

Aurora Public Schools Purchasing Card Program

Introduction & Guidelines

Welcome to the Aurora Public Schools Purchasing Card Program. The Purchasing Card is a simplified and cost-effective method of purchasing and remitting payment for approved site/departmental budget expenditures under \$2,500. The Purchasing Card can be used for retail purchases, mailed, telephoned, faxed or Internet orders.

The Purchasing Card is embraced by public and private organizations as a means to create an easy to use process perfectly suited for small dollar purchases and has been recommended by the GFOA (Government Financial Officers Association). In the continuing effort to improve service to District staff, this is one more opportunity for the Purchasing Department to achieve that goal.

The Purchasing Card is not intended to avoid or bypass appropriate purchasing procedures, but is to be used in accordance with the guidelines established within this manual. You are asked to treat this program with the same sense of responsibility and security you would use with your personal credit card.

All Purchasing Cards are issued at the request of your Principal/Department Supervisor and card usage may be audited, restricted and/or rescinded at any time. You are the only person authorized to use your card and it is only to be used for **authorized** purchases.

Record keeping will be essential to ensure the success of this program. This is not an extraordinary requirement since standard reimbursement policies require the retention of all receipts.

Finally, remember that you are consuming School/Department funds each time you use the Purchasing Card. This is a responsibility that must not be taken lightly. We hope the benefits of this program will assist you in your daily tasks.

Revised 8/22/2018

Cardholder Responsibilities

Before using the APS Purchasing Card, it is important to determine if it is the appropriate purchasing method for the transaction. Generally, the Purchasing Card should be used for transactions of \$2,500 or less; providing the items purchased are not fixed assets, services or any items on the list of prohibited transactions. It is intended to be used for small dollar purchases of supplies and materials, as well as subscriptions and membership fees.

ONLY AUTHORIZED PURCHASES FOR AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE ALLOWABLE.

- Use of the card for personal purchases is not permitted at any time.
- No principal can approve any travel by personnel (staff or employees) outside the school district without permission of the Learning Community Director (LCD).
- Non-school site personnel must have supervisor approval for any trips outside the school district.
- When you are on trips, make sure all receipts (itemized) are accounted for and all persons eating meals with a P-card expenditure are listed with the receipt—standard procedure.
- The Purchasing Card should not be used to buy meals like lunch, dinner, etc., while at work in our school district. We can pay for meals when we have guests from outside the district and the guests makeup at least 50% of those attending the meeting.
- The Purchasing Card may only be used by the approved cardholder. The card is not transferable to other District personnel. The Purchasing Card is issued in your name and it will be assumed that any purchases made against the card will have been made by you and are your responsibility.
- The Purchasing Card may be used in person, via telephone, mail, fax or the internet.
- Cardholders are responsible for informing vendors that the Aurora Public Schools is exempt from sales tax. The state sales tax exempt number is printed on the card. Unauthorized use of the District's tax exempt status is strictly prohibited.
- Refunds and exchanges must be credited directly back to the Purchasing Card account. Under no circumstances should cash be received for refunds or exchanges
- The Purchasing Card should be treated with the same level of security as cardholders treat their own personal credit cards. **Lost or stolen cards should be immediately reported to Citi Bank – Customer Service (1-800-248-4553) and then to the Purchasing Department** so a new card can be ordered (303-326-1988)

To Obtain an Aurora Public Schools Purchasing Card

After you have read and understand the outlined procedures, please complete the electronic Cardholder Application, which can be found at <http://purchasing.aurorak12.org/p-cards/> . You must complete the application in its entirety as incomplete applications will not be processed. Your e-mail address is required on the application, so that you may receive correspondence related to the program. (I.e. suspected fraud alerts)

Read carefully and sign the Purchasing Cardholder Agreement Form. Your Principal/Department Supervisor will also need to sign this form.

When you receive your APS Purchasing Card, activate your p card and request a PIN, then sign **the back of the card**. Although the card is in your name, it is the property of the Aurora Public Schools and is only to be used for authorized Aurora Public Schools purchases defined in this manual. Purchasing Cards are automatically renewed by Citi Bank and a new card will be issued accordingly.

General Information

- When used in accordance with the guidelines established for this program, the Purchasing Card program carries corporate, not individual liability. The Purchasing Card does not impact your personal credit rating in any way.
- The Purchasing Card may be used at any vendor that accepts Visa credit cards.
- Use of the Purchasing Card not in accordance with the guidelines established for this program will result in the restriction or revocation of the card. It may also result in disciplinary action; including up to termination of employment.
- You will not be charged a fee for your card. However, if you misuse the card, or do not submit an itemized receipt you will be required to reimburse the District for any improper uses. If the employee does not reimburse the district directly, a payroll deduction may occur.

- Vendors are paid by Citi Bank within three business days of your transaction.

PROHIBITED TRANSACTIONS

ATM Transactions	Cash advances of any kind
Casinos and other gambling transactions	
Controlled Substances	Including alcohol
Fixed Assets	Fixed Assets are any unit of equipment with a unit cost of \$500 or more and an expected useful life of one or more years.
Leases	
Payments to individuals, consultants and employees	These payments may be subject to IRS 1099 reporting
Purchases for personal use	These may be considered fraudulent purchases
Weapons and ammunition	Any type

Purchasing Limits

Each Aurora Public Schools Purchasing Card has been assigned a monthly credit limit with a single transaction limit of **\$1,000**, and a monthly limit of **\$5,000** unless different amounts have been requested for your card by the budget authority of your site. **Purchasing will not change your credit limit without the approval of the Principal/Department Supervisor and the Purchasing Card Administrator.**

The Purchasing Card will be accepted for authorized purchases of generally approved Aurora Public Schools commodities. Businesses determined not to offer products commonly accepted for Aurora Public Schools use have been blocked from accepting the Purchasing Card.

“Strategies” are in place to clearly define the individual or departmental purchasing control limits. The controls are various combinations of:

- Merchant Category Code (MCC)
- Maximum dollar limit per transaction
- Monthly cardholder dollar limit

The strategies are tied to each individual account. Transactions falling outside the assigned purchasing controls are designed to be declined at the point of sale.

If your card is declined by a vendor and you feel the decline should not have occurred, you should contact Purchasing at 303-326-1988 or customer service at 1-800-248-4553 which is the number listed on the back of your Purchasing Card. Purchasing will help you determine if you were declined because of vendor blocking or if you have exceeded the control limits imposed on your Purchasing Card.

**Purchasing Card Billing Address:
80 Airport Blvd.
Aurora, CO. 80011
303-326-1988**

Reconciliation and Payment

A central invoice covering all Aurora Public Schools purchases will be paid by the Division of Finance. Individuals may be required to reimburse the District if the card is used improperly. If the employee does not reimburse the district directly, a payroll deduction may occur.

It is required that you retain all itemized receipts for goods purchased for three years. If you purchase via phone, internet or mail, require the vendor to include an itemized receipt with the goods when the product is shipped to you. If a receipt is lost or not itemized, you will be required to reimburse the District.

Every transaction will be imported into Charge Rx and will require the following for proper reconciliation.

- Scan and attach an itemized receipt and business purpose for each transaction
- Cardholder and supervisor need to approve the charges.
- Business meal transactions require a list of attendees.
- Keep a record of receipts for three years.

Personal use of district P-Cards is prohibited. Instances of personal usage will be addressed immediately, regardless of intention, and may become a disciplinary issue. Additionally, fees may be assessed when reimbursement checks are returned to APS for insufficient funds.

Sales tax should not be paid on most district transactions as the district maintains a tax exempt status with the state of Colorado and the city of Aurora. Cardholders are responsible for informing vendors of the district's tax exempt status. The state sales tax exempt number is printed on the card. If a transaction should have been tax exempt and tax was inadvertently paid, the amount of the sales tax must be reimbursed to the district.

When reimbursing the district, employees should submit checks to the designated cash handler at their site for deposit and a copy of the related APS AR Deposit Report must be attached to the P-Card statement as backup documentation. Under no circumstances should cash be sent via interschool mail.

When Your Records Do Not Agree with Your Transaction in Charge Rx

There may be an occasion when you find transactions in Charge Rx that do not correlate with your retained receipts. Reconciliation of your transactions in Charge Rx is very important to determine if you made a particular purchase, the amount of the transaction is correct, or you have a quality or service issue.

Your first recourse is to contact the vendor involved to try to resolve the error. If a vendor agrees that an error has been made, they will credit your account.

If you are unable to resolve the issue directly with the vendor, contact Purchasing or the customer service department at Citi Bank 1-800-248-4553. When calling be sure to have detailed information regarding the dispute and state that you would like to dispute a charge on your Purchasing Card. You are required by law to submit the information in writing to initiate a claims dispute with Citi Bank.

Any charge you wish to dispute must be identified in writing within 30 days of the date of transaction.

- The P-Card Agreement will now be signed electronically annually by all cardholders. An e-mail reminder with a link to the form will be sent in July. The due date will be the last business date in August. Any cardholder who does not have a signed agreement submitted by then will have their card deactivated until such time that it is submitted.



In Summary

The Aurora Public Schools Purchasing Card Program is an opportunity to reduce the time it takes to input data related to small purchases, expedite the purchasing process at the school/department level and reduce administrative expenses.

Historically, Aurora Public Schools has used numerous other methods (manual checks, petty cash, A/P checks, purchase orders, etc.) to make small dollar purchases. The Purchasing Card process will allow Aurora Public Schools to realize significant savings in administrative processing costs while providing a customer friendly, efficient and effective method to buy small dollar items.

We ask you to exercise good judgment and act within your authorized budget when using your card. The Purchasing Card is issued in your name and all activity will be assumed to have been incurred by you. We ask you to maintain simple but accurate records and itemized receipts for auditing purposes.

We are always working to continually improve the way we conduct business and your feedback is vital in helping us achieve that goal. Your use of the Purchasing Card for appropriate purchases can help produce cost savings by significantly reducing the amount of labor involved in processing the many thousands of transactions by the Aurora Public Schools each year.

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