

Purchasing Card Program Cardholder and Reconciler Procedures

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The Cardholder and Reconciler Procedures define the key steps required to purchase authorized goods and services for University business using a P-Card and properly account for those purchases using ARC.

I. BECOMING A CARDHOLDER

Individuals interested in becoming a Cardholder must have the approval of their Department P-Card Administrator (DPAD). **In-person hands-on training is required before a card is issued.** In addition, **Cardholders must complete the [Reconciling P-Card Transactions](#) web-based training once directed to do so by ARC Security.**

To apply for a P-Card, Cardholder Role:

1. User (cardholder) completes the **Financial Systems Security Application** available through [Service Now](#) . *Note: Cardholder must be a University employee with valid Employee ID.*
2. The Financial Systems Security Application is routed to DAFFEE Administrator for approval.
3. Once the DAFFEE grants approval, P-Card Team is notified via ServiceNow that a P-Cardholder Role has been assigned
4. P-Card Team generates an “auto” email to the user inviting the user to complete the online [P-Card application](#)
5. The user completes the application indicating they require a card, also indicating any special privileges (food or hotel)
6. User must designate the appropriate reconcilers and approvers assigned to the User’s P-Card. A P-Card will not be distributed to a Cardholder if a Reconciler is not assigned to the P-Card. (Note: A Cardholder may be his/her own Reconciler but cannot be assigned as an Approver of his/her P-Card.)
7. The application is routed to the appropriate Departmental P-Card Administrator (DPAD) based upon the user’s home department
8. Application is returned to the P-Card Team for processing
9. Once application is fully processed, Cardholders is invited to in-person P-Card Policy Training
10. Cardholder attends Policy Training and receives P-Card at the conclusion of Training

Individuals requiring the P-Card Approver, Reconciler and/or Reviewer roles in ARC, must be granted ARC Security access and be assigned the roles in ARC. **Reconcilers and Approvers are required to complete the [Reconciling P-Card Transactions](#) web-based**

training once directed to do so by ARC Security. To apply for a P-Card, Approver, Reconciler or Reviewer Role:

1. User (Reconciler, Reviewer, and Approver) completes the Financial Systems Security Application available through [Service Now](#)
2. Security Application is routed to DAFSEE Administrator for approval
3. ARC Security directs user to complete the [Reconciling P-Card Transactions](#) web-based training. **User must score 90% or above to be granted the ARC role.**
4. Once training is completed, ARC Security grants user the ARC role.
5. P-Card DPAD submits a request to pcard@columbia.edu to add Reconciler, Reviewer, or Approver to assigned card(s).

II. ACTIVATING AND SECURING P-CARD INFORMATION

A. Activating the P-Card (Cardholder)

Cardholders will receive their P-Card once training has been completed. To activate their P-Card, the Cardholder must:

- Call Bank of America @ 1-888-571-1000
- Provide their 16 digit account number (number located on the front of their P-Card)
- Provide their Verification Code, which is the Cardholder's Birth Month and Birth Date (e.g. 0102 for January 2nd)
- Once the activation process is completed the Cardholder should remove the sticker from the front of their P-Card and sign the back of the card

The Cardholder can now use their P-Card for Columbia University qualified and authorized purchases.

B. Securing P-Card Information (Cardholder)

The Cardholder is responsible for all activity on their P-Card. Keeping their P-Card information secure will reduce the risk of fraudulent activity. Cardholders should take the following steps to secure their P-Card information:

- Keep their P-Card and any account information in a secure place
- Do not give their P-Card to anyone else to use (including co-workers)
- Do not post or email their full P-Card account number

Be aware of fraudulent emails requesting credit card information (phishing or spoofing)

III. REPLACING A P-CARD (Cardholder)

A. Reporting Lost or Stolen P-Cards

If a P-Card is lost or stolen, the Cardholder must contact Bank of America at 1-888-449-2273 immediately and provide Bank of America with the following information:

- Verification Code, which is a 9 digits number that includes 5 zeros followed by the Cardholder's Birth Month and Birth Date (e.g. 000000102 for January 2nd).
- Zip Code for their University business address

Bank of America will immediately close the P-Card account, open a new account for the Cardholder and mail a new P-Card to the University's P-Card Team. A member of the P-Card Team will contact the Cardholder once the card has been received to coordinate pick-up or delivery of the card to the Cardholder.

The Cardholder is required to place the call because the P-Card is issued to the individual. Once the bank is notified, the Cardholder should notify their DPAD.

B. Renewing an Expired P-Card

The Cardholder will automatically be re-issued a new P-Card one to six weeks prior to the expiration date on their P-Card. All P-Cards are centrally received and the P-Card Team will contact the Cardholder once the renewal card is received. The Cardholder has the option to either pick-up the card or the card will be mailed via campus mail to the cardholder. . Once the Cardholder receives their new P-Card the Cardholder should:

- Activate the new P-Card (see Section II.A.)
- Destroy the old P-Card
- Contact any vendors who charge against the P-Card and provide them with the new expiration date

C. Replacing a Damaged P-Card

The Cardholder should only follow this procedure when their current P-Card has been damaged and no longer works:

- Notify the P-Card Team at pcard@columbia.edu or the Finance Service Center at 212-854-2122 and their DPAD indicating that they need a replacement P-Card ordered
- The P-Card Team will order a replacement card and notify the Cardholder when the request is complete and the new card is received
- Activate the new P-Card (see Section II.A.)
- Destroy the old P-Card

IV. P-CARD CHANGE MANAGEMENT

A. Changing P-Card Limits (Cardholder)

If a Cardholder needs to increase their P-Card monthly credit limit or single transaction limit the Cardholder should contact their DPAD for approval and the DPAD will contact the P-Card Team to request this change. Or, the DPAD may submit an incident via [ServiceNow](#) or contact the Finance Service Center at 212-854-2122 to request the increase. The P-Card Team will confirm with the DPAD and the Cardholder when the request is complete.

The single transaction limit cannot exceed \$2,500.00 for any Cardholder.

Please note that increases to P-Card limits can take up to 24 hours to process.

B. Adding or Deleting Proxy Reconciler(s)

Each P-Card must have a Reconciler assigned to the P-Card in ARC in order for transactions to be reviewed and reconciled. A P-Card will not be distributed to a Cardholder if a Reconciler is not assigned to the P-Card. (Note: A Cardholder may be his/her own Reconciler.) If an additional Reconciler is required or if a Reconciler has left the department or assumed other duties, the Cardholder's DPAD should forward an email to P-card team or submit an incident via [ServiceNow](#) or call the Finance Service Center at 212-854-2122 to request the addition or deletion of the Reconciler(s) assigned to a P-Card.

C. Changing the P-Card Default ChartString

Each P-Card is given one default ChartString. If the default ChartString needs to be changed, the DPAD may contact the P-Card Team to request the change. The DPAD should forward an email to P-card team or submit an incident via [ServiceNow](#) or call the Finance Service Center at 212-854-2122 to request the change. The P-Card Team will modify ARC to reflect the requested default ChartString. ChartString changes will only apply to future transactions not transactions which have previously loaded to ARC for reconciliation and approval.

Please note that changes to default account numbers can take up to 24 hours to process.

D. Requesting P-Card to be used for Food Purchases (Cardholder)

The P-Card may be used (with DPAD approval) to make small purchases of food from local restaurants or grocery stores for consumption at a work-related meeting or class taking place in a University-owned or leased property. Please see the [P-Card Policy](#) to learn more.

If a Cardholder needs to have food privileges on their P-Card, the Cardholder must contact their DPAD and request the privilege be opened on their P-Card. The DPAD must contact the P-Card Team to authorize the privilege for the P-Card. The DPAD may send an email to the P-Card team or submit an incident via [ServiceNow](#) or contact the Finance Service Center at 212-854-2122 to request the privilege. The P-Card Team will notify the DPAD and Cardholder once the request is complete.

Please note that it will take approximately 3 – 5 business days for the privilege to be opened on the P-Card.

E. Requesting P-Card use with NYC Preferred Vendor Hotels (Cardholder)

The P-Card may be used (with DPAD approval) to make business-related hotel reservations for University guests and visitors at approved preferred local hotel vendors.

If a Cardholder needs to have hotel privileges open on their P-Card the Cardholder must contact their DPAD and request the privilege on their P-Card. The DPAD must contact the P-Card Team to authorize the privilege for the P-Card. The DPAD may send an email to the P-Card team or submit an incident via [ServiceNow](#) or contact the Finance Service Center at 212-854-2122 to request the privilege. The P-Card Team will notify the DPAD and Cardholder once the request is complete.

Please note that it will take approximately 3 – 5 business days for the privilege to be opened on the P-Card.

F. Leaving the Department or University (Cardholder/Reconciler)

A P-Card is issued to an individual in their current role. If the Cardholder leaves the department/school or the University they must be removed from the P-Card program. If they need to become a Cardholder in their new department/school the cardholder must contact the DPAD in the new school/department and re-apply to the P-Card program.

Cardholders should take the following steps when leaving the University or moving to a new department:

1. Notify their DPAD and the P-Card Team
2. Reconcile all their outstanding P-Card transactions in ARC.
3. If P-Card transactions have not posted to ARC then the Cardholder should have their DPAD assign a reconciler who can reconcile those transactions after the Cardholder's departure
4. Provide all receipts and documentation for all P-Card purchases to their DPAD
5. Destroy their P-Card
6. Contact any vendors that are authorized to charge the P-Card on a recurring basis and remove the auto-payment set up

Reconcilers should follow steps one through four above when leaving the University or moving to a new department.

V. USING THE P-CARD (Cardholder)

The Cardholder is the only person authorized to use the P-Card issued to him or her. All transactions on the P-Card are the responsibility of the Cardholder.

The P-Card can be used like a regular credit card; charges can be made in person, online or over the telephone. Please refer to Appendix A in the [P-Card policy](#) concerning items that **cannot** be purchased using the P-Card.

Prior to making a P-Card Purchase take the following steps:

- Determine whether the P-Card is the appropriate method for that purchase. Please refer to the [Purchasing Guide](#).
- Determine if there is a University-wide Preferred Vendor (UwPA) that can be used for this purchase
- Obtain departmental authorization
- Determine if the purchase is tax-exempt. See the University [Sales Tax Policy](#).

When making a purchase the Cardholder should:

- Provide the tax exempt form to the vendor if the purchase is tax-exempt. Contact the [Finance Service Center](#) at 212-854-2122 to receive a copy of the tax exempt form.
- Obtain an itemized receipt for the purchase. See the [P-Card Policy](#) for information on what is considered an acceptable receipt

After making a purchase with the P-Card the Cardholder should:

- Ensure delivery of all the items and ensure that no damage has occurred
- Provide receipts to the Reconciler if one is assigned to that Cardholder
- Log into ARC and reconcile the P-Card transaction

VI. DISPUTING A P-CARD TRANSACTION (Cardholder)

Cardholders are encouraged to work directly with the vendor to resolve all issues with their orders. Cardholder's cannot dispute sales tax and every effort should be made to work this out directly with the vendor.

A Cardholder should dispute a charge if they:

- Receive a charge that is unfamiliar to them
- Are over-charged for an order and the vendor will not provide a credit
- The items were not received and the vendor will not provide a credit

To dispute a transaction the Cardholder must take the following action, within 60 days of the charge Post Date:

- Call the Bank of America at 1-888-449-2273 Provide their 16 digit P-Card account number & Verification Code
- The bank will ask for additional information about the dispute and will send you a Commercial Card Statement of Disputed Item(s) form (CCSDI)
- Complete the CCSDI form and return it to the bank

The Cardholder may be contacted by the Commercial Claims Department at Bank of America to provide more information. It is important to respond to all inquiries from the bank in a timely manner in order to preserve the claim.

During Bank of America's investigation, a provisional credit may be issued to the Cardholder's P-Card account. When the investigation is complete, the bank will notify the Cardholder of the resolution.

Please note, disputing a transaction does not prevent the transaction from posting to ARC. Cardholders/Reconcilers are still required to reconcile disputed transactions, indicating in the "comments" that the transaction is in dispute.

VII. RECONCILING P-CARD TRANSACTIONS (Cardholder/Reconciler)

A. The Reconciling Process

Cardholders and Reconcilers are responsible for reviewing and verifying transactions on a routine basis in ARC. Cardholders and Reconcilers should reconcile all outstanding transactions at least once per week.

Cardholders and Reconcilers should take the following steps to reconcile every transaction in ARC:

- Review transactions for accuracy
- Assign proper accounting information
- Provide a business purpose where required by P-Card policy or their department
- Sign-off on transactions in a timely manner (see Section B below)
- Scan and attach receipts to transactions in ARC, as required by Policy
- File the P-Card receipt for Departmental audit records and/or forward to their Approver or DPAD (Please verify this step with your DPAD to ensure your specific Departmental procedures are followed)

For step by step instructions on how to complete the reconciliation process in ARC see the [ARC Reconciling P-Card Transactions Guide](#).

B. The P-Card Billing Cycle and Hardcloses

P-Card activity runs on a monthly billing cycle similar to that of a regular credit card. The monthly billing cycle for all P-Cards is the 23rd of one month to the 22nd of the following month.

In order to account for all transactions within the fiscal period in which the transactions occurred, the P-Card Team has established a monthly schedule for posting to the Financials. Typically, the Hardclose of all P-Card transactions is generally conducted approximately one day before the last business day of the month at 4:00pm. All transactions that have been billed during the prior billing period, regardless of the transaction status, will be posted to the Financials.

Cardholders are responsible for making sure that all P-Card transactions are Reconciled and Approved in accordance with the deadlines in this section and no later than the hard close date. Failure to meet these deadlines will subject the Cardholder/Reconciler to the monthly review and audit process.

If a Cardholder/Reconciler is out sick or is planning vacation during the hard close period, they should contact their DPAD and have an alternate Reconciler assigned to the P-Card so that someone else can reconcile their transactions.

For a more information on the monthly review and audit process please visit the [P-Card website](#).

C. Reconciling Food Transactions

Cardholders/Reconcilers are required to provide a detailed business purpose for **all** purchases of food from restaurants or grocery stores that are consumed at work-related meeting or events in ARC. The business purpose **must** include:

- Purpose of the event or meeting
- Type of meal (breakfast, lunch or dinner)
- Date and location of the event or meeting
- Names of attendees (or a number if there are more than 10 names)
- Average Cost per person

This detail must be provided in the “Comments” section of the transaction in ARC. In addition, Reconcilers are **required** to scan and attach all receipts to P-Card food transactions in ARC.

A proper business purpose for food transactions that posted in the billing cycle must be provided by the hard close deadline. Failure to meet the hard close deadline will subject the Cardholder/Reconciler to the monthly review and audit process. For more information on the monthly review and audit process please visit the [P-Card website](#).

D. Reconciling Local Preferred Vendor Hotel Transactions

Cardholders/Reconcilers are required to provide a detailed business purpose for **all** University guest and visitor business-related local preferred vendor hotel reservations made on their P-Card. The business purpose **must** include:

- Name of the guest
- Dates of the stay (check in and check out dates)
- Business purpose of the stay
- Cost per day

This detail must be provided in the “Comments” section of the transaction in ARC. In addition, Reconcilers are **required** to scan and attach all receipts to P-Card food transactions in ARC.

A proper business purpose for hotel transactions that posted in the billing cycle must be provided by the hard close deadline. Failure to meet the hard close deadline will subject the Cardholder/Reconciler to the monthly review and audit process. For more information on the monthly review and audit process please visit the [P-Card website](#).

E. Reconciling an International Transaction

If a Cardholder uses their P-Card with an international vendor the Cardholder will be charged an International Transaction Fee. Cardholders/Reconcilers must reconcile all international transactions in ARC just like any other P-Card transaction. A receipt is not required for this type of transaction.

F. Reconciling a Disputed Transaction

Cardholders/Reconcilers are responsible for reviewing and reconciling all P-Card transactions including those being disputed. Cardholders/Reconcilers must:

- Add a comment to the transaction in ARC detailing the fact that the transaction is in dispute and the reason why it is being disputed
- Allocate the transaction and make sure that the transaction status is noted Verified & Approved in ARC (this will note that the cardholder/Department have reviewed the item which is in Dispute and a credit should be forthcoming).

The above information must be provided for disputed P-Card transactions that posted in the billing cycle by the Hardclose deadline. Failure to meet the Hardclose deadline will subject the Cardholder/Reconciler to the monthly review and audit process.

Please review the [P-Card Reconciliation Job Aid](#) for step by step instructions on how to dispute a P-Card transaction in ARC. The dispute function in ARC enables a user to track outstanding disputes.

For more information on the monthly review and audit process please visit [the P-Card website](#).

G. Reconciling a Transaction Where Goods Have Not Been Received

There may be times when the goods ordered on a P-Card do not arrive prior to the P-Card Hardclose deadline. If this occurs the Cardholder/Reconciler must:

- Add a comment to the transaction in ARC detailing the fact that the transaction is pending receipt of goods
- Allocate the transaction and place it in a Verified status; so that the Approver will be able to Approve this transaction prior to the Hardclose deadline.

The above information must be provided for this type of P-Card transaction that posted in the billing cycle by the Hardclose deadline. Failure to meet the Hardclose deadline will subject the Cardholder/Reconciler to the monthly review and audit process.

For more information on the monthly review and audit process please visit the [P-Card website](#).