

Account Request, Configuration, and Training

1. *Can I recommend that staff members attend pcard training before completing their Pcard Applications?*

Yes. Staff members who choose to do this should tell the pcard administrator who presents the training session that they will be applying for pcards. The pcard administrator will then be able to have the staff sign the pcard agreement forms to keep on file.

2. *Can Individual Travel Cards be requested on a per trip basis?*

No. ITCs are reserved for individuals whose positions require that they travel frequently. They cannot be requested on a per trip basis for individual business travel. We are working toward offering cards for faculty-led study trips.

3. *Is it possible to have the daily limit increased for travel purchases? Can we request a daily limit increase for certain days or just in general?*

Our pcards have no daily limits; they only have monthly credit limits and single transaction credit limits. If you find that your monthly credit limit is insufficient for your department's spending needs, complete a Pcard Maintenance Form (found on the pcard website under the Account Request and Maintenance header.) Note on the form whether you need the change to your monthly credit limit to be temporary or permanent.

4. *If our monthly credit limit is \$5000 can we still purchase hotel stays up to \$4999.99 without using our monthly allocation for supplies?*

Your monthly credit limit is the total dollar amount that can be charged to your pcard account, regardless of the type of item/service purchased. If you find that your monthly credit limit is insufficient for your departmental spending needs, complete a Pcard Maintenance Form (found on the pcard website under the Account Request and Maintenance heading) to request an increase in your monthly credit limit. We expect that some cardholders may need to request increases to their monthly credit limits, based on the addition of the KSU Lodging MCC group as well as the increased transaction limit on transportation and lodging transactions.

Making Purchases and Managing Transactions

- 1. *If a lodging expense exceeds 150% of the federal lodging per diem but the traveler is staying at the official conference hotel, can it be put on the pcard?***

At the current time, no. While university policy 7-02.8 does allow for lodging that exceeds 150% of the federal lodging per diem when using a conference hotel, it also states that such an exception must be approved by an executive officer. There is no mechanism within Works to move such transactions into a queue for executive level approver review and approval. As a cardholder, you will need to consult the applicable meal and lodging per diem rate file (found on the Accounts Payable website) before booking the lodging. If the lodging exceeds the stated threshold, the traveler will need to self-pay and then submit a reimbursement request.

- 2. *If a pcard can be used for lodging, how are taxes on hotel rooms handled?***

Kent State is exempt from Ohio sales tax, which extends to sales tax that may be charged by hotels. However, the university is not exempt from the room/bed type taxes that are often included in hotel invoices.

- 3. *What happens if the pcard is used for lodging and, later, when we get the invoice, we see expenses on the room that are not allowable under policy (food, alcohol, etc.)***

As a cardholder, you are ultimately responsible for all charges on your pcard. I suggest contacting the hotel to let it know that such charges are not to be put on the card. If the hotel cannot guarantee that no such charges will be put on the card, do not use the card for that reservation (the staff member will have to self-pay and then seek reimbursement.)

If the hotel agrees to make a notation in its file that no “extras” are allowed and you find that you are charged for them, address the dispute with the hotel. If you are not satisfied, follow the instructions in the Guide to Works (found on the pcard website) to submit a dispute through Bank of America.

Additionally, you should be having conversations with staff members who are borrowing the use of your pcard for lodging purposes about what can be charged to the pcard (the room) and what cannot (food, alcohol, etc.) I would suggest documenting such conversations—you can use the Departmental Pcard Quick Reference Guide’s borrower acknowledgement for this—and stressing that policy 7-12.1 (D)(9)(a) states:

Personal purchases. No personal purchases are permitted to be made, either via purchase order, payment request, or university purchasing card (p-card) regardless of intent to reimburse the university. In addition, no employee may use the university’s name or present him/herself as an agent of the university when making personal purchases.

The same policy goes on to say, in section (E):

Violation. Any person who violates this policy by making unauthorized purchases through use of the university's name and funds may be personally liable for that purchase and may be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

4. *Can departmental cards be used for international lodging? If so, are there any preapprovals necessary so that Bank of America is aware of the upcoming international charges?*

Yes, departmental cards can be used for international lodging, if the hotels accept them. It is a good idea to call Bank of America to note that such charges may be coming through, if you are concerned with a traveler running into a blocked transaction mid-trip.

5. *Can two separate invoices from the same vendor, totaling \$2500+, be charged to the pcard on the same day?*

If the invoices are unrelated (truly separate projects/purchases), that would not be splitting transactions. However, the transactions may be flagged through our pcard administrator view as possible splits. If that happens, you'll be contacted and can offer an explanation. I would suggest entering a comment for the transaction that indicates that the payments were for two separate projects.

6. *If a vendor requires for items to be paid for in two installments, is that considered splitting a transaction?*

If the total combined cost of the goods or services would exceed the purchase order thresholds, this would be considered splitting and thus not allowed.

7. *If we have a group of travelers and need to buy multiple airline tickets that exceed our department pcard's \$4999.99 transaction limit, but each ticket will show as a separate transaction (e.g., twenty \$250 transactions) can we use the pcard?*

No. Since the tickets are part of a group purchase and the total exceeds \$4999.99, you cannot use your pcard. Plan ahead when purchasing airfare and allow sufficient time to get your airfare quote, complete a payment request form, and get all proper signatures before submitting it to Accounts Payable for payment. We can then often use an AP credit card to complete the transaction.

8. *Can the pcard be used to purchase food or non-student functions like Advisory Board meetings or open to the public events?*

No. The only food that can be purchased with a departmental pcard is food for student functions that is a qualified exception for catering using University Dining Services and can be purchased using the card's permanent spend profile. Meals and catering for other purposes cannot be purchased with the pcard.

9. *I have an invoice that says there will be a 3% fee charged on credit card payments. Is this new? I've had several in the last couple of weeks.*

All vendors that accept credit cards pay merchant fees to the bank. Most vendors roll those fees into their pricing. Some do not and later choose to add them onto their invoices. It is a good idea to ask vendors if they charge credit card fees before using your pcard to make payments. You are not required to use a pcard to pay vendors who charge fees for credit card payments.

10. *Do I have to let other employees use my pcard?*

No. As a cardholder, you are responsible for the keeping of the card and for ensuring that purchases made with it comply with university policy/procedures. If you have reason to suspect that your colleagues will not comply with university policy/procedures when using your pcard, do not let them use it.

11. *Why was my pcard transaction declined?*

Page 4 of the Guide to Works (found on the pcard website under Policy and Procedures) describes how to check your card's Authorization Log. The Authorization Log will list a reason why a pcard transaction has been declined. If you do not understand a decline code that is listed, contact us as pcard@kent.edu for assistance.

Common reasons for transaction declines include not having enough available credit on the pcard, entering an erroneous CVV or expiration date, and excluded MCCs. Keep in mind that vendors choose their own MCCs and sometimes choose those that we have excluded for policy reasons. In addition, MCCs are sometimes changed, added, and deleted.

If your purchase is declined due to an excluded MCC, contact us at pcard@kent.edu so that we can research it and determine if it is appropriate to be added to the university's pcard program.

12. *Do we dispute charges if a credit is received or if a credit is indicated but has not posted?*

Do not dispute charges for which you have already received credits. If you have addressed a problem with a merchant and it has agreed that a credit is in order, allow the credit a reasonable amount of time for the credit to post. If it does not post within a reasonable period, submit a dispute through Works. Instructions showing how to do this are included in the Guide to Works, available under the Policy and Procedures heading on the pcard website.

Reconciling Transactions

1. ***We've always had one person enter the accounting allocation and another person mark the transaction as having been reviewed. Are the reviewer and the reconciler the same person now?***

The only card user roles are cardholder, reconciler, and approver. If you want your cardholder to enter the accounting allocation and another person to review and sign off on transactions (note that signing off includes entering the transaction's description, purpose, and benefit to the grant, when applicable), both your cardholder and the person who is signing off will be considered reconcilers.

2. ***As a reconciler I know that I need to reconcile charges within 14 days of the post date. Do approvers have to approve within this timeframe as well or can they do it once a month as they have in the past?***

Yes. Transactions are required to be fully reconciled—allocated, signed off, and approved—within 14 days of their post dates.

3. ***What if the person is out of town during the 14 days that are the limit for approval? What if I go on a 3-week vacation and am the only person in the office who can reconcile the card?***

Timely reconciliation is a must—it is the only way for a department to get a true picture of its budget status. Pcard transactions are not recorded in general ledger until they have been fully reconciled in Works. That is, the expenses do not "hit your budget" until the reconciliation process is complete and the pcard administrators can load the data into Banner.

- Transactions can be allocated and signed off as soon as they post in Works; there is no need to wait until the end of the 14-day period. Reconcilers and approvers should allocate, sign off, and approve all posted transactions before going on leave.
- Cardholders should use Pcard Maintenance Forms to add backup reconcilers or approvers if their reconcilers/approvers will be on leave or otherwise unable to fulfill their reconciling responsibilities within 14 days of their transactions' post dates.
- Departmental cardholders who are out of the office on leave should not be incurring new charges on their pcards since the cards are to be locked in secure locations in their offices when not in use and since cardholders are required to know where their cards are at all times.
- ITC cardholders who are out of the office on business travel can access Works while off campus. They can upload their receipts within Works or can arrange to submit their pcard documentation to their reconcilers or approvers electronically (via email) or through the USPS.

4. *What happens if transactions are not reconciled within 14 days of posting?*

Failure to reconcile within a timely manner is a violation of pcard policy and procedure and may result in the suspension or cancellation of the pcard. Review the Violations section of the Pcard User Manual for more information.

5. *What happens to a transaction after the approver approves it?*

Once your approver approves a transaction, it moves into a final closure queue. Grant accountants review all transactions that are charged to grant, cost share, or program income indexes and then close those transactions. All other transactions are closed (without review) by a pcard administrator. Pcard transactions are loaded into Banner during the week after they are closed.

6. *Is the comment area for Accounts Payable or myself?*

The comments area serves multiple purposes. First, reconcilers are required to enter comments for every transaction. Such comments must include a description of the purchases, the purchases' business purposes, and, when applicable, how the purchases the grant, cost share, or program income index being charged. Second, if an approver flags a transaction, the system will require the approver to enter a comment explaining the flag. Third, comments should be used to provide additional information about transactions, such as a statement that a food purchase is a qualified exception to the use of University Dining Services, or that transactions that appear to split are for separate projects.

7. *Is there a searchable spreadsheet of account, commodity, index, etc. codes?*

The Controller's Office and Procurement Office have made Excel versions of the account and commodity code lists available online. There are links to both on the [BAS website](#). Because indexes are added more frequently than are account and commodity codes, it is better to use Banner to look for indexes. Specifically, run either the FGRACCI report or search on form FTVACCI. Visit the Controller's Office [Banner Finance Training Guide](#) page for instructions on how to do this in Banner.

8. *Can the default account code be changed?*

When reconciling, you can change the account that appears by default to whatever account is appropriate for the charge. All transactions default to 72017 (Office Supplies) because that is the account that we allocate unreconciled transactions to at fiscal year-end. This is a program-wide default and cannot be changed on a per-card basis.

9. *Can the default index be changed?*

When reconciling, you can change the index that appears by default to whatever index is appropriate for the charge. If the default index that has been assigned to your account needs to be changed (e.g., if you want to change it to an index that you use more often), email pcard@kent.edu with that request. Your default index is set on a per-card basis, meaning that cardholders with multiple cards can request a different default index on each card. Note that your default index cannot start with a 4, a C, or a P. If you use your card to primarily allocate to such an index, your default index should be the home department that is responsible for the associated grant. Every grant has an associated home department.

10. *In Works, can indexes and account codes be saved as favorites so that they do not need to be entered every time? (Similar to PaymentNet's favorites feature?)*

No, Works does not have a “favorites” feature.

Document Retention

1. *Is there a way to store documents electronically in Works?*

Yes, you can attach receipts to your transactions within Works. However, as this method of storage does not fulfill the university’s record retention requirements, cardholders must also retain either an electronic or hard copy of the documents within their departments.

2. *Can original receipts/documents be shredded once they are stored electronically?*

Departments must maintain one copy—either hard copy or electronic—of pcard documents, per the guidelines provided in the retention schedule / per the guidelines provided by Grants Accounting. Upon creating a clearly readable electronic copy of a document (i.e., scanning it and storing it in a place that is accessible to the cardholder’s department) the department may destroy the original hard copy.

Reports and Statements

1. *Will we receive monthly statements?*

You will not receive monthly statements through the mail. You can run a Billing Statement report, which includes the information that would be included on a monthly statement.

2. *Can reconcilers access transaction reports for the cards that they reconcile?*

Yes. By default, any reports you run will show you data for all cards for which you are the cardholder.

3. *Do we have to run reports?*

We encourage all card users to become familiar with and utilize Works' reporting capabilities. You will find several reports in the Shared section of your Template Library, which you can run as-is or after modifying with filters. If you cannot locate a report that fits your needs, email pcard@kent.edu and we can help create a custom report template for you.