



Policy Name:	Procurement Card Policy
Originating/Responsible Department:	Procurement Services
Approval Authority:	Senior Management Committee
Date of Original Policy:	September 2002
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Mandatory Revision Date:	January 2026
Contact:	Director, Strategic Procurement

POLICY:

The procurement card is made available to department or research Funding Source Owners (or their delegates, according to the University [Approval and Delegation of Authority policy](#)) in order to make departmental and research purchasing and payment of goods and services (within the levels of procurement authority delegated) where it is efficient, economical and operationally feasible to do so. Wherever possible, eShop is the preferred method of procurement.

PURPOSE:

The primary purpose of the Procurement Card Policy is to set out the terms and conditions under which the Procurement Card (Pcard) may be used by faculty and staff. The procurement card:

- provides faculty and staff with convenient, efficient and cost-effective means to acquire low value goods and services.
- reduces the costs and amount of paperwork required to purchase low value goods and services;
- improves the timeliness of purchases and control of Merchant payments, which includes the centralized use of Visa Payables Automation; and
- improves reporting and control on procurement activities that are not feasible using other means.

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Pcard terms and conditions outline the eligibility and liability of each cardholder and associated approving and administrative bodies, as well as parameters pertaining to the use of the card.

Cardholder Eligibility

To be eligible for a Pcard the applicant must be a University faculty, staff member, or an individual who is authorized to purchase for a Funding Source Owner on their behalf. An applicant must submit a written application to Procurement Services which must be supported and approved by his/her Funding Source Owner of the default FOAPAL or Department Head. The applicant must sign the Cardholder Agreement in advance of receiving their Card.

Cardholder Liability

Pcards are assigned to a specific named individual (the “Cardholder”), and may not be assigned to any other user. It is the Cardholder’s responsibility to ensure that the card is used only within the stated

guidelines of the University Pcard Policy and associated procedures, and to maintain control and security for the Pcard. The Cardholder is the only person authorized to use the assigned card, is responsible for all transactions, and must take all precautions to maintain confidentiality of all information relating to the Pcard. Pcards may not be used by anyone other than the Cardholder at any time.

Departmental Liability

The department is liable for any fraudulent transactions which occur in the course of authorized business purchases and that are unrecoverable by the Card Issuer. The department may be charged for any unrecovered costs associated with fraudulent transactions at the time they are reported to the University by the Card Issuer.

Procurement Card Limits

Carleton University Pcard limits are set as per the following parameters:

- Transaction Limit: a single transaction cannot exceed \$10,000 (including shipping charges, currency exchange and taxes) for operating and research funds/accounts.
- Monthly Limit: \$40,000 in total purchases for the month for operating funds and \$10,000 in total purchases for research funds.

Purchases must not be split to circumvent Pcard limits. If the dollar amount of the item exceeds the established Card limits, a request for a one-time limit increase may be sent to the Card Administrator by email, cc'ing the Cardholder's supervisor confirming they have their approval for the request. These requests will be considered; otherwise, a requisition for purchase order through eShop will be issued.

Any adjustments to the above parameters are subject to the written approval of Procurement Services.

Personal use prohibited

Pcards must not be used for personal purchases. The University will hold the Cardholder fully responsible for all unauthorized purchases (i.e., those that are not business related) and any fees associated with those purchases. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures can result in revocation of the card.

Prohibited Card Transactions

Each card has imbedded transaction restrictions as outlined in this policy (e.g., transaction limits) as well as general restrictions on certain Merchant Category Codes (MCC) that typically fall outside the scope of business requirements or may violate other university policies (e.g., travel merchants, specialty retail stores). In addition, the following goods and services may not be purchased with the card:

- Regulated alcohol;
- Laboratory and research animals;
- Printing and copying services that could otherwise be done through The Print Shop;
- Salary and salary related charges including temporary help and consulting fees;
- Travel and Entertainment related expenses (*These require the use of the Corporate Travel card and reimbursement through the appropriate processes);
- Transactions over \$10,000 including shipping charges, currency exchange and taxes;
- Cash advances; and
- Any purchases where the cardholder has decision-making authority within the vendor organization.

Required Documentation and Record Retention

Pcard transaction documents must be retained for a period of seven (7) years to support potential audit of transactions by funding agencies or sources. The Cardholder is responsible for obtaining the appropriate documentation for each transaction and to forward these to Accounts Payable on a monthly basis with their approved statements. For Carleton University Pcard transactions, key documents supporting transactions will include invoices or packing slips with prices. A certificate of lost documentation is required in the absence of supporting documentation.

Reconciliation of Procurement Cards Charges

Pcard related purchasing transactions are provided daily and can be reconciled online at www.carleton.ca/fast. It is the Cardholder's responsibility to reconcile Pcard charges to the appropriate FOAPAL. It is the responsibility of the Funding Source Owner to ensure that charges to a fund are appropriate and acceptable.

Audit

Pcard transaction records may be requested at any time for examination by Accounts Payable, the Card Administrator, supervisor, and internal or external auditors.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The administration of the procurement card program includes the delegation of responsibilities, segregation of duties, and establishment of authority to ensure the appropriate level of control and probity in the acquisition of goods and services for, and on behalf of, the University.

Procurement Services

Procurement Services is responsible for administering all commercial card programs and the Agreement with the Card Issuer, which includes planning, developing and evaluating all aspects of the Pcard program and related Policies and Procedures. The department reviews all expenditures to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and identify any high-volume items that could be competitively quoted or bid and registers eligible vendors to be set up as merchants with Visa Payable Automation. Members of the Procurement Services team act as liaisons between the Card Issuer and the Cardholder community with respect to promotion of the Pcard program and any issue related to MCC codes, including the approval of any request for changes to the default limits.

More specifically, the Procurement Card Administrator(s) is responsible for addressing any security issues raised by the Card Issuer, maintaining Cardholder agreements and other relevant documentation and processing Card applications and approvals. This includes obtaining approval of default FOAPAL's by the appropriate Funding Source Owner, maintaining the database of cardholders, adjusting cycle and monthly limits on Pcards (subject to Procurement Services' approval), and issuing or replacing Pcards. The administrator facilitates all training related to the Pcard program and works with Cardholders to resolve billing disputes once all attempts with the Vendor have been exhausted. The administrator is responsible for actively monitoring for and resolving potential program abuses, monitoring all transactions in FAST PCard, and managing the system configuration for each billing cycle.

Accounts Payable

To ensure cards are used appropriately and all expenses are compliance and supported, Accounts Payable monitors the receipt of the monthly statements and supporting documentation and performs policy compliance checks on the transactions. They may request that Procurement Services suspend the use of the Card for failure to comply with policy. Transactions made against research funds are triaged to Research Financial Services for review. Accounts Payable is responsible for processing payments to the Card Issuer, as required under the Agreement.

Cardholders

Each cardholder is responsible for using the Card appropriately for university business purposes in accordance with Procurement Card Policies and Procedures, as well as the Procurement Policy. The security of the Card is of the utmost priority, and the Cardholder must notify the Card Issuer and Pcard Administrator of a lost or stolen card, or any suspected fraudulent use. The Cardholder is required to reconcile each transaction in the FAST PCard system, and ensure that all supporting documentation is received from the vendor and forward to Accounts Payable on a monthly basis along with the approved statement. The Cardholder shall resolve all questions or disputes directly with the vendor, or contact the Card Administrator if assistance is required.

Funding Source Owner

Approval from the funding source owner is required for any Card being defaulted to that funding source. In so doing, the funding source owner must give the proposed Cardholder posting rights to the fund so that they are able to reconcile transactions in FAST Pcard. If the individual is either a student or an affiliate of the university (i.e., not a staff or faculty member), the funding source owner is acting as a sponsor for the Card. The funding source owner is responsible for reviewing all Pcard transactions on their financial statements to ensure that the charges are appropriate.

Supervisor

The Cardholder's supervisor shall notify the Card Administrator of any changes in the Cardholder's status (i.e. employment termination, sabbatical, maternity leave, sick leave) and reviewing and approving the cardholder's monthly Pcard statement, in accordance with university policies.

PROCUREMENT CARD PROCEDURES

All procedures related to the Pcard can be found on the Procurement Services website, including, but not limited to, how to obtain a card, how to report a lost or stolen card, how to reconcile transactions and how to safeguard the Card. All individuals involved in PCard administration, including individual cardholders, supervisors and funding source owners, shall be familiar with these procedures.

Contacts: Director, Strategic Procurement; Manager, Procurement Services: Administrative Officer, Procurement Services

Links to related Policies:

[Purchasing Policy](#)

[Approval and Delegation of Authority Policy](#)