FAQs for Contract Administration and Delegation of Contracting Authority
At Kent State University

What is a “delegation of authority”?
Only a few individuals have been given the authority to sign a contract on behalf of the University. Initially, only the Board of Trustees through collective action, the President, and Vice Presidents have the ability to sign a contract – any contract – on behalf of Kent State University. However, this policy gives those officials the ability to give, or “delegate”, that same authority to another position on campus.

Someone told me verbally when I started here that I could sign contracts, so that’s what I’ve been doing. Do I have contracting authority?
Unless you have a written letter signed by a vice president delegating his/her contracting authority to you, you do not have contracting authority. Verbal approval is not enough. Under university policy, all delegations must be evidenced in writing and signed by a vice president – no exceptions.

Every contract? What if it’s only for $300 for a one-time service?
Every contract, no exceptions. If it obligates the university to pay money or commit any type of resource, it is important for the fiscal stability of the university to ensure that the approvals are at the appropriate level. Contracting authority is necessary – no matter how small the amount.

What if I sign the contract without the proper delegation in place?
Without the proper authority to sign on behalf of the University, you are acting outside of your scope of employment. This could nullify the qualified immunity provided to you under Ohio law, as well as result in your personal liability for any damages caused as a result of the contract.

That does not sound good. How can I ensure I have the appropriate authority?
Delegations are provided in a “top down” disbursement, meaning that all approvals come from the President or a Vice President. You can submit a written request to your supervisor, who upon approval may submit the request to either one of these parties (depending upon your department). If your request is denied, the decision is final. There is no option to appeal. All delegations must be made using the standard format provided for by the Office of General Counsel.

I now have contracting authority and wish to enter into a contract. What are my responsibilities??
You are responsible for negotiating the substantive terms (price, responsibilities, payments). However, after you have agreed on those terms (but not yet signed anything), you must submit the contract to the Office of General Counsel (OGC) who will review the contract for legally sufficiency. Upon OGC approval, the contract will be returned to you, and you can proceed to secure the signatures of both parties.

The contract has been signed by both parties. What’s next?
When possible, please send an electronic PDF copy (color preferably) to OGC at contracts@kent.edu. As with any record, you should file it through the general methods used to store documents in your area as provided by the University records retention schedule found at http://www.kent.edu/generalcounsel/records/index.cfm