

No Purchase Order (PO) No Pay Policy

Introduction/ Overview

Since 2015, we have operated a **No Purchase Order (PO), No Pay Policy** - which is a widely used method across the public and private sector. This means that suppliers will need to quote a valid Purchase Order (PO) number on their invoices and credit notes before we pay them.

We recognise the importance of clear communication and supplier relationships in implementing this policy effectively, and this policy creates a transparent and efficient payment process that benefits Worcestershire County Council (Council) and suppliers.

Any invoice or credit note received, unless in the scope of the exemptions list (the exemptions list is detailed in Schedule 1 of the Supplier Participation Agreement (SPA) or otherwise pre-approved by the Council), without an official and valid PO number may be rejected by the Council and returned unpaid to the supplier.

This reduces processing times and streamlines the process for payment of invoices and credit notes because the PO represents a clear instruction from us with a corresponding financial commitment. This policy **must** be adhered to and aims to strengthen financial controls and increase compliance.

Whilst the core No PO, No Pay Policy remains unchanged, the Council recognises that certain suppliers may participate in specialised payment arrangements, including the Premier Supplier Partnership (PSP). These arrangements may include alternative payment timelines, early payment rebate mechanisms, and specific contractual variations to standard payment terms.

Any variations to standard payment terms will be explicitly documented through a formal Supplier Participation Agreement (SPA) and will not negate the fundamental requirement of a valid PO.

Without an official Purchase Order (PO) number, payment of supplier invoices and credit notes will be delayed.

What Suppliers can do to assist:

Suppliers are advised **not to accept any type of order or undertake any action unless a PO number is quoted** to ensure no delay in payment.

If a supplier has not received an official PO number, they should contact the relevant team as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in a delayed payment and the Council rejecting the invoice.

If an invoice or credit note is rejected for failing to specify a valid and official PO number, **the payment term will be effective from the date the revised invoice is received.**

What the requisitioner needs to do:

- Ensure a PO number is in place **BEFORE** goods/services delivery commences.
- Ensure the supplier is provided with the PO number reference **BEFORE** goods/ services delivery commences.

- Ensure all Goods Receipt Notes (**GRN**) are completed in a timely manner to allow the invoice to be processed as efficiently and quickly as possible.

Additional guidance

The Council's, Supplier Participation Agreement, Standard Terms and Conditions for the supply of Goods and Services, and Tender Guidance provide additional details and should be read in conjunction with the No PO, No Pay Policy.

Worcestershire County Council Payment terms:

- Suppliers should expect payment of an invoice within 30 days after the Council has received a valid, non-disputed invoice.
- The Council are part of a Premier Supplier Partnership, which offers the opportunity to be paid quicker than the standard 30-day payment terms. Further information can be found at: [Premier Supplier Partnership \(PSP\) | Worcestershire County Council](#)
- Payments are made by BACS and can take up to three working days to be visible in your bank account.
- If the invoice is disputed it will be sent back to the supplier and will delay payment that may be due.

Premier Supplier Partnership Tender Guidance

The Council's Tender documents provide additional details about the procurement and payment processes. This No Purchase Order (PO) No Pay Policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Tender documents.

The Tender documents include important information about the Premier Supplier Partnership (PSP), payment terms and rebate structures, evaluation criteria, and supplier participation requirements.

Suppliers are strongly advised to review the full documents to understand the complete context of the Council's procurement and payment processes. Suppliers should carefully review both this No PO No Pay Policy and the accompanying Tender documents to ensure full understanding of the Council's procurement and payment processes.

Where and how to send your invoice:

- Suppliers should send your invoices or credit notes to us directly by email to: WCCinvoices@worcestershire.gov.uk
- Send your invoices and credit notes as a PDF document and attach each invoice/note separately.
- Do not apply security to your invoices as our automated system cannot read this.
- The filename for each invoice/credit must not contain any invalid characters (\ / : * ? < >).

- Invoices or credit notes must be attached to the original email and not be embedded within another email or compressed folder.
- Only one PO number must be quoted on your invoice, we cannot accept one invoice against multiple PO numbers.
- Multiple invoices can be received against one PO number.

We also accept invoices by post:

Accounts Payable.

Worcestershire County Council

Wildwood

Wildwood Drive

Worcester

WR5 2QT

However, **we strongly recommend sending invoices by email**, as it is quicker and more cost effective.

Rejected invoices

- If an invoice is rejected the accounts payable team will contact you confirming the reason and what you need to do to next.
- Invoices will be rejected if they do not quote a PO number (in accordance with this policy).

The Council's **Terms and Conditions** can be viewed here and are attached to every PO number raised on the system.

Standard Council Terms and Conditions apply unless replaced by Formal Contract Terms and Conditions agreed by both parties and through the Premier Supplier Partnership with Oxygen Finance.