

Corporate Purchasing Card Distribution and Usage	
Adopted: March 20, 2017	Last Reviewed/Revised: February 6, 2023
Next Scheduled Review: 2025-2026	
Associated Policies & Procedures: III-13 Corporate Purchasing Card Distribution and Usage I-25 Purchasing VI-11 Purchasing I-34 (A) Reimbursement of Board Business Expenses for Employees VI-90 Reimbursement of Board Business Expenses for Employees I-34 (B) Reimbursement of Board Business Expenses for Trustees and External Members of Board Committees I-42 Out of Province Staff Travel VI-73 Meal Expenses for Employees at Board Sanctioned Events	

Purpose

The Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) provides to designated staff and trustees the availability of a Corporate Purchasing Card to be used for approved HCDSB-related travel and business expenses.

Application and Scope

A Corporate Purchasing Card is available to the following elected Board representatives and employees:

- Elected Trustees
- Senior Staff, Managers, and other authorized personnel
- School Principals
- Curriculum, Student Success and Special Education Consultants
- School staff (site card) under the supervision of the Principal

Definitions

Budget Holder - an employee of the HCDSB that is accountable for the budget of their respective school/department(s).

Cardholder - an employee of HCDSB who holds a HCDSB-issued Purchasing Card in their name.

Financial Institution - an establishment that provides financial services for its clients or members and is the issuer of the Purchasing Card.

General Ledger (GL) Code – a unique number given to each budget account within the financial system.

Monthly Spend Limit - the maximum dollar threshold, including taxes, allowed on a Purchasing Card for a one-month period beginning on the eighth day of every month.

Purchasing Card (P-Card) - a commercial card that allows organizations to purchase goods and services in lieu of a traditional purchasing process.

Single Transaction Limit - the maximum dollar threshold, including taxes, allowed on a Purchasing Card for individual purchase.

Site Card - a nameless Purchasing Card designed to be used by a number of employees within a school/department where the Budget Holder is accountable for the use of that card.

Unauthorized Charge - a transaction applied against a Purchasing Card without having official permission or approval.

Principles

- Approved employees and sites are authorized to use the Purchasing Card to purchase goods and services in support of sound business practices. Corporate purchasing cards must be used only for expenses incurred in relation to a cardholder's duties. Benefits include:
 - Reducing the number of invoices, cheque requisitions and cheques processed through the Accounting Department.
 - Reducing the number of purchase orders and purchase requisitions through the Purchasing Department.
 - Providing a simplified process and an increased level of service.
 - Reducing supplier invoicing and reducing turnaround time for payment.
- To provide a convenient payment method for low-value goods and services by simplifying the purchasing process, reducing paperwork, reducing vendor payment time and empowering school/department staff.
- Authorized employees who employ a Corporate Purchasing Card under HCDSB's Purchasing Policy and Administrative Procedures, should use it to pay for approved business expenses whenever possible.

Requirements

Requirements are outlined under the following headings:

1. General Information

2. Operational Guidelines

- 2.1 Purchasing Card Issuance
- 2.2 Purchasing Card Spend Limits
- 2.3 Purchasing Card Rejection
- 2.4 Reconciliation, Payment & Record
- 2.5 Transferred, On Leave, Resigned, Terminated or Retired Employees
- 2.6 Lost or Stolen Cards

3. Prohibitions and Compliance

1. General Information

A Corporate Purchasing Card (P-card) is a HCDSB-issued credit card. It can be used for purchases of school supplies and services almost anywhere the card is accepted.

The P-card program will be administered by Purchasing Services, which will maintain a master list of all P-cards noting the name of the cardholder and site cards and the monetary limits of each card. All requests for P-cards and all changes and other documentation relating to the cards are to be submitted to the Purchasing Services for review and to be approved by the Senior Manager, Financial Services or Superintendent of Business Services.

The Halton Catholic District School Board assumes liability for all authorized charges on the Purchasing Cards. **The individual cardholders and site cardholders are not personally liable for approved business expenses.**

2. Operational Guidelines

The P-card may be used for purchases up to the single transaction limit and monthly spending limit set for each card including all taxes and subject to the restrictions outlined in Section 3 – Prohibitions and Compliance of this Administrative Procedure.

The Purchasing Services, with the approval of the Senior Manager, Financial Services, will determine the single transaction limit and monthly spend limit of each purchase card issued.

Single transaction limits and monthly spend limits are fixed and cannot be increased without the approval of the Purchasing Services and the Senior Manager, Financial Services.

To limit exposure or liability to HCDSB, and the person or site named on the card, the cardholder must be aware of the following practices:

- The cardholder is responsible for ensuring sufficient funds are available in the budget before using the P-card.
- When not being used, the P-card should be kept in a secure location.
- In the case of site cards, the Visa Sign-Out/In Tracking Sheet must be maintained to know where the card is at all times.
- When using the P-card for telephone or online purchases, every precaution should be taken to avoid the risk of unauthorized use of the card.

- Upon transfer, leave, retirement or termination of employment from HCDSB, the cardholder must confirm cancellation and return the P-card to Purchasing Services.

2.1 Purchasing Card Issuance

All P-cards issued by HCDSB remain the property of the financial institution listed on the P-Card and, as such, may be cancelled/revoked at any time.

Prospective cardholders will be required to submit a Corporate Purchasing Card Authorization Form. All original Visa Authorization Forms are to be approved by the Purchasing Services, initialled by the Senior Manager, Financial Services and are maintained by the Purchasing Department.

A P-card shall only be issued upon the approval of the Superintendent of Business Services and Treasurer for new positions required a P-Card and of the Senior Manager, Financial Services, for re-issued P-Cards to existing positions.

2.2 Purchasing Card Spend Limits

P-card limits vary depending on the budget holder's responsibility and budget allocation. From time to time, it may be necessary to have spend limits increased. In this case, a written request to increase the spend limits must be sent to the Purchasing Services for approval by the Senior Manager, Financial Services. Changes can be made effective immediately upon approval of the Senior Manager, Financial Services. In the event the Senior Manager, Finance is not available, approval should be requested from the Superintendent, Business Services and Treasurer or Purchasing Services.

2.3 Purchasing Card Rejection

If a P-card is rejected, please notify the Purchasing Services who will inquire as to the reason the card was rejected. The most common rejections are:

- Over the monthly limit,
- Over single purchase limit,
- Incorrect PIN entered at the merchant location,
- Incorrect card information entered for online transactions,
- Blocked Merchant Category Code (MCC),
- Expired card or incorrect expiry date.

2.4 Reconciliation, Payment & Record

The Financial Institution will forward a detailed monthly statement directly to each cardholder/site to be appropriately reconciled. The individual/site will be required to retain itemized receipts for all P-card transactions. Cardholders are responsible for requesting itemized receipts from the vendor(s) if they are not automatically provided.

Random reviews/audits of statements and final approved reconciliations will be conducted on an ongoing basis. Supervisors are to ensure that all charges are in compliance with HCDSB policies and procedures (or that violations have been documented) and that the correct budget codes are used. Where non-compliance occurs, the subject expenditure will become a personal expense.



Throughout the month cycle, cardholders should reconcile transactions in the Financial Institution's online portal as they occur:

1. Match the itemized charges, with the appropriate receipt/invoice, to the transactions listed on the financial institution's online portal.
2. All reconciled transactions must contain a description of the purchase, an assigned GL code, and attached receipt before submitting to the Supervisor for final approval. It is the responsibility of the immediate Supervisor to ensure all charges are eligible for business expenses and supported by itemized receipts.
 - a. In the case of the Director of Education, the reconciled transactions will be approved by the Chair of the Board
 - b. In the case of Trustees, the reconciled transactions will be approved by the Chair of the Board
 - c. In the case of the Chair of the Board, the reconciled transactions will be approved by the Superintendent of Business Services.
3. Once final approval is issued by the Supervisor, the transaction is considered complete and ready for the Finance Department to allocate all charges to the appropriate GL codes.
4. **For school-issued P-cards (site cards) ONLY:** Elementary school Secretaries and secondary school Financial Clerks are the only personnel permitted to reconcile transactions. As part of the reconciliation process, a completed Funds Disbursement Form is to be uploaded, along with the receipt, for every reconciled transaction.
5. Discrepancies with any transactions must be identified, and the cardholder must take appropriate action to resolve any issues.
6. In the event of unauthorized charges, the Cardholder must notify the Purchasing Services department. The Purchasing Services department will then contact the Financial Institution's fraud investigations department to dispute the charge. All fraudulent transactions must be reconciled by selecting a MISC GL code – all credits must be reconciled by using the same MISC GL code to net \$0.
7. All transactions must be reconciled, with final approval, within 10 business days of the P-card statement issue date. In the case of schools, during the months of July and August, it will be the responsibility of the school to submit their reconciliations by September 15. Transactions that are not reconciled on time will be handled as follows:

1st OCCURRENCE: FOLLOW-UP. Finance staff will follow up with the cardholder or school to understand the issues or barriers that prevented the card from being reconciled within the required timeframe.

2ND OCCURRENCE: FORMAL VISA CARD RECONCILIATION PLAN. Cardholders will be put on a formal reconciliation plan that includes a monthly meeting with finance staff. Requests for increases to VISA card limits will only be approved if VISA reconciliations are current.

3RD OCCURRENCE: VISA CARD SUSPENDED. Cardholders can reapply for their VISA card to be reinstated once VISA reconciliations are current. Reapplications will be



reviewed by the Sr. Manager of Financial Services with possible use restrictions being implemented.

2.5 Transferred, On Leave, Resigned, Terminated Or Retired Employees

In case of a transfer within HCDSB, the named cardholder will take his/her card to their new location. The Purchasing Services department will revise the location information within the financial institution's portal. Site cards remain at the indicated site at all times regardless of staff transfers.

If a cardholder is on a leave of absence, worker's compensation, long term disability or otherwise away from his/her regular place of employment for an extended period, it is the responsibility of the cardholder to return the card to their Supervisor. The Purchasing Services department will temporarily suspend the card within the financial institution's portal. Upon the employee's return to full active duty, the card will be reinstated.

When a cardholder leaves the employment of HCDSB due to resignation, termination or retirement, it is the responsibility of the cardholder's Supervisor to advise the Purchasing Services department and return the card for destruction. The Purchasing Services department will notify the financial institution to cancel the card.

All transactions must be reconciled with final approval before any departure.

2.6 Lost or Stolen Cards

If the P-card is lost or stolen, immediately notify the Purchasing Services department or US Bank (if outside HCDSB business hours) by calling 1-800-588-8065.

The lost or stolen card will be cancelled with the Financial Institution and a replacement card will be issued.

3. Prohibitions and Compliance

- A P-Card shall not be used for any personal expenses. Such fraudulent use of the card could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- A P-Card shall not be used for cash advances or use in any cash dispensing machine.
- The P-card can only be used to make official HCDSB purchases within the HCDSB limitations established under the policies and procedures referenced herein. Purchases such as alcohol, tobacco products, betting, court costs, adult entertainment, etc., are strictly prohibited.
- The site card cannot be used by any staff member without the approval of the Principal/department budget holder.
- Site cards can only be used by paid employees of the HCDSB.
- Individual P-card holders shall not share the card. They alone may use the card.
- No purchases shall be divided to circumvent single transaction limits.



- Accumulation of any benefits from the use of a P-Card shall not accrue to the individual cardholder.

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Administrative Council

AUTHORIZED BY: _____
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board