



# Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines

## Purpose

The MGH Institute of Health Professions is committed to making the campus community more environmentally conscious by integrating sustainable practices across the Institute. As a health science community, the Institute recognizes its responsibility to minimize the negative impacts on human health and the environment while also supporting a diverse, equitable, and vibrant community and economy. The IHP also understands that the types of products and services it buys have inherent social, human health, environmental, and economic impacts, and that it should make procurement decisions that embody the IHP's commitment to sustainability whenever possible.

The National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO) states Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) or green purchasing is generally defined as purchasing a product that has a lesser or reduced negative effect on human health and the environment, when compared with competing products that serve the same purpose. As such, the IHP has created the following environmentally preferable purchasing framework and implementation plan for the selection of products with beneficial health and environmental impacts.

This Sustainable Purchasing Guideline is intended to:

- Communicate the IHP's commitment to sustainable purchasing to its students, employees, vendors, and community
- Complement and support implementation of the IHP's sustainability goals and policies
- Provide implementation guidance
- Empower the IHP community to be innovative and demonstrate leadership by considering sustainability benefits when making purchasing decisions

This framework along with the additional sustainable actions taken by the Institute help demonstrate its environmental responsibility rooted in the school's history as leading health care providers and researchers in the medical field.

## Goal

The MGH Institute of Health Professions' Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines aim to provide the IHP community with assistance in purchasing items with a focus on the three components of sustainability: environmental, social, and economic. All product or service purchases made on behalf of the MGH Institute of Health Professions will be done in a manner that protects human health and the environment, is fiscally responsible, and promotes social equity, disadvantaged business opportunities and other economic benefits to the community. Sustainable products and materials recommended by this framework may contain but are not limited to the following characteristics:

- Include recycled materials
- Minimize waste
- Production process conserves natural resources such as water
- Prevent pollution
- Contain fewer toxic substances than alternate products
- Encourage environmentally positive practices
- Use energy alternatives to fossil fuels
- Protect open-space

- Lessen the impact to public health

While not all factors will be incorporated into every purchase, it is the intent of this policy that the Institute will make an effort to promote sustainability factors to the maximum extent possible. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as requiring a member of the IHP to procure goods or services that do not perform adequately for their intended use, that exclude adequate competition, or that are not available at a reasonable price in a reasonable period.

## Scope

The following sustainable purchasing guide applies to all purchases, rentals, and leases made on behalf of MGH Institute of Health Professions that are within the building and site management's control. This policy will be consulted prior to purchasing materials, food, and beverages and will be reviewed as needed. This policy covers the following:

### *Ongoing Consumables Purchases*

- Office Copy Paper
- Cleaning and Hygiene Products and Services
- Janitorial Paper Products
- Food and Beverage

### *Durable Consumables Purchases*

- Furniture and Furnishings
- Electronic Equipment
  - Light Bulbs
  - Office equipment, appliances, and audiovisual equipment

## Procedures and Strategies for Implementation

### 1. Ongoing Consumables Purchases

#### 1.1. Office Copy Paper

MGH Institute of Health Professions has put in place a policy that ensures copy and printer paper with 30% post-consumer waste recycled content is purchased whenever possible. It is preferred that nonrecycled content of copy and printer paper be Forest Stewardship Council Certified (FSC). The IHP community is encouraged to limit paper usage, when possible. If printing and copying is required, individuals are encouraged to print and copy documents double-sided to conserve paper usage and waste.

#### 1.2. Cleaning and Hygiene Products and Services

MGH Institute of Health Professions has implemented a Green Cleaning Program based on the guidelines of the Green Seal Environmental Standard for Cleaning Services that aims to protect human health without harming the health of the environment. To reduce the adverse impacts of cleaning, products and materials used throughout campus are certified by either Green Seal or the Environmental Choice Program. The Green Cleaning Program in place is provided by American Cleaning Company.

#### 1.3. Janitorial Paper Products

All janitorial paper products (paper towels, napkins, and toilet tissue) purchased are suggested to meet at least one of the following sustainability criterion.

- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)
- Green Seal
- UL ECOLOGO

#### 1.4. Food and Beverage

All coffee pods, coffee cups, sip-through lids, cutlery, plates, bowls, and wooden coffee stirrers purchased for the lounge and kitchen areas throughout the IHP are compostable. Coffee cups, sip-through cup lids, and cutlery are Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) certified compostable and composed of polylactic acid (PLA), a material made

from plant sugars. Napkins purchased for these areas are also composed of 100% recycled content and can be composted in any compost bin on campus.

When food service ware is required, the IHP is encouraged to rent or purchase these reusable items. If reusable items are not available or cannot be used, individuals are suggested to utilize the compostable service ware provided by the IHP.

Food and beverage purchased for events & meetings are suggested to meet the following criteria:

- **Sustainable agriculture**- The food or beverage are suggested to be labeled USDA Organic, Food Alliance Certified, Rainforest Alliance Certified, Protected Harvest Certified, Fair Trade, or Marine Stewardship Council's Blue Eco-Label.
- **Locally grown** – ensures smaller carbon footprint, when selecting produce that is locally grown (items sourced within 250 miles of MGH IHP)
- **Organic** – organic farmers are sustainable stewards and do not use chemical inputs in their soil
- **Fresh & Healthy** – avoiding processed food means selecting fresh options that are healthier and full of nutrients
- **Vegetarian & Vegan options** – further reduce the carbon footprint by providing limited fish and meat meals and more attractive and nutritious vegetation & vegan options.

## 2. Durable Consumables Purchases

### 2.1. Furniture and Furnishings

When purchasing items such as furniture, furnishings, ceilings, walls, and composite wood, it is recommended to first check what is available for reuse or repurposing (includes salvaged, refurbished, or reused products). If reuse is not possible as items no longer function fully for their intended use, new furniture and furnishings should be purchased with preference for third-party certifications such as the following:

- Forest Stewardship Council Certified (FSC) for products containing wood
- LEVEL certified
- Cradle to Cradle Certified

Preference is also given to furnishings, paint, coatings, adhesives, and sealants that have low or no emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), free of flame retardants, and/or contain post-consumer recycled materials.

### 2.2. Electronic Equipment Purchases

#### 2.2.1. Light Bulbs

All light bulbs purchased for buildings at the IHP must be LED including all Emergency Batteries lighting units.

#### 2.2.2. Office Equipment, Appliances, and Audiovisual Equipment

All office equipment, appliances, audiovisual equipment, and other electric powered equipment is suggested to meet at least one of the following criteria.

- **EPEAT rating.** The equipment is suggested to have a silver Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) rating or better.
- **ENERGY STAR rating.** If the equipment does not yet fall under the EPEAT rating systems, it is suggested to be ENERGY STAR® qualified (See Energy Star Procurement Policy below).
  - *Energy Star Procurement Policy:* The IHP has established a partnership with the ENERGY STAR® Program administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This Purchasing Program will attempt to achieve optimal energy efficiency and cost savings for the products and services regularly purchased and leased by the Institute whenever financially and operationally feasible. For product categories that have ENERGY STAR® rated products available, the Institute will strive its procurement efforts on products consistent with the standard which meets the needs of the Institute community. The purchase and lease of resources in support of academic, research and administrative initiatives are included in this policy.

In addition, a phase-out plan to replace remaining products with compliant equipment at the end of their useful life will be in place. Workstations for all employees are in the process of being standardized.

### 3. Additional Purchases

Any additional purchases that do not fall within any of the above categories are suggested to follow the following criteria and guidelines:

- **Recycled materials and products.** The content of purchases must meet or exceed the levels listed in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines. Products not covered by the Guidelines can get credit for their recycled content with no minimum. (<https://www.epa.gov/smm/comprehensive-procurement-guideline-cpg-program/>)
- **Extended use.** Batteries must be rechargeable. Toner cartridges for laser printers must be remanufactured.
- **Bio-based products.** Bio-based raw materials other than wood or bio-based products must be tested for bio-based content using ASTM Test Method D6866 or equivalent method ISO 16620-2, or be certified to the USDA BioPreferred Voluntary Labeling Initiative that includes verification via ASTM 6866 testing.
- **Paper and wood products.** Paper and wood products must be certified by the Forest Stewardship Council or USGBC-approved equivalent.
- **Materials reuse.** Reuse includes salvaged, refurbished, or reused products.
- **Extended producer responsibility.** Products purchased from a manufacturer (producer) that participates in an extended producer responsibility program or is directly responsible for extended producer responsibility.
- **Cradle to Cradle:** Product with Material Health certificate or Cradle to Cradle v3 certified product with Material Health category score of Bronze level or higher.

## Procedures and Strategies for Implementation

1. Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT)
  - a. The EPEAT ecolabel is the leading global Type 1 ecolabel covering products and services from the technology sector. EPEAT uses a rating system of either bronze, silver, or gold.
  - b. <https://www.epeat.net/>
2. LEVEL<sup>®</sup> by Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association (BIFMA)
  - a. An independent evaluation and certification system for environmentally- preferable, health conscious, and socially responsible office furniture and furnishings. The LEVEL program has three performance tiers; LEVEL 1, 2, and 3. The higher the number, the more criteria considered and met. BIFMA's LEVEL Certification Program is included in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Recommended Specifications, Standards, and Ecolabels for federal furniture purchasing.
  - b. <https://www.bifma.org/general/custom.asp?page=level-certified>

This guide was created with reference to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) STARS Framework, LEED v4.1 O+M MRp Purchasing Policy Template, and the Responsible Purchasing Network (RPN).