

P-CARD NEWS

Quarterly Newsletter MAY 2009

A Note from Cecilia McClay, Manager P-card Operations:

Welcome to the first edition of the P-card newsletter. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for using their p-card whenever possible. Not only does it cut down in transactional costs, but it's a convenient and quick way to procure goods for your department.

Since 1998, the P-card program has grown from 700 to 80,000 transactions and from \$112,000 to \$27 million annually. Since its inception, the use of the p-card has saved the University over \$20 Million in transactional costs. With everyone's combined effort, we expect this program to continue to grow as we research areas to be paid by p-card

Rita (Cardarelli) Carlo is now assisting with p-card questions, problems or concerns. You can contact Rita at 2-4855 or e-mail us at: pcard@bc.edu.

P-CARD DECLINES OR QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT RITA @ 2-4855
Or e-mail @ cardarri@bc.edu

Split transactions: Convenient for you, but bad for BC



A split transaction is a product or service over the allowed single-transaction limit of \$5,000 that is paid for by p-card as two or more separate transactions. It is against BC Procurement Policy to pay for a single transaction with two (2) or more payments on your PCARD for the following reasons:

First, splitting a transaction may cause us not to identify a capital asset. It is crucial that capital assets be recorded by BC and tagged by Plant Accounting. A capital asset is defined as a piece of equipment or furniture with a life of more than three years and a value, or combined value (such as two computers) of more than \$5,000.

Secondly, orders over \$5,000 need to be bid by Procurement Services regardless of the source of the funding. Competitive bidding saves the University millions of dollars annually. Procurement Services will include maintenance agreements, warranties, insurance, payment terms and shipping in the bid process.

Attempts to circumvent policies and procedures set up to protect the University, such as splitting transactions, jeopardize the entire p-card program. Internal Audit reviews reports to identify split transactions, and other

out-of-policy situations on a regular basis. We appreciate your effort to ensure that out-of-policy transactions are not found.

New Cell Phone Policy



Cell phones and cell phone service payments (including a PDA, Blackberry or iPhone) are no longer allowed on your p-card. This policy includes all faculty and staff.

In an effort to meet IRS regulations, BC has a new cell phone policy which took effect on January 1, 2009. BC now offers a taxable allowance for cell phones only if the employee's duties and responsibilities require them to carry one. The appropriate Vice President can authorize a cell phone for University business. Authorization will take place if the job function requires considerable time outside the office and it's important to the University that this employee is accessible or the job function requires them to be accessible outside of normal, scheduled working hours.

Even with VP approval, cell phone bills are not to be paid for by p-card. They are reimbursed through a cell phone allowance although paid for initially by the individual. If you would like more information, please visit the Controller's website www.bc.edu/offices/controller

Fiscal Year End

With fiscal year end approaching, please anticipate your purchases and watch your spending. Laptop and computer purchases will be shut off May 15 to be sure they can be delivered prior to May 31.

Please keep in mind, even though p-cards can be used up until May 29, the vendor must submit all their transactions for that day to the bank prior to 5pm on May 29. Otherwise, the transactions will appear in the new fiscal year. Please plan accordingly.

Pcard Year End Dates to Remember for FY09/10:

May 26 – Last day for pcard related transfers

May 29 – Last day for pcard transactions from vendors

June 2 – First day for pcard transactions for the new fiscal year, pending funding

E-mail and P-card Fraud



Please remember that US Bank will never, ever, send you an e-mail to tell you your card has been compromised, your account needs updating or they need to verify personal information. This scam is called phishing and the e-mail, which looks very official, usually carries the logo of US Bank or whatever bank they are impersonating. Please remember never to provide personal information such as social security numbers, bank accounts or credit card numbers. Contact Procurement if you have any questions.

Ask Cecilia:

In this section of the newsletter we will share information regarding the p-card program that may be helpful to others. Please direct p-card questions or helpful hints for this section to: pcard@bc.edu

Take Out or Restaurant?

Dear Celia, I tried using my p-card at Roggie's and it declined. Why? I took the food back to the office for a meeting.

Maria

Dear Maria, Roggie's has a merchant category code of *restaurant*. That is a code that the vendor arranged with its bank to identify itself as a specific business to the IRS. I receive many calls asking why a card doesn't work even though the food was take-out. BC has no control over what a business code is, and even though you're taking the food back to your office, it doesn't change the fact that the company, and associated category attached to their credit card machine, is listed as a restaurant. Restaurants are not allowed on the p-card because more documentation is required for tax purposes than is available on a pcard transaction.

Purchases made thru BC's Bureau of Conferences stay on campus to support BC functions and employees (instead of university funds leaving campus); therefore, we encourage using BC's Bureau of Conferences (www.bc.webfood.com) for your business luncheons.

These purchases have the added advantage of being capable of payment with chart-strings, thereby helping the university to avoid expensive credit card processing fees. However, if you need to order food for a meeting you can obtain a list of "take-out" establishments that are merchant coded as "fast food or take-out" and not "restaurant" on the procurement website under: <http://www.bc.edu/offices/buy/>.

Credit Card Security

Dear Celia, The fraud department called me from US Bank to verify charges. I haven't used my p-card in several months but my number has been stolen. How can this happen? John

Dear John, Criminals obtain valid credit card numbers and then run card numbers in sequential order. US Bank is diligent in making sure your card is protected but you, the cardholder, need to take steps to protect your card. Keep your credit card numbers in a safe place. Never put your credit card number on an e-mail. Never have your credit card number on your desktop. Always lock up credit cards and check your statement carefully every month. Remember, US Bank only allows 60 days to dispute a charge. If you think that your card has been compromised, please contact US Bank's fraud department at 1-800-523-9078.

Address Verification

Dear Celia, My card won't work. It's not "address verifying". I put 140 Commonwealth Avenue. Isn't that our location? Anna

Dear Anna, This is a common, tricky question. Many vendors verify the address before your card can be accepted. What they're looking for is the exact address under your name on your statement, and it's usually your department, building and room number. For example, the address on my P-card is: Procurement ServMore Hall 180

New Employee

Dear Celia, I'm a new employee and my boss told me that I need to get a p-card. Where do I go? Mike

Dear Mike, You need to go to your department business administrator or P-2. That's the person in your department who handles the budget. That person needs to complete an application for you on Peoplesoft.

Once the application is done you will receive an e-mail from me, within two weeks when your card arrives. This email includes the requirements for obtaining the card, which is to read the p-card user's guide and take the quiz (confirming that you read the guide). P-cards are picked up in our Accounts Payable Office, More Hall Room 190.