



## **West Virginia Implements New Law Requiring Procurement Training for State Executives and Directors**

West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin has made it clear that he wants to ensure that every dollar of state money is spent with the proper oversight to achieve the best value. After touting the importance of solid procurement practices in his 2014 State of the State Address, Governor Tomblin successfully championed a procurement bill during the 2014 legislative session that ensured that all executive officials and directors had an understanding of the laws, rules and procedures guiding the state purchasing process. The legislation, which is now included as part of West Virginia Code §5A-3, requires all executive department secretaries, commissioners, and their assistants and deputies, along with all directors and department heads and their assistants and deputies, to take two hours of training on purchasing procedures and purchasing cards annually.

West Virginia Purchasing Director Dave Tincher explained that having the Governor's support was instrumental in the passage of the procurement legislation. "Governor Tomblin stressed the importance of our legal procurement requirements and procedures to the highest level officials in state government. Having this support from the top down ensures a universal understanding of the state purchasing process," he explained.

Under the new law, the West Virginia Purchasing Division is working jointly with the State Auditor's Office to offer and record the required training twice annually. Certification of attendance or viewing is required as part of the new state law. Approximately 250 state officials attended the first training, which was offered on October 29, 2014.

"To create a training program within state government, it is crucial to get buy-in from the top. Once high level officials understand the importance of the procurement function, they are more proactive in making sure their purchasing officers are trained and knowledgeable of the purchasing laws, rules and procedures, but also in educating others in their organization on these requirements," said Tincher. "We are very proud of our training program that we continue to build upon."

Although the law is new, procurement training is not new to West Virginia. In addition to the required training, the agency conducts an annual purchasing conference, monthly in-house training workshops and quarterly webinars, and maintains online resource modules that allow agency purchasers to learn from the convenience of their offices. In addition, state employees can participate in the West Virginia Procurement Certification Program, which offers a basic- and advance-level, based on experience, training, a two-day visit to the Purchasing Division offices, and the successful completion of an examination.

For more information on the West Virginia Purchasing Division's training program, please visit: [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training)