



# PURCHASING CARD POLICIES PROCEDURES & USER'S GUIDE



GEORGIA  
SOUTHERN  
UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF  
PROCUREMENT &  
CONTRACT SERVICES

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## **I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Georgia Southern University Purchasing Card, hereafter referred to as the P-Card, is a purchasing tool designed to allow the university employees to obtain supplies and services for official business use that are *generally* valued at \$4,999.99 or less. The P-Card is a state-issued, corporate Visa credit card that is managed by Bank of America. The P-Card is a valuable, cost-effective tool that allows for quick and efficient procurement of goods and services.

Implemented in 1997, the program has proved efficient and effective in making purchases within the department's delegated purchasing authority. Georgia Southern University's P-Card program is responsible for procuring items and services of approximately \$8,000,000 each year. The P-Card program has proven to be successful in eliminating purchase orders for repetitive purchases and reducing purchasing costs for the university.

**The P-Card is for official university business only and must never be used for personal purchases.**

The State of Georgia mandates that all state agency purchasing card programs are to be modeled after the statewide program. This "Policies, Procedures and User's Guide" sets forth guidelines consistent with the state's program.

Georgia Southern University requires all cardholders and approvers to review these policies and procedures, as well as attend training that will highlight and supplement the information provided in this document. Georgia Southern University's P-Card training program has been developed to meet the State of Georgia's requirements.

Abuse of the P-Card or failure to comply with the policies and procedures established in this document may result in revocation of card privileges and/or other disciplinary action.

## **II. OBTAINING & MAINTAINING A P-CARD**

Any full-time employee (must be a benefitted employee of the state) that needs a P-Card must complete the "[Purchasing Card Request Form](#)." All applicable fields must be filled-in and all required signatures must be present before the request form can be processed. In addition to the cardholder and the immediate supervisor, the Department Head/Director, the appropriate Dean/Director, and the Vice President must also sign the request form to authorize initial issuance of the P-Card. The immediate supervisor also approves the listed default SpeedChart and Account Code listed on the application.

Any employee applying for a new procurement card must successfully pass a background check and a credit check. Using guidelines provided by the Board of Regents, the review committee will look at the following in determining whether to issue a card:

- Student loans currently in default
- Bankruptcies. Bankruptcies followed by good credit may be a mitigating factor.
- Credit reports indicating installments in excess of 40% of gross monthly income.
- One or more unpaid collections and judgments.

Mitigating factors may be considered. It is not the responsibility of the institution to discover, research, or verify that possible mitigating factors exist. The burden of proof to present mitigating factors rests entirely with the applicant. If an applicant is denied a P-Card, the applicant will be notified in writing by the Department of Human Resources.

No card will be issued until all training has been successfully completed by the cardholder and the approver/manager/supervisor. The card will be issued in the name of the employee designated on the application. The cardholder and immediate supervisor are responsible for any and all charges made through the use of the card by the designated cardholder. Only one P-Card is allowed per employee.

The P-Card shall be issued after all previous requirements have been completed and the cardholder signs the "Cardholder Agreement" form. The P-Card will only be issued in-person to the employee whose name is on the P-Card.

Under no circumstances, will a card be issued in the name of a department. **A cardholder must not allow any other person to use his/her P-card. Use of a P-Card by anyone other than the cardholder may revoke all P-Card privileges, rights for fraudulent purchase claims and will be considered as a major violation.**

There are neither annual fees, nor personal financial obligation connected to the P-Card. The P-Card is initially issued for 3 years. Once the P-Card is renewed at the end of the third year, the P-Card will begin to renew on an automatic 2-year basis.

Inactive accounts (those with no activity for 6 consecutive months) are to be canceled in accordance with DOAS and the university president's cabinet guidelines. Out of courtesy, the cardholder and immediate supervisor will be notified via email upon 5 months of inactivity. The cardholder shall then have 1 month to use the P-Card. If the P-Card is not used by the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> month, it will be canceled.

Any cardholder who feels that his/her P-Card should remain active is required to submit a written request via his/her supervisor. The written request should provide a detailed justification for continued activation. If the request is honored by the committee, the card will remain active for an additional 3 months. *Extensions are rare and typically require very special circumstances.* After the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive month of inactivity, the card will be canceled without advanced notice. A second request for an extension will not be accepted. A report of canceled cards and those requested to be retained will be reported to the appropriate department's vice president.

## **A. TRAINING**

Georgia statute 50-5-83 mandates that all cardholders and approvers complete P-Card Policies and Procedures training. In accordance with Georgia statute 50-5-83, cardholders (new/first-time applicants and refresher), as well as supervisors/approvers/managers are required to attend training as follows:

1. Cardholder: Each cardholder is required to attend the P-Card Policies & Procedures training and WORKS training before issuance of the P-Card. Each cardholder will be required to complete refresher training every two years (via online training or classic classroom setting).
  - *If a cardholder is a member of a department with a group proxy reconciler, he/she is not required to complete WORKS training. WORKS training is only required if the cardholder is responsible for reconciling his or her own transactions.*
2. WORKS Reconcilers & Approvers: Each WORKS reconciler & approver must complete WORKS training prior to being granted access to the WORKS program. Refresher training may be required if significant changes have been made since the WORKS user last completed training. Refresher training may also be required if the user struggles with his/her WORKS duties.
3. Non-cardholding Supervisors: Each non-cardholding supervisor must complete P-Card Policies & Procedures training before he/she is authorized to review cardholder submittal packages and sign off on each package. The completion of P-Card Policies & Procedures training will grant the approver authorization to review and sign off on P-Card submittal packages. Each non-cardholding supervisor will be required to complete refresher training every two years (via online training or classic classroom setting).
4. Any trainee who is more than 15 minutes late for live, classroom training will not receive credit for training. Please show courtesy to other classmates by being present and on-time at the designated start time.
5. ALL cardholders, supervisors/approvers/managers, and proxy reconcilers are subject to renewal training (P-Card Policies and Procedures training and/or WORKS training) without advanced notice if significant changes have been made to the P-Card program, internal procedures, or state purchasing guidelines. Each P-Card affiliate is subject to renewal training without advanced notice if he/she exhibits a significant lack of knowledge regarding proper P-Card policies and procedures.
6. All training is regularly held in the Procurement & Contract Services conference room in the Rosenwald building. An alternative training location may be selected. The procurement card coordinator will notify all class attendees via email of any room changes. Notification to attendees will occur as soon as the new room has been designated.
7. Training information is available on the Procurement & Contract Services website. The training dates are set to accommodate most individual schedules. Training dates may be moved or canceled due to mitigating circumstances. All trainees will be notified via email of any moves or cancelations as soon as the P-Card coordinator confirms the move or cancelation.

8. If an upcoming training date falls outside of a trainee's availability or mitigating circumstances prevent attendance, special accommodations may be made. A written request for a special training session should be made via email to P-Card coordinator. A request must include a brief, detailed justification as to why the trainee cannot attend one of the upcoming training dates. A decision regarding any request for special training accommodations is solely up to the discretion of the P-Card coordinator.
9. A record of training attendance is retained by the P-Card coordinator. Each cardholder and supervisor will be required to sign a Purchasing Card Agreement form verifying that they have been given a copy of the P-Card Policies & Procedures, they have attended training, and understand that they are now an authorized purchaser for the university. In turn, each cardholder and supervisor agrees to carry-out specified responsibilities for expending public funds and act within the principles and guidelines of the State Purchasing Department.

Refresher training is always available to any user who wishes to voluntarily attend in order to improve his or her knowledge.

## **B. CARD RENEWAL & REFRESHER INFORMATION**

A notice for refresher training and any other requirements will be sent via email to each cardholder approximately 45 days before his/her anniversary date. Each cardholder will have until the end of the anniversary date's following month to complete P-Card Policies & Procedures training. If refresher training and/or other renewal requirements are not completed by the conclusion of the anniversary date's following month, the P-Card will be canceled.

A notice for refresher training requirements will be sent via email to each supervisor/approver/manager approximately 45-60 days before his/her anniversary. Each supervisor/approver/manager will have until the end of the initial anniversary's following month to complete refresher training. If refresher training is not completed by the conclusion of said month, all P-Cards under his/her supervision may be suspended until training requirements have been completed.

## **III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The College/University Procurement Officer serves as the official liaison between the university and the State Cards Program Manager for all matters related to the P-Card program. In accordance with state policy, this individual (Director of Procurement & Contract Services) has delegated the appropriate roles and responsibilities to several individuals on campus. The associated roles must comply with the responsibilities listed.

### **P-Card Coordinator:**

- Develop the internal policy governing the use of the P-Card
- Develop written internal procedures for requesting P-Cards and approving cardholders
- Establish, maintain and adjust written procedures to ensure compliance with, or request exceptions to, State purchasing laws and regulations, the Georgia Procurement Manual, the State Purchasing Card Policy, and the internal purchasing card policy
- Develop and administer a training program for all cardholders and supervisors/approving officials
- Review and evaluate P-Card applications and requests
- Add and delete cardholders as requested/needed/specified
- Establish, maintain and adjust speed chart and account codes within WORKS
- Review and analyze cardholder activity in order to monitor for suspicious activity, fraudulent activity and to assure compliance with all policies, procedures and user guide governing the use of the P-Card
- Develop and maintain audit standards for individual cardholders and implement routine reviews of cardholder activity while also participating in review processes with other audit groups including the university's internal audit office, Board of Regents audit office, and state audits offices
- Audit submittal packages in accordance with university, Board of Regents and DOAS policies
- Ensure that each cardholder is audited at the mandated minimum of once annually
- Serve as the point of contact of the university with DOAS, SPD, Bank of America and other state agencies/universities
- Assist university management with program review and analysis; suggest changes and adjustments for improvements
- Assist departmental personnel in establishing internal approval procedures for P-Card processes

- Establish, maintain and adjust spending limits for cardholders
- Verify all submittal packages are received in a timely and efficient manner
- Notify cardholders of late submissions and follow-up until received
- Retain all original P-Card submittal packages
- Submit all special requests for exception to state policies and MCC requests to the State Cards Program Manager

**Cardholder** – After attending required training and accepting the P-Card, the cardholder is a defacto purchasing agent for the State of Georgia and has certain responsibilities. These include:

- Have a minimum understanding of the State purchasing laws and regulations.
- Maintain knowledge of State Purchasing Card Policy and internal policies and procedures on use of the P-Card.
- Provisions of O.C.G.A. §45-10-1 regarding State Employee Code of Ethics and Conflicts of Interest. Purchases from friends, relatives or from companies where the cardholder may have a financial interest are prohibited.
- Maintain security of the account number, expiration date and security code at all times. No one may use the card but the person whose name is shown on the card. If the card information is compromised or the card is lost/stolen, the cardholder must contact the P-Card Coordinator at Georgia Southern on the first available business day during normal business hours at 912-478-0045.
- Ensure all purchases are allowable purchases according to State and Institutional policies and procedures.
- Ensure all purchases comply with purchasing requirements of the Georgia Procurement Manual concerning Order of Precedence and Competitive bidding.
- Obtain “best value” for the State when making purchases with the P-card.
- Maintain all documentation required by State and Institution policies.
- Sign the transaction log and transmittal form.
- Notify the P-Card Coordinator and/or Internal Audit & Advisory Services if he/she is being directed by his/her supervisor to purchase prohibited or restricted items. All reports will be handled without retribution.
- Gratuities - The cardholder must not accept any gratuity or gift from any vendor when it is offered, or appears to be offered, to influence your decision-making regarding P-Card purchases.
- Monthly Reconciliation - The cardholder is responsible for completing the monthly billing cycle process and forward to the transmittal sheet approver as required within a timely manner to ensure all have ample time to approve/disapprove transactions.
  - Grant funded transactions – The Principal Investigator for the Grant must approve the transaction by initialing the Activity Log. The only exception is if the Principal Investigator is the cardholder. Once the transmittal sheet approver has signed, then the package will be forwarded to Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs (ORSSP) for approval. This process should be done at a minimum of 5 business days prior to the deadline to Procurement & Contract Services. Cardholder understands, in the event the transmittal sheet approver is not available to process package by the deadline, the package will be forwarded to the next available level supervisor of the manager/approver until package is reviewed and approved.
    - No P-Card purchases should be made with funding from a grant that expires within 45 days. Any transactions with the P-Card that are not processed by the grant end date will become the responsibility of the department that the grant is housed under.
  - Student Affairs/Fees funded transactions - Once the transmittal sheet approver has signed, then the package will be forwarded to Office of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management for approval. This process should be done at a minimum of 5 business days prior to the deadline to Procurement & Contract Services as described on page 10, Billing/Deadlines. Cardholder understands, in the event the transmittal sheet approver is not available to process package by the deadline, the package will be forwarded to the next available level supervisor of the manager/approver until package is reviewed and approved.
- Purchase Limitations - The cardholder accepts the responsibility to ensure that restricted items are not purchased and to adhere to the transaction limit to avoid splitting an order. The cardholder

understands the limitation for inventoried equipment threshold of \$3,000.00 and will refrain from purchasing these items with the P-Card.

**Manager/Approver (Transmittal Sheet Approver)** – This individual must be a Dean, Director, Department Head, or direct supervisor over the cardholder. The cardholder cannot be the Manager/Approver of his/her own card. Managers/Approvers must have a thorough knowledge of the job responsibilities of the cardholders under his/her supervision in order to determine if purchases are reasonable in terms of types of purchases made. Responsibilities include the following:

- Maintain knowledge of State Purchasing Card Policy and internal policies and procedures on use of the P-Card.
- Be a direct supervisor of the cardholder
- Not be the approver of their own card
- Review and sign cardholder requests made with the Purchasing Card Request form (used to request changes to the cardholder's credit limits, request team/group travel, food purchasing privileges and/or any other special request)
- Invoices/receipts and activity logs have the required information
- State Sales and Use Tax was not charged
- Transmittal forms & activity logs contain the cardholder's original signature. All signatures must be original signatures. Signatures made with rubber stamps are prohibited.
- Sign the monthly transmittal form and the cardholder activity logs signifying review and approval for payment. This responsibility cannot be delegated to another person
- Submit all original documentation according to internally established procedures
- Verify that all transactions are made in the best interest of the State Government and made in accordance with internal procedures and State requirements.
- Monitor transactions and card activity to ensure that all purchases are for legitimate State business use.
- Identify and discuss any minor violations with the cardholder to provide additional instruction. Discussions should be documented and attached to the reconciliation submittal package. If major violations are noted, the situation should be documented and attached to the reconciliation package and appropriate action taken.
- Ensure that all transactions by cardholders under their supervision are approved in Bank of America Works by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month.

#### **Other Individuals:**

##### **Proxy Reconcilers (*WORKS ONLY*)**

**Proxy Reconciler for Cardholder** - The appropriate reconciler (cardholder or proxy) is to review and sign off transactions after he/she has verified the following:

- Items/services purchased are acceptable, appropriate and for official business only
- Purchased items/services are billed correctly and items have been shipped/received
- Correct general ledger information is applied for each transaction
- Transactions are signed off in ample time so that the transaction may be reviewed by the approver prior to the Accounting sweep deadline of the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month

**Proxy Reconciler for Approver** – The appropriate approver for each cardholder is to review and approve transactions after he/she has verified the following:

- Correct general ledger information is applied for each transaction
- Items/services purchased are acceptable, appropriate and for official business only
- Comments for the purchase are acceptable and appropriate for the items/services purchased
- Sign offs by cardholder and approver are completed prior to the Accounting sweep deadline of the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month

**Grants Approver (Monthly Transmittal Sheet only)** – This individual has the responsibility of approving transactions that utilize grant funding and ensures the availability of funds when the purchases are approved.

#### **IV. UPDATES/CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM**

Procurement & Contract Services maintains an e-mail listing of all current cardholders, supervisors/approvers/managers, and proxy reconcilers. The listing, as well as the web page will be used to inform all cardholders, supervisors/approvers/managers, and proxy reconcilers of significant changes to the P-Card program.

All cardholders, supervisors/approvers/managers, and proxy reconcilers are responsible and held accountable for any and all communications disseminated through email and through the Procurement & Contract Services webpage.

Additionally, employees who wish to share suggestions for improvement of the program are encouraged to contact Procurement & Contract Services. Suggestions and recommendations may be forwarded to the State Procurement card administrator.

#### **V. CARD LIMITATIONS & PROHIBITED PURCHASES**

P-card purchases for technology (less computers and telecommunications equipment currently excluded by University policy) will only be supported/approved with prior documented (email) approval. Requests should be email to [ITPurchasing@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:ITPurchasing@georgiasouthern.edu).

The term "technology" follows the definition as described in O.C.G.A. § 50-25-1, and referenced in Board of Regents Policy Manual Chapter 11, which states that technology includes, but is not limited to:

*"hardware, software, and communications equipment, including, but not limited to, personal computers, mainframes, wide and local area networks, servers, mobile or portable computers, peripheral equipment, telephones, wireless communications, public safety radio services, facsimile machines, technology facilities including, but not limited to, data centers, dedicated training facilities, and switching facilities, and other relevant hardware and software items as well as personnel tasked with the planning, implementation, and support of technology."*

In accordance with State Purchasing, Board of Regents, and university purchasing policies, ***the P-Card CANNOT be used to purchase the following items and/or services (regardless of funding):***

- Alcohol products
- Animal Toxins
- Computers (of any cost)
- Contracts/purchases involving written agreements (*unless previously approved through Procurement & Contract Services*)
- Dues or Memberships
- Entertainment & entertainment items
- Employee Food (*meals, food supplies, beverages, and/or any other food item that may be consumed*)
- Employee or any other non-student travel expenses
- Employee or any other non-student lodging expenses (*hotels & motels*)
- Hazardous material (*including some chemical & biological agents*)
- Inventoried Equipment (Assets):
  - A single piece of equipment with a total value of \$3,000 (*this figure includes any shipping, insurance, or any other associated cost with the transaction*) or greater and a useful life of three (3) or more years
- Items of a personal nature (*purchases of goods or services intended for non-work related use or use other than official state business*), such as the following:
  - Stamps
  - Greeting cards
  - Holiday decorations
  - Radios or televisions, which may be used for recreational purposes
  - Coffee pots, microwaves, refrigerators, or any other appliance that may be used in a department break room
  - Flowers, gifts
  - Refreshments, coffee, candy, candy dishes, etc.
- Items or services funded by Foundation (*Georgia Southern University*) Funds
- Items or services funded by Agency Funds (*speed chart numbers that begin with 96xxx*)
- Items or services listed on a mandatory source contract (state or agency contract) from an unauthorized



- non-contract vendor/supplier/manufacturer
- Negotiable Instruments (*such as gift cards, prepaid cards, rebate cards or discount coupons*)
- Non-emergency auto parts or services (*exceptions may be granted by DOAS upon verification of procedures to enter costs into Vital, the State's fleet management system.*)
- Personal services
- Petroleum
- Professional Services (*means the profession of certified public accountancy, architecture, chiropractic, dentistry, professional engineering, land surveying, law, pharmacy, psychology, medicine and surgery, optometry, osteopathy, podiatry, veterinary medicine, registered professional nursing, or harbor piloting*)
- Purchases greater \$4,999.99 and/or single transactions greater than \$4,999.99
  - Purchases over the \$4,999.99 department delegated purchasing authority limit must be processed in accordance with other established [Purchasing Policies & Procedures](#).
- Purchases that are not suited for the business functions of the cardholder's department
- Purchases that are not within the mission of the university and/or cardholder's department
- Radioactive material
- Real estate rental (*including storage contract fees*)
- Sales tax
- Software
- Telecommunication equipment
- Temporary Personnel/staffing
- Weapons

**Furthermore, cardholders are strictly prohibited from the following:**

- Allowing others to use your P-Card
- Gaining cash advances with the P-Card
- Securing non-student hotel rooms
- Splitting purchases (to circumvent cycle limits, single-transaction limits, or state bid requirements of any orders over \$4,999.99)
- Using your P-Card to pay for purchases from Units within the University (ex. Bookstore, Eagle Print Shop)

## **VI. DEPOSITING CHECKS INTO DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS**

In the event a cardholder purchases a prohibited item(s), with the P-Card, he/she will be accountable for reimbursement of these expenses. The cardholder must complete the deposit transmittal form located on the Bursar's website. The deposit transmittal form aids in depositing money into the 55MC account (this is a miscellaneous clearing account). The speed chart and account number, where the money is transferred from, is required and entered manually on the form. Revenue Accounting will do a journal entry once a week to move the monies from the 55MC to the departmental account. All requests must include a copy of the check and other back-up to explain the deposit. The cardholder attaches the deposit receipt and memo to the front of the statement package. Questions concerning the procedures and/or form should be directed to the Bursar's office.

## **VII. P-CARD PURCHASING EXCEPTIONS**

Some of the previously mentioned items *may* be purchased with the P-Card after a formal request has been made with the "Purchasing Card Request Form" and approval has been granted by Procurement & Contract Services and/or the State Purchasing Department. The following items are allowable for purchase AFTER approval has been granted from Procurement & Contract Services and/or the State Purchasing Department:

- Entertainment items such as movies, games, and/or recreational items and supplies for student use and enjoyment are allowable after a special request has been approved.
- Food for laboratory/classroom use, food for resale, food for students and food provided for consumption at events or services provided to the general public, state benefit recipients and/or state program participants (*other than state employees*), or purchased for resale in gift shops, bookstores, etc., and other non-employee meal related use is allowable after a request to purchase food items for these types of use has been approved.
- Student travel and lodging expenses such as motor coaches, buses, vans, taxi services, hotels, motels and/or any other expense associated with the transportation or lodging of Georgia Southern University students are allowable after a special request has been approved. *Petroleum (automobile gasoline) and airline tickets are NOT allowed under this exception.*

- Rental cars for employee travel, for official Georgia Southern University business use ONLY, is an allowable purchase. A special request is NOT required for state-contract rental car purchases.
- Items/Services Listed as Exempt from State Purchasing
  - State Purchasing has designated some items and services as exempt from state purchasing requirements. The definition for an “exempt” purchase means the State Purchasing Administrative Rules do not apply as defined in the Georgia Procurement Manual (GPM), Chapter 2, Section 3. A list of exempt purchases for commodities and services by NIGP Code is provided at the following address:  
[http://www.doas.ga.gov/StateLocal/SPD/Docs\\_SPD\\_General/NIGPExemptList.pdf](http://www.doas.ga.gov/StateLocal/SPD/Docs_SPD_General/NIGPExemptList.pdf)
  - If any exempt items/services are purchased with the P-Card, it should be specified that the purchase(s) is exempt on the Activity Log. Cardholders may specify exempt purchases by writing/typing the word “Exempt” and the item/service’s 5-digit NIGP code on the activity log line with the purchase detail.

## **VIII. VENDOR/CONTRACT ORDER OF PRECEDENCE**

In accordance with the Georgia Procurement Manual, the purchase of goods and/or services must follow the order of precedence specified below:

1. **Statewide Contracts** (*listed on the Procurement website, examples include but are not limited to furniture and copiers*)
2. **Agency Contracts** (*listed on the Procurement website, examples include but are not limited to letterhead and uniform services*)
3. **Georgia Correctional Industries (GCI), Georgia Enterprises for Products & Services (GEPS) or other state agencies that may offer discounted pricing for products designated as mandatory** (*examples include filing cabinets from Georgia Correctional*)
4. **Convenience Contracts, Non-Mandatory Source Contracts and/or GEPS products designated as preferred**
5. **Open Market** (*any items or services not listed on a mandatory source contract or with a contract vendor may be purchased from a non-contract vendor, such as Wal-Mart or Lowes*)

**Items listed on mandatory source contracts (state or agency) must be purchased from the contract vendor/supplier/manufacturer. It is the responsibility of the cardholder to use the tools provided to determine if an item or service is listed on a mandatory source contract.**

## **IX. MAKING PURCHASES**

The P-Card may be used to make purchases from local merchants, out-of-town merchants, via telephone and/or on-line orders, or from any vendor that accepts the P-Card/Visa credit cards. Purchases may be restricted by vendor’s ability to accept Visa credit cards and also by the vendor’s individual Merchant Category Code (MCC). Some MCCs (such as liquor and package stores or gas stations) are restricted on the card. NOTE: Use of the card does not excuse departments from using statewide or University Mandatory sources of supply.

Authorized Vendors: Orders may be placed with any vendor who accepts the P-Card so long as a cardholder remains within the delegated authorized transaction limits and allowable goods/services.

Sales Tax: When making a purchase, cardholders are required to advise the vendor that Georgia Southern University is a tax-exempt agency of the State of Georgia. *Sales taxes are not to be paid to any vendor based in Georgia.* If the vendor fails to note the tax exemption status, the university will inadvertently pay sales tax that may be added to the purchase. Cardholders are to notify the vendor to issue a credit for the amount of sales tax charged. A tax exemption notification may be required by the vendor to prove the university’s tax status. The tax exemption notification is available upon request to the P-Card Coordinator.

If a vendor listed on a mandatory source contract (state or agency) charges sales taxes, please notify the P-Card Coordinator. If an open-market vendor *continually* charges sales taxes after they have been notified of Georgia Southern University’s tax exemption status, please notify the P-Card Coordinator and discontinue using the vendor’s services.

Documentation of attempts to obtain credit for state sales and use taxes charged in error must be maintained with documentation for the transaction where the tax was charged. Should the sale be made with an out-of-state vendor, cardholders are to ask the vendor to issue a credit. If the vendor is not willing to honor the university's tax exemption status, the cardholder should document the processes involved. Taxes, other than sales tax, may be payable. Cardholders should contact Procurement & Contract Services should there be any questions regarding sales taxes.

**Best Price:** Cardholders are expected to make every effort to utilize the lowest available prices based upon requirements, quality and availability in order to obtain the maximum value of each dollar expended.

**Conflict of Interest:** Cardholders must refrain from making purchases from vendors who are relatives or from vendors where the cardholder has a financial interest.

**Items that may be pilfered:** When purchasing non-inventoried assets (items valued at less than \$3,000.00), that may be at risk of theft, departments and cardholders may have the items tagged by Property Control with a "Property of Georgia Southern" decal. Contact Property Control at (912)478-5381 or (912)478-1560 to obtain the theft-deterrent decals. Common items that are labeled include, but are not limited to, the following:

- o DVD Players, Digital Cameras
- o Televisions and monitors
- o Any other electronic equipment requiring special inventory management

**Splitting Orders:** Use of the P-Card is restricted to a pre-set transaction limit (normally \$4,999.99). "Splitting orders," as well as purchasing the same items from two or more vendors simultaneously may be considered an attempt to evade the transaction limit and will be considered as a major violation (*see pages 13 & 14, Audits and Violations*).

**Monthly Cycle Limits:** Each P-Card has a monthly cycle limit (State Purchasing and Bank of America/WORKS use the terminology card profile and/or cycle limit) and a single-transaction limit (\$4,999.99). The cycle limit should not be exceeded for the given cycle. The single-transaction limit should not be exceeded for a single purchase. Cardholders may request an increase in his/her single transaction limit or cycle limit if additional funds are needed to cover purchasing expenses. Cardholders may request an increase in limit(s) via the "Purchasing Card Request Form." The form should be completed with all required information and signatures and then sent to Procurement and Contract Services for review. Cardholders will be notified via email of any changes that are needed to further process the request and the approval status of the request.

**Delivery:** Orders made with the P-Card should be addressed to the department for delivery. For UPS deliveries, the address should be provided in the following format:

FORMAT	EXAMPLE
Georgia Southern University Department Name Building Name <b>AND</b> Room Number* Street Number <b>AND</b> Street Name Statesboro, GA 30458	Georgia Southern University Procurement & Contract Services Rosenwald Building Room 1051 2142 Southern Drive Statesboro, GA 30458

\* *The room number should be the departmental office or other office where it is reasonably expected someone will available M-F from 8:00 to 5:00 to accept delivery.*

In the instances where the items must be delivered to Central Receiving, ensure the address given is as follows:

Georgia Southern University  
Central Receiving  
4280 Old Register Road  
Statesboro, GA 30458

**Cardholders and departments are responsible for notifying Central Receiving of any impending shipment.** Additionally, cardholders should request the vendor identify the department or person to whom the item is consigned. Failure to do so may cause unnecessary delays in delivery to the department or possible refusal of the shipment.

## **X. RETURNING GOODS**

If an item needs to be returned to the vendor due to defect, damage, or any other reason, notify the vendor

immediately, and request a ship to address and a return authorization form. Cardholders should then request a refund or credit from the vendor for the transaction. **Vendor or “store” credit, rebate cards, cash refund, and/or an impending negative balance held with the vendor is not a proper method for reimbursement.** Reimbursements for items are only to be attained in the form of a credit/refund/reimbursement to the P-Card of the purchasing employee. Cardholders should be sure to check WORKS and the upcoming monthly billing statements to make sure that the credit has posted to the cardholder’s account. If the credit/refund has not posted to the cardholder’s account, the cardholder should contact the vendor to resolve the issue. If a resolution has not been provided, the charge may be disputed through Bank of America.

## **XI. DISPUTES**

Some charges are found to be made accidentally by vendors and/or fraudulently by another party. Charges made by other parties that the cardholder is unaware of or did not make for Georgia Southern University shall be disputed. The transaction is to be reported to the P-Card coordinator immediately. Bank of America can only reimburse Georgia Southern University within 60 days of the original transaction date.

Disputes with the vendor over pricing, shortages, damaged merchandise, etc., are the responsibility of the cardholder. In the event that a solution is not achieved between the vendor and the cardholder, Procurement & Contract Services may be called upon for assistance.

Do not use vendors who do not resolve errors within 30-days of the cycle date following the error or dispute.

## **XII. BILLING & DEADLINES**

Billing verification and reconciliation must take place each month that the cardholder exhibits activity (purchase or credit) on his/her account. A billing statement with the cardholder’s activity is mailed from Bank of America to the cardholder’s individual Georgia Southern University post office box. Billing statements typically arrive around the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. If a cardholder does not exhibit any activity during the billing cycle, he/she will not receive a billing statement for that cycle.

If a cardholder fails to receive his/her statement via mail, the cardholder can access a billing statement through WORKS. The WORKS billing statement may be used in lieu of the Bank of America billing statement.

All required monthly paperwork (indicated below) must be submitted to Procurement & Contract Services **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON THE 4<sup>th</sup> WORKING DAY OF THE NEXT MONTH.**

Because the 4<sup>th</sup> working day of each month may fall on a different day and/or date, it may be in the best interest of the cardholder to set-up a reminder of the due date on his/her Groupwise (or other email/scheduling client of choice) calendar.

The **WORKS deadline** for cardholders and managers signing off transactions for a billing cycle is the **25<sup>th</sup> of each month**. On the next business day (26<sup>th</sup>), Accounting sweeps all transactions for the cycle and makes allocation changes impossible. Cardholders who do not sign off transactions will experience a system-generated reduction in their cycle purchasing limit.

## **XIII. SUBMITTAL PACKAGES**

The submittal package is the package of required documentation for purchases and credits. **The submittal package must be completed and submitted to Procurement & Contract Services by close of business on the 4<sup>th</sup> working day of the new month (following the cycle end date).** The order for submittal package documentation is as follows (*in order as they are listed*):

1. [Monthly Transmittal Form](#)
2. Bank of America or WORKS statement
3. Activity Log
4. Any applicable [missing receipt forms](#)
5. All **ORIGINAL** receipts, packing slips and/or email confirmations

Cardholders will be notified if there is a problem with their package.

All Transmittal forms and activity logs must be signed by the Department Head/transmittal sheet approver/supervisor and the cardholder. If cardholder and department head are the same, the department head may not sign the transmittal as his/her own approver. It must be signed by next level supervisor. All signatures must be original; no rubber stamps or any other unoriginal signature is accepted.

All purchases must be accompanied by an itemized receipt or other itemized form proof of purchase. Packing slips, confirmation emails or any other itemized form proof of purchase can serve as the vendor sales slip/receipt. Auditors prefer original invoices versus packing slips or email confirmations.

If you are responsible for submitting the paperwork for various cardholders within your department, always submit separate paperwork for each P-Card statement.

If missing a receipt, use the missing receipt form located on our website. **NOTE: Use of the form by any cardholder more than three times in one fiscal year will result in suspension of card privileges until the following fiscal year.**

#### **XIV. FILE RETENTION**

Each cardholder must retain a copy of all P-Card submittal packages for a minimum of the previous 12 calendar months. Should a cardholder terminate employment, the cardholder's supervisor shall be responsible for maintaining these files.

#### **XV. AUDITS AND VIOLATIONS**

It is imperative that cardholders follow proper procedures with regards to timely submittal of monthly statements and proper use of the card. Procurement & Contract Services is responsible for documenting receipt of monthly statements. ALL Transactions and P-Card submittal packages are subject to audit, at anytime.

Transactions and submittal packages may be audited by Procurement & Contract Services, internal auditors, Board of Regents auditors and/or DOAS auditors.

State policy states that "cardholders or supervisors/approving officials who knowingly, or through willful neglect, fail to comply with the following may be subject to suspension or termination of card privileges or other disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and criminal prosecution to the fullest extent of the law:

- Official Code of Georgia sections related to governmental purchasing
- Applicable requirements of the Georgia Procurement Manual
- State Purchasing Card Policy
- Internal policies and procedures governing procurement and the Purchasing card program

**Violation timeframe** begins once the first violation occurs. The cycle that the violation is issued is the first cycle. Violations will escalate within the subsequent 12 cycles. Once that 12 cycle timeframe has passed the cardholder will start over with a clean record.

#### **Manager Violations**

- 1<sup>st</sup> time – Manager/Approver is sent a memorandum stating that they have not approved transactions in Works for the Cardholders they supervise before the sign off date of the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. This notification will also go to the Approver's Supervisor
- 2<sup>nd</sup> time – Manager/Approver is sent a memorandum stating they have not approved the transactions in Works by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month and must attend a mandatory retraining for Managers before the end of the next cycle and the Supervisor will be notified of the violation.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> time – Manager/Approver will no longer be allowed to approve transactions in Works. The Manager's Supervisor will be the new approver for those Cardholders. The supervisor must attend training if they are not an approver already before the next cycle approval.

#### **Cardholder Violations**

**Minor violations** are instances that may appear to be "accidental" and/or without willful intent. Examples of minor violations: using the wrong card when doing personal shopping and usually includes immediate discovery and notification to the P-Card Coordinator, purchases with the card that should be made through the requisition system or some other means or failure to reconcile and submit statement (manually or electronically) by the specified deadlines.

Minor Violations will be treated as follows:

- o 1<sup>st</sup> time – Cardholder is sent a memorandum specifying the violation and refers the cardholder to the training and procedures for clarification. This memo will require an explanation via mail, fax or email by a given date. If a response to the violation letter is not received by the date specified in

the memo, the cardholder's account will be suspended and will not be reactivated until a response is received, reviewed and accepted.

- o 2<sup>nd</sup> time – A second occurrence memorandum is sent to the cardholder with a copy to his/her supervisor and refers both to the training, procedures and the first memorandum. This memo will require an explanation via mail, fax or email by a given date. If a response to the violation letter is not received by the date specified in the memo, the cardholder's account will be suspended and will not be reactivated until a response is received, reviewed and accepted. The cardholder will be cautioned that another violation will cause the card to be suspended and may only be reactivated upon request by the cardholder's department head assuring that proper procedures will be followed.
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> time – Treated as 1<sup>st</sup> occurrence/major violation. *All minor violations occurring after the 2<sup>nd</sup> minor violation are no longer treated as minor; all subsequent minor violations are treated as major violations.*

**Major violations** are instances that show "willful intent" to disregard established policy and procedures, splitting orders and/or allowing others to use the card. Examples of major violations: purchasing unauthorized or restricted items, splitting orders to avoid the single transaction limit, allowing others to use the card, or knowingly making personal purchases. Any major violation will result in immediate temporary suspension of the cardholder's privileges and notification to the department head. If deemed appropriate, Bank of America, Georgia Southern Public Safety, Georgia Southern Office of Internal Audit will also be notified.

- o 1<sup>st</sup> time – Immediate suspension thru the end of next full P-card cycle, memorandum is sent to cardholder with a copy to the department head. Required follow on action and /or dates will also be indicated. If a response to the occurrence memorandum is not received by the date indicated, the cardholders account will not be reactivated until a response is received, reviewed and accepted.
- o 2<sup>nd</sup> time – Immediate suspension thru the end of next two full P-card cycles, memorandum is sent to cardholder with a copy to the department head. Required follow on action and /or dates will also be indicated. If a response to the occurrence memorandum is not received by the date indicated, the cardholders account will not be reactivated until a response is received, reviewed and accepted.
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> time – Immediate suspension thru the end of next three full P-card cycles, memorandum is sent to cardholder with a copy to the department head and Dean/Director and Vice President. Required follow on action and /or dates will also be indicated. If a response to the occurrence memorandum is not received by the date indicated, the cardholders account will not be reactivated until a response is received, reviewed and accepted.
- o 4<sup>th</sup> time – Loss of card, memorandum is sent to cardholder, department head and Dean/Director and Vice President.

## **XVI. LOST OR STOLEN CARDS**

If a card is lost or stolen, the cardholder has the responsibility to notify the P-Card Coordinator at Georgia Southern on the first available business day during normal business hours.

Procurement & Contract Services will notify Bank of America for follow-up action. The cardholder will be notified by the P-Card Coordinator when the new card arrives. Replacement P-Cards may be picked-up in the Procurement & Contract Services office.

## **XVII. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

Should a cardholder terminate employment with Georgia Southern University, the cardholder must surrender the card into the Controller's Office as part of the termination/checkout procedures. The cardholder's department is obligated to notify the P-Card Coordinator of a cardholder's termination in order to cancel the card as soon as possible.

## **XVIII. TRANSFER TO ANOTHER DEPARTMENT**

Any cardholder who transfers to a new department is to notify the P-Card Coordinator. Upon approval by the cardholder's new supervisor, the cardholder may retain his/her card. The cardholder must complete a new

Purchasing Card Request Form, have his/her new supervisor approve it and forward to Procurement & Contract Services.

The Purchasing Card Coordinator will notify both department heads when card has been transferred.

## **XIX. LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

If a cardholder is away for an extended period of time (30 days or greater) and will not be using his/her P-Card, the cardholder can notify the P-Card Coordinator in order to place the card in a suspended or inactive status. This will help to protect against potential losses and fraudulent charges. The suspension time will not have a negative effect on the regularly monitored 6 months of inactivity. Upon return, the cardholder should contact the P-Card Coordinator for reactivation.

## **XX. FRAUDULENT CHARGES**

Depending upon the severity or circumstances of a major violation involving personal purchases, the charges may be determined to be fraudulent charges. This may result in immediate cancellation of card privileges, notification to Department Head, Dean, Director and Vice President and Public Safety. Appropriate action could involve more formal charges and possible termination of employment.

If purchasing card misuse (intentional fraud by the cardholder) is discovered, the following steps will be completed by the P-Card Coordinator:

1. Cancel the P-card immediately
2. Notify State Purchasing Card Program Manager
3. Notify appropriate personnel at the university (Public Safety officials, Internal Audit officials, Human Resources and supervising officials)

Cardholders who violate the State Purchasing Card Program by committing fraudulent activity against the State will be immediately terminated. This process is to be coordinated through appropriate levels with the minimum of director level involvement.

Bank of America will coordinate the filing of appropriate liability waiver documents (insurance claim to recover losses).

Please be aware that Bank of America will provide corporate liability protection under Visa®'s Liability Protection Coverage; however, certain conditions apply. The principal condition is that the employee has been terminated and Bank of America is notified of the termination within TWO DAYS of its occurrence. Bank of America will rely on and shall be protected in acting on issuance requests or other requests or instructions which the bank believes to be genuine and to have been signed by a State of Georgia Purchasing Card Administrator.

## **XXI. P-CARD COORDINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION**

**CURRENT P-CARD COORDINATOR:** Todd Aldrich

**PHONE NUMBER:** (912) 478-0045

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** [taldrich@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:taldrich@georgiasouthern.edu)

**PO BOX:** PO Box 8123

**BUILDING:** Rosenwald

## GLOSSARY & REFERENCE

**Billing Cycle** – A predetermined timeframe that all P-Card transactions occur in. The billing cycle spans from the 16<sup>th</sup> of the current month through the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month. Georgia Southern's billing cycle is **always** from the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month.

Example: January 16<sup>th</sup> – February 15<sup>th</sup> is 1 full billing cycle.

### **Supervisors/Managers/Approvers** –

**Electronic/WORKS Only** – An individual who has attended both P-Card and WORKS training and approves cardholder transactions. This individual should review the transactions for validity and appropriate general ledger (speed chart and account code) information. This authority may be delegated to a proxy reconciler. **The cardholder and approver cannot be the same person.**

**Manual/Paper** - The immediate supervisor or higher authority who has received P-Card training and is in a supervisory role over the cardholder. The most important internal control is the monthly review of the cardholder's submittal package by the approving official. *See page 7 for the responsibilities of this individual.* **The cardholder and approver must never be the same person.**

**Cardholder** – A full-time, benefitted employee of the university whose name appears on the P-Card. A cardholder is a defacto state purchasing agent who has attended both P-Card and WORKS training. **THE CARDHOLDER IS THE ONLY AUTHORIZED USER OF THE ASSIGNED P-CARD.** Employment status of temporary full-time, part-time, casual and/or student employees are not normally issued a P-Card.

**Card profile limits** – (otherwise known as cycle and single transaction limits)

**Single transaction limit** - \$4,999.99 for each transaction, no single purchase/transaction may surpass this limit

**Cycle limit** – one of the following amounts that a cardholder is able to spend during a given cycle: \$5K, \$10K, \$15K, \$20K, or \$25K. Anything over \$25K must be approved by DOAS.

**Purchasing Card Request Form** – A P-Card administrative form to be used by a cardholder to request the following:

- a P-Card
- transfer of P-card privileges from one department to another.
- increase or decrease of delegated purchasing authority (single-transaction limit) greater than \$4,999.99
- increase or decrease of delegated purchasing authority (cycle limit) greater than the present amount
- any other exception to state purchasing card policy (examples include, but are not limited to: team/group travel, food purchases, entertainment purchases, auto supplies)

**Reconcile** – A WORKS process. The process of reviewing transactions to check for accuracy and validity, reviewing general ledger allocation(s) to ensure funding for the transaction is correct, adding comments to explain what items/services were purchased and how they are to be used, and signing off.

**Reconciler** – The cardholder or proxy reconciler who has been granted proxy rights for the cardholder, approver or department/group.

**Proxy Reconciler (WORKS only)** – An individual who has been granted authority by the department head to complete WORKS duties for individuals within the department/group. Proxy reconcilers may complete WORKS (only) duties for individual cardholders or approvers or for entire departments/groups. A completed and signed Proxy User Request form must be submitted to the P-Card Coordinator before changes can be made. ALL proxy reconcilers must complete P-Card & WORKS training before he/she is granted access to WORKS. **The proxy reconciler cannot serve as proxy reconciler and proxy approver of a single card. The reconciler and approver must be 2 separate individuals.**

**Sign off** – The last action step to be completed when reconciling WORKS transactions. The cardholder (or proxy) must sign off after the transaction has been reconciled. Sign offs must be completed prior to the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month to ensure proper reconciliation and payment. The approver/manager or proxy approver/manager signs off as the next tier approver after the transaction is signed off by the cardholder/proxy reconciler.



GEORGIA PROCUREMENT MANUAL:

[http://pur.doas.ga.gov/gpm/MyWebHelp/GPM\\_Main\\_File.htm](http://pur.doas.ga.gov/gpm/MyWebHelp/GPM_Main_File.htm)

PROCUREMENT & CONTRACT SERVICES WEBSITE:

<http://services.georgiasouthern.edu/procurement/>

PURCHASING POLICIES:

<http://services.georgiasouthern.edu/procurement/webpg3.htm>

STATEWIDE P-CARD POLICY:

[http://www.doas.ga.gov/StateLocal/SPD/Docs\\_SPD\\_Cards/PCard\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.doas.ga.gov/StateLocal/SPD/Docs_SPD_Cards/PCard_Policy.pdf)

STATE CONTRACTS:

[https://ssl.doas.state.ga.us/PRSapp/PR\\_StateWide\\_contract\\_list\\_alpha.jsp](https://ssl.doas.state.ga.us/PRSapp/PR_StateWide_contract_list_alpha.jsp)

GSU AGENCY CONTRACTS:

[http://ssl.doas.state.ga.us/PRSapp/PR\\_AGENCY\\_contract\\_agency\\_01.jsp?agencyCode=53900](http://ssl.doas.state.ga.us/PRSapp/PR_AGENCY_contract_agency_01.jsp?agencyCode=53900)

SRS (FORMERLY MSD):

<https://www.srs.usg.edu/>