

Trail Conference Procurement and Reimbursement Procedures

Thank you for arranging a purchase to assist with a trail project! This guidance should help you through the process. For future reference, all materials described below are available on the [Volunteer Reimbursement Guidelines and Forms](#) webpage. You can find a link to this page under “Forms” in the “Common Resources” section of your [volunteer Dashboard](#).

Following this process is an important part of financial transparency and maintaining our status as a 501c3 tax-exempt nonprofit. Failure to follow these procedures can jeopardize that good standing, so we appreciate your cooperation.

1. Procurement Procedure (Purchases \$250+)

- A Procurement Form must be submitted to the relevant Trail Conference staff member for a planned purchase of **\$250 or more**. If your planned purchase is less than \$250, you can skip this step and proceed to the “**Reimbursement Procedure**” below.
- Before putting the work into a procurement form, check that the items you wish to purchase are [eligible for reimbursement](#) and confirm with your Trail Chair that funds for the purchase were included in the committee’s approved annual budget (or through another fund). It can be difficult or impossible to approve purchases not included in the year’s budget.
 - [Volunteer Procurement Form](#)
- **Part I:** Complete this section with your information, including a full list of all items (and quantities) in the purchase you plan to make.
- **Part II:** Obtain three different quotes for the **whole order** (not for each separate item contained within the order) from different vendors and identify the best option. Sending documentation of these quotes along with your procurement form is welcome, but not required.
 - These totals should include shipping expenses, but not tax – as a 501c3 tax-exempt nonprofit, the Trail Conference is not required to pay taxes on most purchases and **cannot reimburse volunteers for tax money spent**. Be sure to ask your staff contact for a tax-exempt form if you do not have one.
 - Note that finding three suitable vendors might not always be possible for some specialty orders. In these cases, please indicate the reason for having less than three quotes in the available space (for example, “*no other vendors carry this product*”).
 - Similarly, you can also justify why the least expensive option isn’t the best suited. Immediate availability or speed of delivery may be worth spending a few extra dollars. Simply note the reason for your chosen vendor in the form so we have a record.
- **Part III:** Check the box “*Volunteer will submit for reimbursement*” if you plan on making the purchase and having the Trail Conference reimburse you. This is the standard procedure. If you would prefer that the Trail Conference make the purchase using the organization’s credit card, instead select “*Credit Card Purchase*” and our staff will handle the purchase.
- **Part IV:** If there is any clarifying information that will be helpful when making the order (colors, sizes, delivery location, etc.), include it here.

- Once **Parts I-IV** are done, email the completed form to the relevant staff member to review. Once you receive approval, go ahead and make the purchase.
 - **Do not make any purchase until you receive formal approval to do so!**
 - Remember to request the appropriate tax-exempt form if you have not already done so. **We cannot reimburse money spent on taxes.**
- Once you have received that approval, happy shopping!

2. **Reimbursement Procedure**

- Before making any purchase that you plan on submitting for reimbursement, check that the items you wish to purchase are [eligible for reimbursement](#).
 - If your planned purchase is more than \$250, make sure you complete the “**Reimbursement Procedure**” above.
 - As a 501c3 tax-exempt nonprofit, the Trail Conference is not required to pay taxes on most purchases and **cannot reimburse volunteers for tax money spent**. Before you make a purchase, be sure to ask your staff contact for a tax-exempt form if you do not have one.
 - If you do not wish to be reimbursed for a purchase, but would like a **letter acknowledging your purchase as a charitable contribution** for tax purposes, you can still use this form. Simply complete the “*Less amount given as a tax-deductible contribution*” line as appropriate, and we will issue you a letter instead of a check. Thank you for considering this option!
- After you have confirmed that the items you wish to purchase are under \$250, eligible for reimbursement, and you have the right tax-exempt form, go ahead and make the purchase.
- Once the purchase is complete, complete the form below. Note that you may make multiple purchases over several months and submit for reimbursement all at once, to minimize paperwork.
 - [Volunteer Expense Form](#)
 - All receipts corresponding to your purchases must be included as attachments along with the form. If you are only being reimbursed for several items within a larger purchase, it makes the process much easier to **highlight or circle the expenses you wish reimbursed** on the receipt.
 - All expense reports for a calendar year **must be submitted by January 15th** of the following year. Please don't forget to get reimbursed for your year's spending!
- Submit the completed form and attached receipts to the relevant Trail Conference staff member. Shortly after, you will receive a check or signed acknowledgement letter in the mail.