

The Division of Financial Operations (DFO) is committed to providing supports and services to schools, Field Support Centers (FSC), clusters, central and field offices, and all DOE employees.

As part of this commitment, the Procurement Card (P-Card) Unit within DFO has created the following list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding P-Card usage.



P-Cards: Frequently Asked Questions

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P-Card FAMIS Certification

Q. If I return an item purchased with my P-Card, do I still need to certify the transaction within FAMIS?

A. Yes. All purchases – with the exception of fraudulent transactions – must be certified within FAMIS.

Q. I found a fraudulent transaction on my P-Card statement. What do I do?

A. If a fraudulent transaction appears on your statement, you must dispute it by performing each of the following steps:

- Call Citibank – (800) 248-4553 – to notify it of the fraudulent transaction(s).
- In FAMIS, [P-Card Expense Reporting screen](#), select “report dispute”. Enter reason for dispute in the justification field. Select save.
- Send an email to the P-Card Unit – pcers@schools.nyc.gov – to alert it to the charge.

Q. I certified my P-Card purchases, but when I tried to make a purchase today, my P-Card was declined. Why?

A. You likely failed to certify your P-Card purchases on your previous statement prior to the certification deadline. Given this, your P-Card must be reinstated – before you can begin using it again. Once you have certified your purchases, send an email to the P-Card Unit – pcers@schools.nyc.gov – stating that certification has been completed and that you wish to have your card reinstated. In the email, please include the WC number associated with this P-Card.

Q. How long will it take for my P-Card to be reinstated?

A. It depends whether this is your first, second, or third offense for this school year. The progressive consequences are as follows:

- If this is your first offense, after certifying your P-Card purchases in FAMIS, you must send an email to the P-Card Unit – pcers@schools.nyc.gov – stating that certification has been completed. In the email, please include the WC number associated with the P-Card you wish to have reinstated. Your P-Card will be reinstated within 48 hours after verification of certification.
- If this is your second offense, after certifying, you must send an email to the P-Card Unit – pcers@schools.nyc.gov – stating that certification has been

completed. In the email, please include the WC number associated with the P-Card you wish to have reinstated. Your P-Card

will be reactivated 90 days from the date that you completed certification.

- If this is your third offense, your P-Card will remain deactivated for the remainder of the school year.

Making Purchases

Q. My P-Card was denied because of an ineligible MCC code. What is that?

- A. Each vendor is assigned a Merchant Category Code (MCC) by the bank. The MCC code classifies the business by the type of products or services it provides its customers. Some vendors, given their MCC codes, are restricted by the DOE. If you need to make a purchase from a vendor that is restricted by the DOE, you must send an email to cdash@schools.nyc.gov or contact the P-Card Unit at (718) 935-2939. In the email (or on the telephone), please provide a full description of what you wish to purchase, why you need to use this particular vendor, and the total cost of the purchase. If the purchase is related to the business of education, the P-Card Unit will instruct the bank to temporarily lift the restriction for that vendor to allow you to make your purchase. Since your original transaction was blocked, you must make your purchase again.

Q. I mistakenly used my P-Card for a personal purchase. What do I do?

- A. Report the purchase in error to the P- Card Unit at (718) 935-2939. Provide the name of the vendor and the dollar amount of the purchase. Write a personal check payable to the NYC Department of Education. In the "Notes" section of the check, please write "P-Card Repayment" and include your WC number. Mail the check to:

NYC Department of Education
P-Card Unit
65 Court Street, Room 1502
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Attn: Noli Hourahan

Q. Can I use my P-Card at Staples and still receive the DOE discount?

- A. The recommended method for purchasing merchandise from Staples is to order through the [FAMIS portal](#). Once logged in, select Procurement Card and then log into Staples. This will prompt you to log into the Staples Advantage Ordering site. If you recently received your card and cannot access this site, please email the P-Card Unit at pcers@schools.nyc.gov. In an emergency, you may shop at any Staples retail store but you will not be able to take advantage of favorable DOE pricing. Do not go to Staples.com or use the 800-number to order.

Q. As a cardholder, can I authorize my assistant principal or secretary to use my card to place orders on my behalf?

- A. The cardholder should not allow any person to use his or her card. During enrollment, the cardholder agreed that he or she is solely responsible for all transactions made with the card.

Q. When making online purchases, what address must I enter for the billing address?

- A. When making online purchases you must enter your school or office address for the billing address.

Q. I used my P-Card to make a purchase and was charged New York State sales tax. Why?

- A. The vendor may not be aware of DOE's tax exempt status. Therefore, it is best practice to provide the vendor with a completed [tax exemption certificate](#) to avoid being charged New York State general sales tax. Please refer to the [OTPS chapter of the SOP, Section 2.5.12](#) for guidance. Prior to making an online purchase, contact customer service on the vendor's website, to find out how to proceed with a tax exempt purchase.

Q. Can I get reimbursed for New York State sales taxes that were charged to my P-Card purchases?

- A. Yes. Contact the vendor to inform it of the DOE's tax exempt status, and request that the refund be credited directly to your P-Card.

Transaction Limits

Q. I tried to use my P-Card, without success, and when I called the bank, it said my spending limit is \$1. Why?

- A. When a p-card's spending limit is reduced to \$1, it means that the cardholder failed to certify his or her purchases by the due date. After certification, you must send an email to the P-Card Unit – pcers@schools.nyc.gov – stating that certification has been completed. In the email, please include the WC number associated with the P-Card you wish to have reinstated.

Q. I tried to use my P-Card, without success, and when I called the bank, it said my spending limit is \$2. Why?

- A. P-Card spending limits are reduced to \$2 when the cardholder has failed to submit requested documents to a P-Card review. Contact the P-Card Unit at (718) 935-2939.

Q. Is there a limit to how much I can charge to my P-Card in a single transaction?

- A. Yes. The single transaction limit is \$2,500.

Q. I would like to make a purchase, but the total amount exceeds the \$2,500 single transaction limit. Can I break the transaction down to several smaller transactions?

- A. No. This scenario is categorized as a split transaction. Split transactions are not permitted (see DFO's Standard Operating Procedure [SOP] for details, [OTPS section 4.4.6](#)). If you need to make a purchase that exceeds \$2,500, send a detailed request to cdash@schools.nyc.gov or call the P-Card Unit at (718) 935-2939. Upon review, you will be informed of whether or not your request will be honored.

Q. How many transactions can I make per day with my P-Card?

- A. Cardholders are limited to 8 transactions per day. If there are extenuating circumstances, please email or call the P-Card Unit – pcers@schools.nyc.gov or (718) 935-2939 – for assistance.

P-Card Reviews

Q. The P-Card reviewer requested a list of student attendees. What exactly should I submit?

- A. Submit a list including the names of each student who attended the event. This is your confirmation that these particular students were the recipients of the goods or services expensed. Do not submit the official student enrollment roster as this contains sensitive information, for example, students' dates of birth and students' identification numbers.

Q. I am under review for a parking expense. Why must I provide a meeting invitation, an agenda, and an approved TRAC (Travel Reimbursement and Approval Certification) document along with my parking receipt?

- A. Along with your parking receipt, these documents serve as proof that the parking expense was related to official DOE business. For example:
- The meeting invitation provides the time and location of the meeting, which should approximately correspond to the date and length of time your car was parked in a public lot or garage.

- The meeting agenda confirms your attendance at the meeting.
- Your TRAC documentation can be accessed via the [TRAC system](#). Once logged into the TRAC system, click the Show Chart link at the top of the page. Enter your TR document number on the next pop-up screen, then click search. The next screen that appears is the TRAC Case Flow screen. Click the bubble furthest to the right on the TRAC Case Flow screen. The next screen that appears is the TRAC Details screen. This is the screen that you should print and submit to the P-Card Unit per its request.

Your supporting documentation can be scanned and submitted via email to the p-card reviewer, or faxed to the P-Card Unit at (718) 935-2787. If you have any questions regarding supporting documentation, please call the P-Card Unit at (718) 935-2939.

Q. Expenses were disallowed during my P-Card review. Can I write a check from the General School Fund to reimburse the DOE?

- A. Improper use of a P-Card results in disallowance. You cannot use the General School Fund to reimburse the DOE. The charges appearing on your P-Card statement are your responsibility and you are personally liable for these expenditures. As part of the review process, the P-Card reviewer will instruct the P-Card holder exactly how to reimburse the DOE for the disallowed expense. Reimbursement must be in the form of a personal check payable to the NYC Department of Education. In the “Notes” section of the check, please write “P-Card Repayment” and include your WC number. Mail the personal check to:

NYC Department of Education
P-Card Unit
65 Court Street, Room 1502
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Attn: Noli Hourahan

Gifts & Incentive Awards

Q. My secretary is retiring and we plan to celebrate her retirement at a neighborhood restaurant. Can I use my P-Card to pay for this outing?

- A. No. OTPS funds must not be used to pay for employee gifts or celebrations. Further, P-Cards cannot be used to pay for donations to political parties or charities. This includes holiday celebrations and gift giving (for example, flowers, fruit baskets, etc.). For more information, see the [OTPS chapter of the SOP, section 4.4.6](#).

Q. What is an appropriate amount to give to a student as an incentive award?

- A. The maximum allowable expense per student is \$25 per occurrence. There must be an officially sanctioned incentive program defining the incentive award in writing. For more information, see the [OTPS chapter of the SOP, section 2.5.7](#).

General

Q. Are all DOE employees eligible to apply for a P-Card?

- A. No. Employees that hold certain titles are not eligible to apply for a P-Card. Please see the [OTPS chapter of the SOP, section 4.1](#), for the list of ineligible titles.

Q. I recently applied for a new P-Card and I plan to use it for an event next week. Is it possible to have delivery of my P-Card expedited?

- A. No. All applicants will receive their p-cards approximately 21 days after the application is approved by the Support Team.

Q. What is a WC number and why do I need to know the number when I call the P-Card Unit?

A. A WC number is a document number assigned to a P-Card application in FAMIS. The WC number is linked to your P-Card account number and is used as an identifier for that particular P-Card. It is good practice for you to know the WC number associated with your P-Card (especially if you have more than one P-Card) as this will reduce the amount of time you spend on the telephone if you ever need to call the P-Card Unit; the WC number will allow the P-Card Unit to quickly identify the P-Card in which you need assistance. If you do not know your WC number you can log into FAMIS and select Open Document Inquiry. Your WC number(s) will appear.

Q. Why does my P-Card balance, as viewed in FAMIS, differ from the balance found on my bank statement?

- A. Transactions do not post to FAMIS in real time. You can obtain your real-time balance by doing one of the following:
- Call the Citibank service line at (800) 248-4553. After entering your 16-digit card number and the last 4 digits of your social security number (SSN), you will be provided with an “available balance”. This amount represents your real-time P-Card balance.
 - Log on to the [Citibank Citimanager Web site](#) and follow the prompts.

Q. What is the difference between *current balance* and *available credit limit* in the Citi Manager application?

- A. Citibank defines the current balance as the amount that has already been spent on the P-Card, while the available credit limit is the amount available to spend on the P-Card.

Q. What is Chip and PIN?

- A. Chip and PIN cards contain an encrypted microprocessor that is embedded within the card. If the card is lost or stolen, the embedded microchip makes the card extremely difficult to counterfeit. All Citi Chip and PIN cards will continue to have a magnetic stripe, enabling cardholders to use their Citi Chip and PIN cards at merchants who have not yet adopted Chip and PIN technology. No personal information about the cardholder account (outside of account number, expiration date, PIN and Security Code) or cardholder is stored on the microchip.

Web links referred to in this document:

- P-Card Expense Reporting screen: <https://dfoforms.nycenet.edu/pcardexpensev2/login.aspx>
- FAMIS portal: <https://dfoforms.nycenet.edu/FAMISPortal/Login.aspx?sessiontoken=ul32ef45czcsiojqitckh2jv&link=logoff>
- Other Than Personal Services chapter of the Division of Financial Operations’ Standard Operating Procedures manual: <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/AF357509-D04A-4411-841C-7A17945356DA/0/RevisionToOTPS.pdf>
- Tax Exempt : <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/66D28ED7-7F53-4911-9EB0-ACDEF966CA9/0/otpsxb.pdf>
- TRAC system: <https://dfoforms.nycenet.edu/trac/>
- Citibank Citimanager Web site: <https://home.cards.citidirect.com/CommercialCard/Cards.html>
- Chip & PIN: <https://www.citi.com/credit-cards/template.do?ID=chip-technology-questions>