Signing Authority

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

This policy provides the framework for the administration of financial authority throughout Providence Health Care ("PHC"). It is designed to balance the needs of operational effectiveness and risk management.

For the purposes of this policy, Signing Authority is defined as the authority granted to an individual, by virtue of their position in the organization, to approve or commit the expenditure of funds on behalf of PHC. The authority to sign arises out of two specific types of authority: contracting authority and signing authority.

Signing authorities are established to match decision-making and accountability to the organizational level closest to the operational impact of those decisions, to the extent possible. Refer to the attached contracting and signing authority matrices for details (Appendix A and B).

1.2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees and those individuals that have been delegated signing authority rights of PHC. Contracting and signing authority may be delegated to medical staff, consultants, or employees of other Health Organizations ("HO") under a Lower Mainland Consolidation initiative in accordance with sections 2.3.4. and 2.4.4.

2. Policy

2.1. Policy Intent

All individuals with signing authority shall comply with the intent of this policy.

The application of contracting and signing authority levels in accordance with Appendices A and B may not be adjusted by artificial means, such as altering or sub-dividing payments, invoices, or contracts into smaller amounts or other mechanism.

PHC does not recognize any obligations established on its behalf by an unauthorized individual and will take any legal or disciplinary action required to recover losses suffered as a result of such transactions.

2.2. Policy Application

This policy, and the limits set forth in Appendices A and B apply to all commitments and payments made on behalf of PHC. All commitments and payments must be within an approved annual operating or capital budget, must comply with all applicable procurement policies and guidelines, and are subject to Board approved limits.

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2.3. Contracting Authority

Provincial Health Services Authority ("PHSA") has primary contracting authority for PHC. All contracts must follow the contracting policies of PHSA.

PHC retains contracting authority for certain types of commitments (refer to Appendix A, Contracting Authority Matrix).

The attached matrix specifies who has PHC contracting authority (refer to Appendix A, Contracting Authority Matrix).

The level of contracting authority applies to the total commitment for the whole term of the contract.

PHC contracting authorities are permitted to sign legal documentation giving effect to contracts.

Contracting authority is limited to a selected number of individuals who, by virtue of their position and background, have the ability to examine fully the implications of a particular contractual obligation.

No individual has contracting authority unless explicitly granted in accordance with this policy. PHC may take disciplinary and/or any other reasonable actions required to recover losses suffered as a result of contracts being entered into by an individual without the proper contracting authority.

2.3.1. Contracting Responsibilities

Individuals who are assigned contracting authority are responsible for negotiating and executing contracts within their level of contract authority that are in the best interests of PHC. Individuals with contracting authority must comply with legal and financial standard practices, including but not limited to approval of business case, Vendor Relations Guidelines, and all relevant PHC procurement policies and guidelines.

Contracting authorities must ensure that a recommendation is received prior to entering into a contractual obligation and committing funds as required in the Contracting Authority Matrix (Appendix A). That recommendation must include an authorized signature of an individual with appropriate signing authority for the value of commitment being sought.

Contracting authorities must ensure that PHC is able to meet the obligations to which they commit; ensure that the action authorized complies with legislation, regulatory requirements, policies; ensure that the appropriate level of documentation, review and approval has been obtained for the action; and be aware of the financial and other implications, and ensure maintenance of a proper audit trail, which establishes what actions were taken and by whom.

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2.3.2. Contract Management

Contracting authorities must comply with the PHC <u>Contract Management</u> policy and, where applicable, the Lower Mainland Facilities Management Procurement Manual in developing and managing the signed contract. For contracts of significant value, risk or profile that require signing by a Vice President or Senior Executive, the CFO, or by the CEO; a <u>Contract Tracking and Approval Form</u> must be completed to ensure that the appropriate reviewers (e.g. contract sponsor, finance, legal, etc.) have read and approved the contract for signing. This form is to be filed with the original copy of the contract.

2.3.3. Consultants

No Consultant has contracting authority unless specifically authorized and designated by the CEO, the CFO, or a Vice President or Senior Executive in a properly completed Authorization of Contracting Authority Form, which would include an acknowledgement of and undertaking to abide by this policy. Consultants authorized to exercise contracting authority must comply with all terms of this policy, and any limitations of contracting authority set out in the Authorization of Contracting Authority Form. Individuals delegating authority to Consultants shall remain responsible and accountable for the exercise of contracting authority by the authorized Consultants pursuant to the Authorization.

2.3.4. Delegation of Contracting Authority

Each contracting authority may have a delegated alternate who, at the discretion of that contracting authority, may act on their behalf. The delegation of contracting authority, including the extent to which authority is delegated or any restrictions placed thereon, must be documented. The delegation of an alternate does not alter the responsibility and accountability of the individual identified in this policy.

In the absence of an alternate, contracting authority reverts to the individual's immediate manager/supervisor.

2.3.5. Addendums, Amendments, Extensions, Renewals, and Restatements

Any addendum, amendment, extension, renewal or restatement of current or future contracts must be executed in compliance with the level of authority granted by this policy.

2.3.6. Open-ended Contracts

Where open-ended contracts are authorized and executed, the contracting authority limits set out in the Contracting Authority Matrix (Appendix A) of the policy must be interpreted as the cumulative total of the commitment.

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2.4. Signing Authority

Signing authorities are permitted to approve payments within the limits of a pre-established contract. Signing authority is restricted to the signing authority or their delegate (and their manager/supervisor) who is accountable for the budget of a particular department or division within PHC.

2.4.1. Signing Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of signing authorities to ensure that sufficient funds exist within a budget to cover a particular expenditure as well as all known obligations. Signing authorities have full authority to commit funds within their budget and are held fully accountable for those commitments. Signing authorities must ensure that goods/services received are consistent with the underlying contracts. Signing authorities must discuss extraordinary or unusual amounts, high risk financial transactions, multi-year commitments, or expenditures in excess of budget with their immediate manager/supervisor and must involve the appropriate contract authority in securing specific goods and services. Refer to Section 18 in the Contracting Authority Matrix (Appendix A).

The attached matrix specifies who has PHC signing authority (refer to Appendix B, Signing Authority Matrix).

2.4.2. Financial Signing Register

To ensure accuracy, the Financial Signing Register (FSR), which is referenced by Supply Chain and Accounts Payable to verify appropriate signing authorities, must be kept current. It is the responsibility of the program leader, overseeing a department's budget, to ensure all changes to signing authorities within their program are communicated to the Business Systems Integration (BSI) Team. The requestor must complete the 'VCH Signing Authority FSR ePRO Change Form' and submit to the BSI Team at VCHASigningAuthority@vch.ca for processing.

2.4.3. Consultants

No Consultant has signing authority as set out in this policy unless designated by the CEO, CFO, or a Vice President or Senior Executive in a properly completed Authorization of Signing Authority Form. Individuals delegating authority to Consultants shall remain responsible and accountable for the exercise of signing authority by the authorized Consultant pursuant to the authorization.

2.4.4. Delegation of Signing Authority

The signing authority of PHC shall be limited to the positions outlined in this document. Each signing authority may designate individual(s) to act on their behalf. The delegation of signing authority does not alter the responsibility and accountability of the individual identified in this policy. In the absence of an alternate, signing authority reverts to the individual's immediate manager/supervisor.

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Principles and Practices

- Delegation must be in writing and communicated to Accounting Services through the <u>Delegation of Spending Authority</u> Form. The delegation of signing authority must include the extent to which authority is delegated and any restrictions placed thereon
- Signing authorities must be delegated to the next appropriate organizational positions in the department.
- Authorization to approve transactions can only be delegated to individuals with the skill and knowledge necessary for the effective exercise of the authority.
- The designator exercises control sufficient to ensure the discharge of their responsibilities.
- Effective procedures for the regular review and approval of the actions of the delegate must be in place and adhered to.
- A delegate may not authorize disbursements for which they are the recipient.

2.5. Standards

2.5.1. Conflict of Interest

It is a general principle that an individual cannot approve a transaction that will confer a benefit on that same individual or that individual's family members or related parties, where the individual has equity interests (e.g., common or preferred stocks, partnership units, or other securities).

In cases of doubt, it should be assumed that there is a potential or perceived conflict of interest.

Where a conflict, potential conflict, or perceived conflict exists, Signing Authority is raised to the manager/supervisor of the conflicted individual.

For specific information on PHC's policy, refer to Conflict of Interest policy.

2.5.2. Extraordinary Financial Transactions

Signing authorities shall diligently bring to the attention to the CFO those financial transactions within their jurisdiction that are considered to be of sufficient importance regardless of value, prior to their signature. Namely, these are financial transactions with an unusually high risk factor and those that could bring the activities of PHC under public scrutiny, involve controversial matters and fraud.

3. Supporting Documents

3.1. Related Policies

Conflict of Interest
Travel and Business Expense Reimbursement
Contract Management
Provincial Health Services Authority policies

4. Definitions

"Contracts" in this policy shall be interpreted to include agreements of all forms and types that are binding on PHC.

"Health Organizations" include Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and Fraser Health Authority within the meaning of the Health Authorities Act. Health Organizations also includes Provincial Health Services Authority, which is incorporated under the Society Act.

"Personal Payment" is a payment from PHC directly to an employee. This payment must be authorized by an individual senior to the employee, who has appropriate signing authority for the cost centre.

"Senior Executive" is a member of PHC's Senior Leadership Team and has equivalent signing authority limits as a Vice President. In most cases, a senior executive is directly accountable to the CEO.

"Signature" is a handwritten name signifying the exercise of contracting or signing authority. If there is a three way match of purchase order, receiving document, and supplier invoice, a signature on the invoice is not required.

"Signing Authority" is an individual with budgetary responsibility for a particular business unit (cost centre).

5. References

PHSA Supply Chain Purchasing

6. Appendices

Appendix A: Contracting Authority Matrix Appendix B: Signing Authority Matrix



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Appendix A: Contracting Authority Matrix

TYPE OF COMMITMENT		RECOMMENDATION OR REQUEST FOR ORDER (PRIOR TO CONTRACTING)	CONTRACTING AUTHORITY
1. Goods, Servi Supply Cont procured by (except as st (Note 1)	racts PHSA	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix Equipment subject to approval by functional department and/or Biomedical Engineering 	Refer to PHSA Signing Authority Policy
2. Facilities Ma Capital Expe (excluding le	nditures	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix Project to be reviewed and approved by Capital Planning 	 Manager, Facilities Management < \$50,000 Director, Facilities Management < \$100,000 Executive Director, Facilities Management < \$1,000,000 VP or Seni or Executive < \$3,000,000 CFO < \$5,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit
3. Facilities Ma Non-Capital Expenditure renovations maintenanc	s (including and	Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix	Refer to Spending Authority Matrix (Appendix B)
4. Facilities Ma Leases, Pren Licenses	_	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix Treatment of leases as capital or operating to be determined by Finance Leases in excess of a 10 year term to be pre-approved by Finance 	 Manager, Facilities Management < \$50,000 Director, Facilities Management < \$100,000 Executive Director, Facilities Management < \$1,000,000 VP or Senior Executive < \$3,000,000 CFO < \$5,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit

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	TYPE OF COMMITMENT	RECOMMENDATION OR REQUEST FOR	CONTRACTING AUTHORITY	
5.	Encumbrances on PHC Real Property	Executive Director, Projects, Planning & Facility Management Subject to applicable PHC policies and guidelines Subject to approval by Legal Services as required	 Chief Operating Officer (COO) for temporary encumbrances lasting less than24 months COO for permanent encumbrances that do not create a financial liability such as easements, statutory rights of way, covenants, etc. CFO for permanent encumbrances that create a financial encumbrance for PHC <\$100,000 CEO for all other encumbrances up to Board approved limit 	
6.	IMITS or IM – Capital Expenditures (excluding leases) IMITS or IM expenditures are procured and contracted by PHSA unless specifically exempted by PHC policy.	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix Project to be reviewed and approved by capital planning 	Where contracted by PHSA: Refer to PHSA Signing Authority Policy Where contracted by PHC: Manager, IMITS or IM < \$50,000 Director or Department Head, IMITS or IM < \$100,000 Regional Director, IMITS or IM <\$1,000,000 VP or Senior Executive < \$3,000,000 CFO <\$5,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit	
7.	IMITS or IM – Non-Capital Expenditures, (including software, maintenance, and licenses) IMITS or IM expenditures are procured and contracted by PHSA unless specifically exempted by PHC policy.	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix Computer systems and infrastructure must be acquired through existing contracts. Computer software and licenses with a cumulative cost in excess of \$10,000 must be approved by the appropriate IMITS or IM Director or above. 	Where contracted by PHSA: Refer to PHSA Signing Authority Policy Where contracted by PHC: Refer to Spending Authority Matrix	

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TYPE OF COMMITMENT	RECOMMENDATION OR REQUEST FOR ORDER (PRIOR TO CONTRACTING)	CONTRACTING AUTHORITY
8. Leases / Rental Contracts – Equipment and IMITS or IM (including vehicles)	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix If contracted by PHSA, the PHC Finance department must pre-approve Treatment of leases as capital or operating to be determined by PHC Finance Capital leases to be reviewed and approved by Capital Planning 	 Where contracted by PHSA: Refer to PHSA Signing Authority Policy Where contracted by HO: Director, Accounting or Financial Services <\$100,000 CFO <\$5,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit
9. Consultants (excluding capital projects) Consultant services are procured and contracted by PHSA unless specifically exempted by PHC policy.	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix If contracted by PHSA, the PHC Executive Director must pre-approve amounts up to \$250,000 and the VP or Senior Executive must pre-approve amounts over \$250,000 HR Services (as required by any applicable Professional Service Provider Policies) – secondary approval, all amounts 	 Where contracted by PHSA: Refer to PHSA Signing Authority Policy Where contracted by PHC: Director or Department Head < \$100,000 Executive Director < \$1,000,000 COO, VP, or Senior Executive < \$3,000,000 CFO <\$5,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit.
 Where PHC contracts for a service that was previously performed in house by unionized labour. Includes laundry, waste management, and patient transport. 	Board to consent to outs ourcing a ward If contracted by PHSA, the PHC CEO must pre-approve all amounts	 Where contracted by PHSA: Refer to PHSA Signing Authority Policy Where contracted by PHC: CEO up to Board approved limit

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TYPE OF COMMITMENT RECOMMENDATION OR REQUEST FOR CONTRACTING AUTHORITY			
	ORDER (PRIOR TO CONTRACTING)		
Health Service Providers Health Service Provider contracts refer to services performed by external agencies/health service organizations using their premises, equipment, material and personnel, e.g. continuing care, home care, private medical clinics, laboratory services, etc.	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix If contracted by PHSA, the contract must be pre-approved by the HO: Executive Director < \$1,000,000 VP / Senior Executive < \$3,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit 	 Where contracted by PHSA: Refer to PHSA Signing Authority Policy Where contracted by HO: Executive Director < \$1,000,000 COO, VP, or Senior Executive < \$3,000,000 CFO < \$5,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit 	
 Physician Contracts Sessional Contracts and Medical On Call Availability Program Contracts (MOCAP) Other (e.g. Clinical Academic Service Contracts, Clinical Service Contracts, Administrative, Stipends) 	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix Subject to recommendation by the Medical Affairs department 	 Director < \$100,000 Executive Director < \$1,000,000 VP or Senior Executive < \$3,000,000 CFO < \$5,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit 	
13. Business Expenses	Refer to separate policy re. Travel and Business Expense Reimbursement Policy	N/A	
14. Legal ServicesHR LegalOther Legal	 Executive Director, People Executive Director, Quality, Patient Safety, Risk Management, Patient 	 Director \$100,000 Executive Director \$1,000,000 VP or Senior Executive \$3,000,000 CFO <\$5,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit 	
15. Research 16. Public Health Licenses and Permits Licenses to Operate (Community Care Facilities) Environmental Health - Permits (e.g. restaurants, public swimming pools)	 Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix 	 Refer to Spending Authority Matrix Public Health Inspector or Director, Health Protection Public Health Inspector or Chief Medical Health Officer 	



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TYPE OF COMMITMENT	RECOMMENDATION OR REQUEST FOR ORDER (PRIOR TO CONTRACTING)	CONTRACTING AUTHORITY
17. Goods, Services, and Supply Contracts not included above (Note 1)	Signing Authority as per Spending Authority Matrix	Refer to Spending Authority Matrix
 18. Extraordinary Transactions Including Contracts and Expenditures with: Significant liability exposure – high risk to assets, clients, staff or business processes; Significant public profile – potential impact on HO reputation; or Significant future impact – affecting long-term plans, service delivery or standard of care 	 CEO to recommend to Board for approval. The Board to approve the contract award before signing Refer to Board Policy: Limits of Spending Authority 	
Examples include: Purchase of Real Estate Union Contracts Changes in Benefit Carriers or Plans Borrowing Mortgages 19. To be Reviewed by Finance Insurance A/R Write-Offs and Waivers of Revenue Inventory Write Down	 Board and Ministry of Health Board Board for significant changes Board and Ministry of Health Board and Ministry of Health All contracts and charges to income must be reviewed by the Finance Director before contract is signed or written off 	 CEO, all a mounts Finance Director < \$100,000 Executive Director < \$1,000,000 CFO < \$5,000,000 CEO up to Board approved limit

NOTE

(1) All contracts must be subject to a review for content, insurance coverage, Canada Revenue Agency issues and general language.

This review will generally be conducted by Legal Services. Review by external legal counsel may be appropriate in some cases.

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Appendix B: Spending Authority Matrix

Spending Level	Limitations (Per Transaction)	Signature of Signing Authority	EPro Level*
11	Nolimit	Board of Directors	-
10	Up to Board Approved Limit	Chi ef Executive Officer	-
9	Up to \$5,000,000	Chi ef Financial Officer	
8	Up to \$3,000,000	Chief Operations Officer, or Vice President	-
7	Up to \$1,000,000	Corporate Director, Executive Director, or Regional Director	-
6	Up to \$500,000	Senior Director or Principal Investigator	-
5	Up to \$100,000	Director or Department Head	5
4	Up to \$50,000	Manager	4
3	Up to \$30,000	Coordinator	3
2	Up to \$10,000	Supervisor	2
1	Up to \$5,000	ePro Requestors (Group 2) *	1
0	Up to \$1,000	ePro Requestors (Group 1) *	0

^{*} Not applicable to Meditech

Spending Level 11: The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors (the "Board") must approve operating and capital budgets. The Board delegate's responsibility to the CEO to implement subordinate levels as outlined below.

Spending Level 10: Chief Executive Officer

Authority: The CEO has unlimited signing authority to execute the operating and capital budgets as approved by the Board. The CEO must authorize any single transaction greater than \$5,000,000 up to the Board Approved Limit for a specified transaction.

It is the responsibility of the CEO to provide internal guidance, to Levels 0 to 9 for the total approved operating and capital budgets. Where necessary, the CEO may approve specific deviation from the Levels of Signing Authority structure.

Exclusions: Requisitions for personal payments to the CEO require approval by a designated Director of the Board.

Spending Level 9: Chief Financial Officer ("CFO")

Authority: The CFO has spending authority over the total approved operating and capital budgets for their functional areas of responsibility.

Specific Limitations: The CFO must endorse requisitions relating to their functional areas of responsibility, for any single transaction between \$3,000,001 and \$5,000,000.

Exclusions: Requisitions for personal payments to the CFO require approval from the CEO.

Spending Level 8: Chief Operating Officer ("COO"), or Vice President ("VP")

Authority: The COO, or VP has signing authority over the total approved operating and capital budgets for their functional areas of responsibility.

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Specific Limitations: The COO, or VP must endorse requisitions relating to their functional areas of responsibility, for any single transaction between \$1,000,001 and \$3,000,000.

Exclusions: Requisitions for personal payments to Vice Presidents or Senior Executives require approval from the CEO.

Spending Level 7: Corporate Director, Executive Director, or Regional Director

Authority: The Corporate Director, Executive Director, or Regional Director has signing authority over the total approved operating and capital budgets for their functional areas of responsibility.

Specific Limitations: Corporate Director, Executive Director, or Regional Director must endorse requisitions relating to their respective functional areas of responsibility, for any single transaction between \$500,001 and \$1,000,000.

Exclusions: Requisitions for personal payments to Corporate Directors, Executive Directors, or Regional Directors require approval from a Vice President or Senior Executive.

Spending Level 6: Senior Director or Principal Investigator

Authority: The Senior Director or Principal Investigator has signing authority over the total approved operating and capital budgets for their functional areas of responsibility.

Specific Limitations: The Senior Director or Principal Investigator must endorse requisitions relating to their respective functional areas of responsibility, for any single transaction between \$100,001 and \$500,000.

Exclusions: Requisitions for personal payments to Senior Directors or Principal Investigators require approval from a Corporate Director, Executive Director, or Regional Director.

Spending Level 5: Director or Department Head

Authority: The Director or Department Head has signing authority over the total approved operating and capital budgets for their departments.

Specific Limitations: The Director or Department Head must endorse requisitions relating to their respective department, for any single transaction between \$50,001 and \$100,000. The Director or Department Head is entitled to the ePro Level 5 approval limit (i.e. up to \$100,000).

Exclusions: Requisitions for personal payments to Directors or Department Heads require approval from a Senior Director or Principal Investigator.

Spending Level 4: Manager

Authority: The Manager has signing authority over the total approved operating and capital budgets for their cost centres.

Specific Limitations: The Manager must endorse requisitions relating to their respective department, for any single transaction between \$30,001 and \$50,000.

Exclusions: Level 4 Authority excludes all Managers who do not hold control over the budget of a specific cost centre. Requisitions for personal payments to Mangers require approval from a Director or Department Head.

Spending Level 3: Coordinator

Authority: The Cost Centre Manager has signing authority for the total approved operating and capital budgets for their cost centres.

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Specific Limitations: The Coordinator must endorse requisitions relating to their respective cost centres, for any single transaction between \$5,001 and \$30,000.

Exclusions: Level 3 Authority excludes all Coordinators who do not hold control over the budget of a specific cost centre. Requisitions for personal payments to a Coordinator require approval from a Manager.

Spending Level 2: Up to Supervisor Level

Authority: The ePro Requestor has spending authority up to the limit approved.

Spending Levels 1 and 0: ePro Requestor

Authority: The ePro Requestor has spending authority up to the limit as defined in the ePro System.

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	1. May 2023	Minor updates to language and clarification of processes.	