

**WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
PURCHASING CARD POLICY MANUAL**

Rev. 5/2020

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PURCHASING CARD INFORMATION & HOW IT WORKS

Introduction

The Purchasing Card is designed to be used for University business related purchases only and is intended to simplify the procurement and disbursement process by facilitating point-of-demand procurement. As the purchasing card authority is delegated to ordering departments, Cardholders are authorized to place an order directly with vendors. Use of the card for personal purchases is strictly prohibited. Authorized use of the Purchasing Card shall be limited to the person whose name appears on the face of the card. The Purchasing Card cannot be loaned to other individuals. The Purchasing and Accounts Payable departments are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the Purchasing Card Program and user compliance with the procedures outlined in this manual.

Questions regarding the Purchasing Card program can be directed to:

Mark Case, casem@wcsu.edu, Director for Administrative Services at 837-8657.

Karen Muffatti, muffattik@wcsu.edu, Purchasing Assistant at 837-8660.

The University's Purchasing Department is located in the lower level of University Hall, Midtown Campus, Room 008.

The Purchasing Card simplifies the procurement and disbursement process by facilitating point-of-demand procurement. Purchasing authority is delegated to the ordering departments enabling the authorized cardholders to place an order directly with the suppliers. Use of the Purchasing Card will in no way affect or change your personal credit history.

Benefits to the Cardholder/Department:

- Obtain goods and services more quickly and in a streamlined process.
- Significantly reduces the workload related to the purchase and payment of goods and services.
- No purchase order is required; therefore, no typing and tracking of individual purchase requisitions and receiving reports are required.
- Receive orders within days instead of weeks.
- Significantly reduces the clerical and approval processing time.
- Provides end users with greater autonomy.

When a purchase is requested by the vendor at the point-of-sale, the MasterCard system validates the transaction against pre-set limits established by the University. All transactions are approved or declined [instantaneously] based on the following Purchasing Card authorization criteria:

- Number of transactions allowed per day – twenty (20)
- Number of transactions allowed per billing cycle – One Hundred (100)
- Single item maximum purchase limit not to exceed Four Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety-Nine Dollars and Ninety-Nine Cents (\$4,999.99) for general purchases. Individual card per purchase limits shall be established to this maximum level at the discretion of the Purchasing Department.
- Spending limit per billing cycle not to exceed Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00)

Splitting a single item purchase to circumvent the purchasing card threshold of \$4,999.99 is not allowed.

****Exemptions to the above limitations may be granted on a case-by-case basis upon the approval of the Purchasing Department. Requests for exemptions shall be made in writing with a detailed explanation documenting the reason for the exemption.***

PURCHASING CARD ADMINISTRATION

The Purchasing Card represents the University's trust in you and your empowerment as a responsible employee of the University to safeguard and protect our assets. As a cardholder, you assume the responsibility for the protection and proper use of the Purchasing Card.

Activating a Purchasing Card:

To activate a Purchasing Card, call the number printed on the sticker at the top of the card. The card will be available for use within twenty-four (24) hours from the time that it was activated.

Canceling a Purchasing Card:

If the cardholder determines that the card is no longer needed, the cardholder must notify the Purchasing Department. The Purchasing Card will be cancelled and a final review of the cardholder's records will be conducted as part of the closure process. The cancelled purchasing card can be shredded or returned to the Purchasing Department.

Renewal of Existing Purchasing Cards:

Within thirty (30) days from the expiration date of the card, the Purchasing Department will notify the cardholders of the renewal and distribute the reissued cards.

JPMorgan Chase Customer Service Number:

Contact JPMorgan Chase's Customer Service representative at 1-800-316-6056 to report a lost or stolen card or to inquire why a card was declined at the time of purchase.

Lost or Stolen Purchasing Cards and Fraudulent Charges:

Report lost or stolen cards immediately to the Purchasing Department and contact JP Morgan Chase Customer Service when the Purchasing Department cannot be reached. If a fraudulent charge is determined to have been made, contact the Purchasing Department or JP Morgan Chase to report the fraudulent activity and close out the card. A replacement card can be obtained in the event of a lost and stolen card or fraudulent activity.

Disputing a Transaction:

A cardholder may dispute a charge that appears on the monthly statement. Disputed charges can result from failure to receive goods, fraud or misuse, altered charges,

defective merchandise, incorrect amounts, duplicate charges, credits not processed, and other related occurrences.

If the cardholder is unable to reach agreement with the vendor, the next step is to contact JPMorgan Chase's Customer Dispute number 1-888-297-0768. The Purchasing Department can intervene on your behalf once a written history is provided.

When JPMorgan Chase has completed its investigation, the cardholder will be informed of the resolution and any adjustments that were made.

Please note that, by law, vendors are not permitted to bill your charge card for purchases until the items have been shipped.

JPMorgan Chase Smart Data Online (SDOL):

We encourage all of our cardholders to visit and utilize the JPMorgan Chase Smart Data Online site at: <https://smartdata.jpmorgan.com/static/public-portal-ui/login-signin-component?cobrandHost=chase>.

Smart Data Online is JPMorgan Chase's web-based support system for users to view and monitor purchasing card activity, generate a copy of a monthly statement, or generate reports which may assist in budget and purchasing card management. If you would like to visit and utilize this site, contact the Purchasing Department to establish access and obtain training.

Tax Exemption Number:

Western Connecticut State University is a tax-exempt organization. The University's tax exemption number is 06-730435K. The tax-exempt number appears on the face of each Purchasing Card, directly below the cardholder's name.

This number should be provided to all vendors by the cardholder at the time of the transaction to exempt payment of state sales tax. Please remember that the University is a tax-exempt institution and purchases should not include any state sales tax.

When making purchases, every effort should be made by the cardholder to ensure that Connecticut sales tax is not charged. If sales tax is billed incorrectly to the cardholder's account, it is the responsibility of the cardholder to dispute the charge and make a diligent effort to have a credit issued (applies only to State of Connecticut vendors) in a timely manner. Out-of-state vendors do not have to honor our tax-exempt status.

If repeated failures to rectify sales tax issues are evident, the cardholder may lose purchasing card privileges for a specific time depending on the severity of the infraction.

Sales Tax Tips to Remember:

- If purchasing from a store merchant, approach the “Courtesy Desk” and advise them that you are from WCSU and will be making a tax-exempt purchase. This will allow the merchant to verify that WCSU is on record as a tax-exempt agency and alert the staff at the register that a tax-exempt purchase will be forthcoming.
- If WCSU is not in the merchant’s system, report this to the University’s Purchasing Department. The Purchasing Department will contact the merchant to establish what documentation must be completed so that future merchant transactions will be seamless.
- Cardholders should notify the Purchasing Department when they are experiencing difficulties with a merchant.
- Double-check the receipt before you leave the store to ensure accuracy of the purchase.
- **If sales tax is billed incorrectly to the cardholder’s account, it is the responsibility of the cardholder to dispute the charge and make a diligent effort to have a credit issued (applies only to State of Connecticut vendors) in a timely manner. Out-of-state vendors are not required to honor WCSU’s tax-exempt status.**

Agency Number:

The University’s State of Connecticut agency number is 7803 and may be given upon request to vendors.

Vendor Assigned Tax Exempt Numbers:

In addition to WCSU's tax-exempt number, some vendors require that its assigned tax exempt number be used, including but not limited to Home Depot, Staples (store), Walmart, and Best Buy. Please contact the Purchasing Department to obtain a vendor assigned tax exempt number. Ensure that you have an itemized list available when making a purchase from any of these vendors so that the University is not charged sales tax.

Purchasing Card Review:

To ensure the continued success of the Purchasing Card Program and to meet the fiscal requirements of the University, various government agencies, and the requirements of this program, reviews will be made of cardholder's accounts to ensure that items purchased have been received and that policies and procedures are being followed.

The Purchasing Department will monitor conformance to these policies and procedures. Reviews will be performed on a monthly basis by the Purchasing Department upon receipt of monthly statements and receipts from the cardholder. The Purchasing Department will be available to provide training and technical support to cardholders, as needed.

Misuse of the Purchasing Card:

The following is a list of sanctions that will be imposed (based on the seriousness of the infraction) on the user if the Purchasing Card is misused or there are recurring deficiencies in documentation of purchases:

- Formal written warning to cardholder and their Dean or Vice President for misuse of card.
- Temporary suspension of cardholder privileges for:
 - 30 days
 - 6 months
 - Indefinite

Post Review Action:

- In the event that follow-up is needed with the cardholder to secure appropriate signatures, receipts, or documentation, the Purchasing Department will correspond with the cardholder to obtain this information.
- In the event the follow-up correspondence does not yield the information needed to satisfy the review, further sanctions may be imposed up to and including suspension of cardholder privileges including mandatory retraining. If necessary, the cardholder's Dean or Vice President may be notified of the results depending on the severity of the infraction(s).
- The Director of Administrative Services will be copied on the notification based upon the severity of the infraction. The notification will include a warning for purchasing card revocation pending further investigation and/or misuse.

Moving the Charges to the Appropriate Accounts:

Purchasing Card charges are accumulated during the billing cycle. Charges are expensed against the cardholder's Banner Index in a timely manner following the billing cycle. Cardholders are encouraged to view their Banner Index to ensure that the correct amount was charged against their budget.

Reallocating Expenses:

Purchasing Card charges are applied to the Banner Index that the department chose. Occasionally, following the application of the Banner Index, a department may wish to have a charge applied to another Banner Index. The request must be received no later than five (5) working days from the close of the billing cycle (15th of each month).

CONTRACT COMPLIANCE

Introduction

While the Purchasing Card is a procurement tool, it does not signal a change in policy regarding compliance with University procurement policies.

Purchasing Cards may **only** be used for official, state-related business. Purchases must follow appropriate State and University policies and guidelines and must be made with reasonable judgment. If there is a question about the official purpose of a purchase or if the use of the Purchasing Card to make a purchase is questionable, contact the Purchasing Department for clarification prior to making the purchase.

Approved Purchases

The following are examples of the types of items that may be purchased with the card as long as the item purchased is \$4,999.99 or less:

- Advertisements
- Books and periodicals
- Conference registration fees (after approval of the travel authorization)
- Airfare reservations (after approval of the travel authorization)
- Dues and professional membership(s) – (business, technical, professional and institutional memberships only)
- Cellular Phones with contract vendor only (approval must be obtained from IT&I prior to making your purchase).
- Purchases for Classroom instruction/experiments only:
 - Animal feed and bedding
 - Live animals
 - Food
- Maintenance supplies
- Office, laboratory and educational supplies
- Printing services (after approval by University Publications)
- Repair parts and materials
- Subscriptions

Facilities Purchases: Cardholders are to contact Facilities Management prior to purchasing any item that may require electrical, plumbing, carpentry, painting or structural work. Facilities Management will ensure that the item being ordered is appropriate and will advise if additional work will be required.

IT&I Purchases: Cardholders are to contact Information Technology & Innovation (IT&I) Services and obtain approval prior to purchasing any software or hardware to ensure compatibility with the WCSU system and CSUS policies. The only exception to this approval is the purchase of miscellaneous IT accessories such as keyboards, mice, cases, cables, and related items which are peripheral to approved devices.

Information Technology & Innovation Services reserves the right to not support any hardware or connect it to the campus network if purchases are made without prior approval.

Restricted Purchases

The following are examples of the types of items that may not be purchased with the P- Card:

- Air Conditioners/Space Heaters (except by Facilities Operations)
- Any item exceeding \$4,999.99 unless an exception is granted by the Purchasing Office
- Alcoholic beverages
- Artwork (including pictures, posters, statues, etc.)
- Audio Visual or Photographic Equipment (except for Media Services, Publications or Student Education related activities)
- Birthday Cakes or items related to office celebrations/parties
- Candy/snacks (except for authorized university concessions, student activity funded programming, and student programming)
- Capital equipment or items funded with capital or bond funds.
- Carpet (except by Facilities Operations)
- Car Washes (except by Facilities and University Police)
- Cash advances of any type
- Cellular Telephones (including pocket pc's, blackberry's, etc.) (except as approved by IT&I and international travel purposes)
- Dry Cleaning/Laundry services (except by Theatre, Residence Life, and Police Departments)
- Employee entertainment and benefits (including tuition and gifts)
- Equipment (as defined in the Property Management Asset Valuation Manual)
- Extended lease and rental agreements
- Financial Instruments (ie; money order, bank draft)
- Flowers or gifts for condolences, congratulations etc. involving employees or their relatives
- Fines and Penalties

- Food/Meals (except for student and student activity funded programming, University sports teams, study abroad programs, and student sponsored off campus events.) (food and meals involving employees must be in accord with the University's refreshment policy)
- Fuel (including gasoline, diesel, propane etc.)
- Furniture and furnishes >than \$4,999.99 (including tables, lamps, desks, chairs, etc.)
- Gifts/donations of any kind
- Gift cards except those related to student programming and student activity funded promotions and programs
- Greenery for office beautification
- Insurance (except for auto rental insurance on authorized travel)
- Information Technology hardware and software (prior approval from IT&I Department required)
- Kitchen appliances (including coffee pots, microwaves, heaters, refrigerators, toasters etc.) (except by Facilities Operations and Residence Life Department)
- Office Food Supply Items (refer to University's Refreshment Policy) (including utensils, paper plates, cups, napkins, salt/pepper/sugar, coffee, tea etc.) (except for student activity funded programming)
- Outdoor signage (except by Facilities Operations and Police Departments)
- Paint (except by Theatre Department and Facilities Operations Departments)
- Personal or decorative items
- Personal use items (pens/pencil sets, folio's, attaches', etc.)
- Plants or shrubs (except by Facilities Operations)
- Precious metals
- Prescription drugs and controlled substances (with the exception of Health Services and Athletics Departments)
- Professional or Personal services of any type
- Purchase from a University employee or their immediate family (refer to state ethics policy)
- Radioactive materials
- Sporting Goods (except by Athletics and Recreation Departments and student activity funded programming)
- Sponsorship (except by Institutional Advancement)
- Telecommunications Equipment (except by IT&I)
- Temporary Help
- Tobacco Products
- Weapons (except as required by the University Police)

Exemptions or questions regarding restricted purchases may be granted on a case by case basis upon the approval of the University's Purchasing Department.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND USE OF CARD

Responsibilities of the Cardholder:

- To secure a card, complete a Purchasing Card Application Form and obtain necessary approvals.
- Upon receipt of the card, receive an overview of the use of the card from the Purchasing Department.
- Read the University's Purchasing Card Policy Manual and abide by the Purchasing Card policies and procedures outlined therein.
- Accept responsibility for all purchases made with the card in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Purchasing Card Program Manual.
- Safeguard card security at all times.
- Assume responsibility for repayment of improper charges and personal liability for misuse.
- Maintain all supporting documentation (e.g. proper receipts, vendor order forms, cash register receipts, etc.) and reconciling to the monthly statement in a timely manner.
- Ensure receipt of goods and following up with the vendor to resolve disputes and arrange for returns, credits, delivery problems, etc.
- Verify that the purchases are consistent with all University policies and procedures, all merchandise has been received, and all supporting documentation has been obtained.
- Report lost or stolen cards immediately to a member of the Purchasing Department or to JPMorgan Chase when the Purchasing Department cannot be reached.

Ordering Process:

The Purchasing Card may be used to purchase approved goods in person (at the point-of-sale), over the phone, by mail, fax or over the Internet. Prior to placing an order, check the University and State Contract list for the applicable contract suppliers for the product or service you are about to order.

When placing your order, please be sure to provide the vendor with the following information:

- Identify yourself as a Western Connecticut State University employee and provide cardholder name.
- State that you are making the purchase using a MasterCard Purchasing Card.
- State that it is a tax-exempt purchase and provide the tax-exempt number listed on the front of the card directly below the cardholder's name.
- Provide individual charge card number and expiration date on charge card.
- Provide complete billing and delivery address including building and room number.
- State the appropriate University or State Contract that you are using (if applicable) to ensure that you receive correct pricing and applicable prompt payment discounts.
- State the quantity and description of the items being ordered.
- Verify the total cost of the purchase with the vendor.
- Furnish any other information that may be required.

Note: Please inform the vendor not to send a bill or invoice to the ordering department or Accounts Payable. Submitting an invoice for a charge card transaction may result in a duplicate payment.

Billing Address:

The address that appears on your statement, without the tax-exempt number, is your billing address. Please provide this address to vendors as required. Failure to provide the proper billing address may result in your purchase being declined. If you are a first-time user, please contact the Purchasing Department if you are unsure of your billing address.

Shipping Instructions:

Important: Inform the vendor that the address label/packing list that accompanies the package **must** contain the following information:

Western Connecticut State University
 Cardholder's Name
 Department Name
 Building and Room Number
 190 White St.
 Danbury, CT 06810

Packages that are not labeled properly may delay the delivery of items ordered indefinitely.

Under no circumstance should the vendor indicate the Purchasing Card number on any address label or packing list. Listing of the card number would threaten the security of your card.

Tips to Remember When Returning Goods:

- At the time of purchase, please ask the merchant for their return policy.
- It is suggested to retain boxes, containers, special packaging until you are certain you are going to keep the item. Some items, such as software or fragile pieces cannot be returned without the original packaging materials.
- Read all enclosed instructions carefully. Often a phone number and other instructions are included on the packing slip and/or receipt.
- In some cases, there may be a restocking fee (usually a percentage of the purchase price). If the vendor is completely responsible for the error or problem, you should not have to pay this, or any other fee. However, if they are not fully responsible the University may have to pay it.
- In reviewing your monthly statement, make sure that a credit was issued for the returned item(s).

Proof of Purchase Documentation:

With the authority to purchase comes the responsibility for maintaining adequate documentation at the time of the transaction. It is the responsibility of each department to develop a process and assign responsibility for document retention in accordance with the requirements set forth in this manual.

Within one week to ten days from the end of the billing cycle, JPMorgan Chase will mail the bank statement directly to the cardholder. The cardholder statement you receive is for reconciliation and review purposes. This statement is to be checked against sales receipts, packing slips, etc. to ensure that all goods were received and that the amount on the documentation matches the amount on the statement. Documentation should support the legitimate business purpose of all transactions made with the Purchasing Card. The following are examples of supporting documentation:

- In Person Purchases:
 - Cash register receipts.
 - Copies of order forms or applications indicating the item purchased and the cost
- Internet Orders:
 - Screen prints of order confirmation numbers for internet purchases (a screen print describing what you are ordering is not sufficient documentation. An order confirmation page with the item, cost and description is considered adequate documentation).

- Fax Orders:
 - Copies of order forms or applications from the vendor indicating the item purchased and the cost.
 - Sales receipt.
- Phone Orders:
 - When placing a phone order, ensure a receipt is provided for the order.

Packing slips may be included as supporting documentation.

Cardholders will not receive a statement if there was no card activity for the billing cycle.

Please note that the billing cycle is the 16th of each month to the 15th of the next month.

Record Keeping

The cardholder is responsible for reviewing and reconciling their monthly billing statement and, by doing so, will be certifying that purchases are consistent with all University policies and procedures. Every transaction must be supported by a receipt. If a credit is issued, a receipt or some form of documentation relating to the original transaction should be provided. All supporting documentation must be secured to the billing statement to facilitate reviewing.

Purchases made at the end of a billing cycle may not appear until the next billing statement. Documentation for purchases that do not appear on the cardholder's current statement must be held as "pending" for timely retrieval and reconciliation of future statements.

Once the statement is reconciled and reviewed, the cardholder and appropriate budget managers must sign the monthly statement. By signing the monthly statement, the cardholder will be certifying that the purchases are consistent with all University policies and procedures. All supporting receipts and documentation should be stapled or clipped to the bank statement to facilitate reviewing. Cardholders shall forward their statements and receipts in pre-printed envelopes to the Purchasing Department within (30) days of the close of the p-card monthly cycle. The Purchasing Department will provide pre-printed envelopes for the submittal of statements and receipts.

If you find that you are missing a receipt, a missing receipt form may be filed with your monthly statement. In addition, the vendor may be able to assist you with this; or, for certain vendors, the receipt may be posted within the JP Morgan Smart Data Online (SDOL) System.

Document Retention:

P-Card statements and supporting documentation are to be maintained in a secure location at all times for timely retrieval for audit purposes in compliance with State, University or grant guidelines for record retention (minimum of three (3) years or until audited, whichever is later). The University must obtain from the Connecticut State Library permission to destroy Purchasing Card records by following the guidelines and procedures established by the Connecticut State Library

