



**To:** Deans, Directors, Department Chairs, Procurement Card Holders, Procurement Card Holder Supervisors or designated Procurement Card Reviewers

**From:** Panther Express

**Date** January 07, 2015

**Subject:** Procurement Card (P-card) Program

The University's P-card program has been available for department purchasers as a convenience to process certain types of low-dollar value purchases. Although the P-card is convenient, like a personal credit card, it carries a higher risk of fraud and misuse than PantherExpress System purchase orders. In order to mitigate this risk, the University has articulated policies on P-card use, and provides tools to departments to help monitor charges.

### **Policy**

The [P-card policy \(05-02-12\) has been updated](#) to clarify appropriate uses of the University's P-card, and to remind P-card holders, their supervisors and designated P-card transaction reviewers of their responsibilities in preventing fraud and abuse. Please take time to [read policy 05-02-12\\* closely](#).

The most significant clarification on appropriate uses of the P-card relates to laboratory chemicals and biological materials restrictions. Several scientific departments provided valuable feedback that the current restrictions were too broad, and created unnecessary hurdles when trying to purchase certain unique scientific and medical supplies. We worked with representatives from these departments and the Office of Environmental Health and Safety to refine these restrictions, thereby increasing flexibility while managing risk. We will continue to closely monitor purchases in the laboratory chemicals and biological materials categories to determine if the refined definitions are appropriate.

### **Automated tools to streamline review and improve oversight**

An independent minimum monthly review of the business purpose of each transaction has been required since the inception of the University's P-card program. However, this review has involved a labor-intensive process of matching receipts to the VISA monthly statement to the Level Reports.

Also, the quality of individual P-card purchase transaction data available to the University from VISA has improved steadily over the years. Transaction data quality largely depends on the technological sophistication of the supplier accepting the P-card as payment. Due to recent supplier technology improvements, we can now obtain a detailed description of each item purchased for approximately 60% of P-card transactions.



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In order to streamline the transaction review process and to take advantage of improved data quality, we have improved the PRISM P-card Application. P-card transaction reviewers can now review the details of P-card transaction online approximately three days after the supplier has processed the payment transaction. Also, PRISM P-card Application transactions may now be viewed online for the fiscal Level Report period (versus VISA posting date) in which the purchase actually posted, thereby eliminating the need to manually reconcile the monthly VISA Statement to the Level Reports.

### Training

We will be contacting all P-card holders, their supervisors and designated transaction reviewers for training on the changes mentioned above in the first calendar quarter of 2015.

As always, it is a pleasure to serve your purchasing needs. If you have questions, please contact PantherExpress Customer Service by submitting an [online inquiry](#) or by calling 412-624-3578. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*University of Pittsburgh – PantherExpress*

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\*Policy 05-02-12 is located at this web address: <http://cfo.pitt.edu/policies/documents/policy05-02-12.pdf>