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What is a Red Team?

Red Teams are ethical hackers commissioned to identify attack paths that breach an organization's security defense through real-world attack techniques. These teams are comprised of highly skilled offensive cybersecurity experts.

Red Teams help organizations understand how their defenses fair in the real world as compared to their theoretical capabilities.

Red Teaming is critical to accurately assessing an organization's ability to defend and detect against an attack.

Red Teams help organizations decrease their attack surfaces by identifying their most critical threats and recommending remediation plans.

Number of cyber crimes reported in 2021:

847,376

Losses to cyber crimes in 2021: **\$6.9 Billion**

Average number of cyber crime complaints the FBI receives daily: **2,300+**

Number of Cyber crimes reported to the FBI in Arkansas last year: **2,745**

Top 4 countries for state-sponsored computer intrusion:

Russia, China, Iran & North Korea

nextstep
I N N O V A T I O N





- The **Arkansas Office of State Procurement** has reviewed TIPS processes and adopted TIPS Contracts on behalf of the State of Arkansas as recently as 2021
- **Next Step Innovation** holds TIPS Contract 200105 : Technology Solutions, Products and Services
- Under TIPS Contract 200105 **Next Step Innovation** has a full Cybersecurity Services Catalog

A Department of Education Service Center Region 8, 4845 US Highway 271 North, Pittsburg, Texas 75686, (866) 839-8477

The Interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS) - Who We Are

The Interlocal Purchasing System, more widely known as TIPS, is a successful and growing national purchasing cooperative. We are a department of Region 8 Education Service Center, a governmental entity located in Pittsburg, Texas. TIPS may have started as a small, regional cooperative but because of our diligent attention to compliance and customer care from inception through the present, TIPS continues to far exceed its initial vision.

As a governmental entity, TIPS understands that governmental entities such as public schools, municipalities, and agencies, throughout the United States are struggling with limited funding, complying with extensive state and federal public procurement laws, maintaining transparency, and the necessity of constantly procuring all goods and services necessary to operate in a manner that best serves the public. Generally, cooperative purchasing is a legal method for governmental entities to join forces to potentially expedite and increase the efficiency of public procurement. TIPS continuously strives to build and improve upon the already beneficial process of cooperative purchasing. TIPS serves our Vendors and Members by carefully completing the extensive competitive procurement process on behalf of our public entity Members and connecting those Members with highly qualified TIPS Vendors who are willing and ready to meet the endless purchasing needs of these public entities.

TIPS is not a commercial entity, we are not a contracted third-party, we are a department of a governmental entity created to serve other governmental entities and the Vendors who best serve those governmental entities. Our Lead Agency is Region 8 Education Service Center (“Region 8 ESC”) which is a government entity, commissioned by the Texas legislature to assist public school districts in improving student performance and increased efficiency. Region 8 initially recognized the incredible benefit TIPS provided its regional school districts and awarded Vendors through its facilitation of legal, compliant, transparent, and competitive sales. TIPS now offers that same benefit to Vendors and Members on a much larger, national scale.

TIPS’ top priorities are legal compliance and customer service. TIPS legal team, specializing in public procurement, drafts every solicitation and contract document and evaluates every Vendor proposal. Unlike other national cooperatives, TIPS prides itself on addressing your needs clearly and promptly. Whether you are a widely known national Vendor, a local small business, the largest municipality in your state, or a small rural school in need of procurement assistance; if you call or email us, one of our experienced, personable team members will respond ready to assist. No automated systems, no runarounds, just experienced professionals who are always a quick phone call or click away. TIPS and our entire team exudes our motto, “Purchasing made Personal.” We welcome you to visit our public website at www.tips-usa.com for more information about TIPS and the individuals who make up our TIPS Team.



THE INTERLOCAL PURCHASING SYSTEM

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The Interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS) – What We Do

It is understood that the intent behind the stringent regulation of public purchasing was to promote competition, encourage integrity, and obtain the most effective and efficient expenditure of public funds. However, as public purchasing regulations have evolved and become more complex, the practice of public purchasing and selling to public entities now seems fraught with unnecessary complications. Often, qualified vendors are willing and ready to meet the urgent, specific, or time-sensitive needs of public entities but cannot do so until the rigorous and time-consuming competitive procurement process is complete. That is where cooperative purchasing through TIPS (a division of Region 8 Education Service Center – a governmental entity) provides a valuable and necessary solution that meets both the applicable legal requirements and connects qualified vendors with public entities in need of goods and services. The American Bar Association Model Procurement Code for State and Local Governments defines “Cooperative Purchasing” as, “Procurement conducted by, or on behalf of, one or more Public Procurement Units.” In essence, cooperative purchasing through TIPS is the joining together of two or more public entities, as permitted by law, to aggregate their purchasing powers and satisfy their entities’ needs with competitively procured goods and services from vetted Vendors.

The advantages of utilizing TIPS to facilitate public sales are countless. When permitted by law, instead of Vendors and Members expending time, money, and resources on the extensive competitive bidding process, the use of TIPS, allows public entities to quickly select and purchase their preferred products or services from highly qualified, competitively evaluated Vendors within a matter of minutes. Cooperative purchasing through TIPS saves Members and Vendors significant time and money, fosters competitive contract prices, and connects public entities with qualified, sought-after Vendors ready to serve their immediate needs. In a world where public entities often see a waning of resources but an increase in demands, TIPS can be an incredible tool that allows entities to legally, efficiently, and transparently procure the goods and services required to operate successfully from the Vendors most prepared to meet those needs.

Our entire TIPS team is here to serve you, our TIPS Members and Vendors. Each of our valued Vendors is competitively procured according to applicable state and federal bid laws to the extent a cooperative can complete the process on behalf of a public entity. Our legal team drafts all TIPS solicitations which are publicly posted and advertised seeking sealed proposals. All sealed proposals received are evaluated by our team of legal professionals according to the published scoring criteria and are awarded accordingly. Whether you have a question about becoming a TIPS Vendor or Member, management of your TIPS contract(s) or account, procuring or selling goods/services/construction, or the legal aspects of public procurement, we have a department of knowledgeable professionals ready to assist. Facilitating public entity purchasing through unmatched customer service and legal compliance is who we are and what we do. We welcome you visit our public website at www.tips-usa.com or reach out to us directly to learn more.