Top Ten Tips for Using the Procurement Card

Towson University participates in the State of Maryland’s Procurement Card Program (PCP). The procurement card is the most efficient way for University employees to purchase supplies and services valued at $5,000 or less.

- BPW Advisory No.P-001-98, Corporate Purchasing Card Mandatory Use, requires use of procurement cards for purchases valued at less than $5,000.

- Towson University’s PCP is managed by the Procurement Card Program Administrator (PCPA). Financial Services manages the Procurement Card Reallocation and Reconciliation Website, and conducts periodic reviews of every department’s procurement cards.

1. The procurement card is for departmental business only, not for personal use. Contact the PCPA immediately if a personal purchase is discovered.

2. Only the cardholder may use the procurement card. The university employee who makes purchases for the department must be the cardholder. The cardholder may make purchases for others in the department, but may not loan the Visa card or account number to other employees. Be sure to sign the invoice for any purchase made for someone else, so sharing will not be suspected.

3. Complete documentation is required. Retain an original receipt, invoice, or credit memo for every transaction.

4. After the close of each cycle (around the 25th of the month), complete a Monthly Transaction Reconciliation Log—even if you made no purchases. The form is available on the Procurement Card Reallocation and Reconciliation Website. A properly completed monthly log will include:

- The bank statement for the billing cycle, signed/dated by the cardholder and reviewer
- A receipt or credit memo for each item
- A description of each transaction on the log, supplemented as necessary
- Supporting documentation (purchase requests from supervisors, notation of purchases made for others, packing slips, guest list for catered events, etc.)
- Signature of the cardholder and reviewer on the reconciliation log, signifying that the statement was reconciled, and that the reviewer checked each transaction to confirm that it was for a university purpose, complied with policy, and that the price was fair and reasonable.
- Retain logs for five (5) years in a secured central location within the department.
5. Prompt and consistent monthly reviews ensure appropriate procurement card use. Reviewers must request and approve a transaction log from each assigned cardholder by the 25th of every month. The reviewer’s approval signature on the log and the bank statement acknowledges that each transaction supports a university project or need, and is an appropriate use of the department’s budget.

6. Keep the account number, records, and card secure at all times. Don’t leave statements or logs out where others might copy the account number. Unless you must regularly make purchases at off-campus locations, don’t carry the card in your wallet or handbag; keep it secured in a locked file.

7. Transactions valued at more than $5,000 always require purchase requisitions. Submit a requisition to Procurement so a purchase order can be issued to the vendor.

8. All procurement card transactions must comply with TU policies, including Policy 08-03.03, Restricted and Prohibited Purchases, published on the university policy website. Note: Purchase of gift cards with the procurement card is absolutely prohibited.

9. Submit disputed charges to the bank within 60 days. After 60 days, the bank is no longer contractually required to assist cardholders with credits for inaccurate/defective shipments or non-delivered merchandise.

10. Procurement card transactions are public information. Think: If my purchase were a headline, how would it reflect on the University?

- Finally: Know and observe the monthly Visa billing cycle:

  - **25th** of the month: Visa billing cycle closes; a new cycle begins on the 26th. If the 25th is a weekend day, the billing cycle ends on the next business day.

  - **1st** of the month: US Bank prints/mails the monthly statement

  By the **5th** of the month: Each cardholder should have received the monthly statement

  Between the **5th** and **7th**: Cardholder completes all necessary reallocations of charges from the default account to other department budget accounts.

  By the **15th** of the month: Cardholders reconcile/signs statement and submits to reviewer

  By the **25th** of the month: Reviewer must report to PCPA any outstanding cardholder logs or unresolved irregularities in cardholder logs (e.g., missing receipts, personal purchases, gift cards).

  **45 days after cycle close**: PCPA must certify to Annapolis that all transactions for the prior cycle were in compliance with program requirements.