PCard
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a Procurement Card (PCard)?
The Procurement Card, also known as a PCard, is a MasterCard credit card used to make retail, internet, and low dollar business-related purchases within a department replacing the paper based Small Purchase Orders and low dollar requisitions.

2. Will my personal credit history be checked when I apply for a Procurement Card?
No. Your personal credit history will not be checked or affected when applying for or using the Procurement Card. The personal information on the application will only be used for identification purposes when activating your card for the first time.

3. Can I use the Procurement Card to make purchases on the Internet?
Yes. Make sure that you use secure web sites, and that the commodity being purchased is allowed according to Vanderbilt University Procurement Card Policies and Procedures.

4. Do I have to keep the credit card receipts for my purchases and how should they be filed?
Yes. Every Procurement Card transaction REQUIRES a detailed invoice or receipt of what was purchased, in accordance with the Vanderbilt University Procurement Card Policies and Procedures. All original documentation must be maintained in the department and kept on file according to the University Document Filing and Record Retention policy.

5. What is Access Online?
Access Online is an Internet Application designed and managed by U.S. Bank that lists all procurement card charges you make. The Access Online system, allows you to make changes to the current month’s transactions by changing the account and budget centers before posting to the general ledger, and facilitates the documentation, review and management approval of your pcard transactions.

6. If I don’t review my transactions in Access Online or my Manager does not approve them in the system, will the merchant still be paid?
Yes. The bank pays the merchants within a few days of the transaction date. At the end of the month, when the export file is sent to the general ledger, it will include all transactions whether or not they have been "approved" in the Access Online system. The transaction will post to the default account and budget center number. Note: Procurement Card Policy states that both the Cardholder and Manager must review and approve the transaction in Access Online. Failure to review and approve transactions in Access Online may result in loss or suspension of Cardholder and/or Card Manager privileges.

7. Can I use my PCard for travel?
Yes. When you fill out the procurement card application, check the box that allows you to
use the PCard for travel. Your Dean or Administrative Officer will approve and sign the application allowing you to use the PCard for travel. If you already have a PCard, your Dean or Administrative Officer will need to send an email to pcard@list.vanderbilt.edu in order to add travel to your card.

8. Why do I have to record my Travel Authorization number and the business purpose in the appropriate fields in Access Online for every PCard travel transaction?
Typing in your Travel Authorization/Report number in Access Online will provide a cross-reference for your expenses and your business trip. By including this in Access Online, it also provides documentation required by the IRS.

9. How long do I need to keep my travel receipts and trip related documentation?
All Departments/Divisions will maintain records of each PCard transaction and the supporting documentation in an auditable state for the current fiscal year and seven complete prior fiscal years for expenses excluding federal grants or awards. All records pertinent to a federal grant or award must be retained until three years after the date of submission of the final expenditure report in compliance with granting authority regulations. PCard transaction documentation and monthly reconciliations will be subject to audit by the PCard Office, the Department of Finance and/or Internal Audit.

10. What happens if someone intentionally misuses the PCard for personal expenses?
Any misappropriation of Vanderbilt funds, by PCard or otherwise, is grounds for performance improvement counseling, up to and including termination.

11. Can another employee in my department use the PCard that is issued in my name, if I am unavailable?
No. The PCard is non-transferable. The only person that may use the card and number is the person whose name is embossed on the card. However, specially issued department cards may be used by multiple pre-approved individuals. Contact the PCard Office for more information on this optional PCard product.

12. Can a PCard transaction be stopped?
No. Once the charge has been made your credit card will be billed. The cardholder would need to make arrangements directly with the merchant to obtain a credit, which would be processed through the card.

13. Will merchants know what a Procurement Card is?
Yes. However, you may need to tell merchants you are tax-exempt and that you will be purchasing with a corporate MasterCard. Show them the tax-exempt number on the card or provide a copy of the Sales Tax Exemption. (For a copy of the Tennessee State Sales Tax Exemption form, go to http://www.vanderbilt.edu/accounting/TaxGuidance/TaxIssues&GuidanceIndex.htm.

14. Who can see my transactions in Access Online?
At a minimum, the Cardholder, the Card Manager, the PCard Office, and Internal Audit
can see a Cardholder’s transactions. In many cases, the Administrative Officer, Directors and other financial individuals may have the authority to view the Cardholders transactions too.

15. Can I reallocate charges if they are to be redistributed to different accounts and budgets centers?
Yes. The Access Online application allows you to allocate your transaction to up to 99 different account/center combinations.

16. How do I add or delete budget centers in Access Online?
Center numbers can only be added or deleted by the PCard Office. This is done after the PCard Office receives an e-mail from the Dean/Administrative Officer or designate, who has signature authority over the centers involved, requesting the change.

17. If my volume of spending exceeds my current PCard transaction or monthly limits, can the limits be increased?
Yes. The Dean/Administrative Officer or designate, who has signature authority over the center involved, should send an email to the PCard Office to request the change, not to exceed $3,000 per transaction. The e-mail request should be sent to pcard@list.vanderbilt.edu.

18. Can I use my PCard to pay for some of my travel expenses already submitted on travel advance/prepayment forms for an upcoming trip?
No. Pre-existing travel plans on travel advance forms must continue to conclusion using the current process. Start using your PCard on your next trip using the green Travel Report Form.

19. How can I calculate the total cost of my trip upon return?
The reason that the Travel Authorization/Report Form number is included in the “Travel Authorization Number” section of Access Online is so that a Transaction Detail Report can easily be run on that number and all travel expenses located.

20. Does this mean travel costs will be unsupervised?
No. The PCard requires review and on-line approval by the Card Manager of each transaction. This requirement is to insure that all PCard travel costs are supervised and approved. In addition, Access Online offers reporting features that would allow managers to see all travel charges by the traveler for a specified period of time.

21. If I use my card to book a hotel room for someone in my department, what happens when the hotel requests to see my card at the time of check in?
If you are booking a hotel room for another individual, tell the hotel personnel this when making the reservations. They will fax a form to you that you will have to sign stating that it is OK to bill the room charge, meals and taxes directly to your card. Any other expenses would need to be paid personally by the traveler. They may also request that you photocopy your card and fax it to them too. It is OK if the hotel asks the traveler for an additional credit card at the time of check in. That is a formality in case there are
other charges, telephone, movies, etc. that will need to be paid for personally or for reimbursement.

22. If I want to watch a movie or use the laundry services at the hotel, can that be charged to my PCard?
No. If you have personal charges on your hotel room bill, pay for them using your own personal credit card at the time of check out. It is against policy to use the PCard for personal expenses.

23. Are we exempt from sales tax in other states?
Yes, in certain states we are exempt from sales tax. If you are traveling and would like a tax exemption form for the state(s) in which you are traveling to, contact the Office of Financial Affairs at 343-6601 and they will fax you an exemption certificate. Please note, we are not exempt from hotel occupancy taxes or other entertainment taxes, only sales tax.

24. How do I get reimbursement for expenses I paid for myself and where should I file my PCard expenses for travel?
If the traveler has incidentals that were not placed on the PCard, the traveler must submit a Travel Report Form within 60 days of the end of the trip. Faculty and staff use Form 60-002-523 and students use Form 60-002-658 to submit travel expenses for reimbursement. The Transaction Detail Report from Access Online will provide a grand total of charges placed on the p-card. PCard expenses should be included in the expense detail section of the Travel Report Form and then deducted under Total PCard Transactions to arrive at the reimbursable amount. The following items are required attachments for reimbursement:

- Copy of the Transaction Detail Report (PCard trip related charges)
- Original itemized receipts for out-of-pocket expenses

After appropriate signature approvals, the Travel Report Form and attachments should be submitted to the Department of Finance (for Medical Center employees) or Disbursement Services (for University employees). Do not send any PCard receipts with the Travel Report Form, only receipts that need reimbursement should be forwarded for reimbursement.

Attach all original itemized PCard receipts and copies of any out-of-pocket receipts for the trip to your copy of the Travel Report Form and file with your monthly PCard transaction detail reports and bank statements, as appropriate. You should check with your department administrator, however, to determine if additional departmental filing requirements exist.

25. I use a Travel Agency to book my business trips, can I use the PCard to pay for those expenses?
Yes. The travel agencies will accept the PCard, as well as your personal credit card.
26. How can I get travel added to my PCard?
Your Dean or Administrative Officer must e-mail the PCard Office to approving you to be set up for travel. Even if you don’t have travel, you may still continue to make business purchases with your card.

27. I don't currently have a PCard, but would like to get one now that we can use for travel. What should I do?
Complete an application and mark on the form that you would like to include travel. After your Dean or Administrative Officer has approved the form, you will forward it to the PCard Office at Suite 1110 Baker Building or VU Station B #357000 and wait to be trained. It generally takes 3-4 weeks to process your application, schedule training and receive your card.