

UMBC P-card Questions & Answers

General Procurement

How can we purchase general office supplies, like tissues for offices and coffee for the staff break room?

While most office supplies, like pens, paper, tape, etc. can be purchased from multiple suppliers through PAW or in a store with a P-card, items that are used for faculty and staff only and that don't have a business purpose can't be purchased with State funds. If the purchase of tissues is for students who would visit offices that would be acceptable. Coffee and snacks for staff break rooms are never acceptable and should be provided through contributions of the staff who will use them.

Once we get approval for a software purchase, do we need to do that approval to renew licenses for following years?

Yes, as things with technology are changing all the time approval for renewal is required.

How does the State view student staff - as students or as staff?

The State looks at the primary relationship that exists. Student staff are students first, so they are viewed as students by the State.

We are allowed to use PayPal, correct? With all documentation?

Yes, PayPal is allowed but you need an itemized invoice or agreement that shows what you purchased. The PayPal receipt alone is not enough documentation.

Is there a way to remove a Run Control ID from the Pcard Reports Suite? I have 2, but one goes to an old card number that is no longer active.

Currently, there is no way to remove old run controls. This is an aspect of PS that we cannot change.

My P-card expires in November. When should I start applying for a new one? How long does it usually take to receive a new card? What form do I need to submit to apply for a new card?

The P-card will expire after a four-year period. Prior to its expiration, a replacement card will be sent by US Bank to Procurement. Procurement will contact the cardholder to pick up their new card. Cardholders will be required to sign for their new card (photo ID is required). If the P-card is sent directly to the cardholder, it must be brought to Procurement before use.

Is there somewhere we can find a list of businesses that have the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) certifications?

You can find the list of certified businesses on the [MDOT website](#).

Has there been any consideration given to creating a system/structure that would allow Center Directors (supervisors) to hold P-cards? It is cumbersome and labor-intensive to require that specialists attend a post-program dinner, for example, simply for the purpose of swiping the card.

A center director can be a cardholder. You would just need a P-card supervisor that is in a position above the director (can't be someone that reports to the director). In addition, P-cards can't be used to pay for meals at restaurants.

I report directly to the Dean, can my P-card supervisor be someone other than a direct supervisor? Could the P-card supervisor be in a lateral position?

If there is someone in the Dean's Office who could be a supervisor, then it would be allowable if the Dean agrees to delegate. For clarity, it could be anyone in the Dean's office (for example, an Assistant Dean, a Business Specialist), so long as that person has been so delegated. It can never be someone who reports to the cardholder.

Can we request an alternate delivery address via PAW?

If the desired address is not already in PAW as option, there is a link in PAW to request a new delivery address. By policy, all items must be sent to an approved mailing address.

Did I read that using the P-card for 4imprint purchases was prohibited?

That is correct. There is a PAW punchout for 4imprint that gives UMBC better pricing. All 4imprint purchases should be made via PAW.

My professors want to purchase subscriptions and enter their contact info, password, etc. Is it okay if I enter the P-card info for them?

Absolutely! It is common for staff who need to pay for something with a P-card to have a cardholder enter the payment information on their computer. The cardholder can never share the number verbally or written with another person.

Is the PeopleSoft P-Card Report still required documentation for reconciliation? It seems redundant now that we have the PeopleSoft transaction log, and I didn't see it mentioned in the slides.

The only PS P-card report that needs to be run is the PS transaction log printed which needs to be included in the reconciliation documentation.

Is there any way to fix the transaction report generation process so you don't have to keep hitting refresh to see Success and Posted?

Unfortunately, there is nothing that can be done to improve this at this time. This is an aspect of PS that we cannot change.

Woodlawn Bus company requires a contract signed before a trip occurs. I heard that the department head cannot sign the contract. If this is true, who do we send the contract to in Procurement and who is designated signer in the department?

These can be sent to David Clurman (clurman@umbc.edu) or Ann Fusselbaugh (fusselba@umbc.edu) for review and signature.

Is there a contract with Dell?

Yes, and there is a punchout for Dell (as well as Apple) in PAW. Don't buy computers outside the contracts as they are set up for UMBC-specific configurations. The 3-year warranty needs to be purchased with the computer directly from Dell.

Sales Tax Exemption

Is it ever acceptable to pay tax?

Sales tax may be paid outside of the State of MD. We are not excluded from city, county, and room tax in-state. MD state sales tax should never be paid with the P-card.

I had to provide a phone number when using tax exempt at a supplier. If this happens, what is the phone number we should use?

Enter the phone number that is located on the back of the certificate - 1-800-492-1751.

Guidance/best practices for making purchases in retail stores - places that are easy/hard to deal with the tax exemption.

If a supplier is making it difficult when removing MD state sales tax, you are encouraged to make the purchase elsewhere. Accepting the exemption is not optional for Maryland retailers.

Documentation and Accounting

Can you retain a digital copy of records for 4 years and dispose of the physical copy before the 4-year mark?

Yes, digital records are considered the same as physical records for retention purposes.

Is it mandatory to keep paper records or can the whole process be completed via DocuSign?

The whole process can be done in DocuSign.

Can the P-card reconciliation be signed electronically? Also does the US Bank statement still need to be signed as well?

The reconciliation routes through DocuSign for electronic signatures. The DocuSign signature on the whole packet is sufficient. Wet signatures (hand-signed) are not needed with this process on any statement.

If I am no longer a P-card holder, and just a P-card supervisor. How long do I need to keep the monthly reconciliation folder in Box? Is there a point that you remove it?

The reconciliations need to be maintained for at least 4 years, longer for sponsored awards. Procurement maintains these files, so you don't need to worry about them.

What is UMBC's fiscal year close date?

June 30; you'll get emails from Finance on last transaction dates and fiscal close as we get closer.

I was looking for a car part in a "used part yard" and paid \$3 to enter and didn't find the part. How do I reconcile \$3?

You should have a receipt for the \$3 entrance charge. If that was not provided, write a memo to include with the monthly reconciliation documents. (missing receipt form? here?)

What do you do if an online store sends you a tax refund back in the form of a check vs a refund on the P-card?

Deposit the check with Business Services and allocate the credit to the chartstring that matches the original charge.

I have had packages delivered without packing receipts. Should I take a picture of the item?

A picture is great. Essentially, we're just looking for confirmation that we've received what we ordered. A note on the invoice can also work.

Could you clarify if I can reallocate charges even if I do not have a packing slip yet?

Yes, you can do this. Ideally, you should hold off on paying for something if you haven't received it yet, unless the supplier requires payment.

Is there a prompt from DocuSign sharing the expectation that someone needs to upload the DocuSign certification to a Box folder?

No. DocuSign will notify both the form initiator (usually the cardholder) and the P-card supervisor that the form has been completed. At that time, either the cardholder or supervisor can download the completed form from DocuSign and upload it to the cardholder's Box folder.

I sometimes get confused with what dates to input when I run the "PCard Reports Suite" report. How do I ensure I am using the correct dates each time/what dates do I put?

If you enter the fiscal year and then use the magnifying glass to select the "accounting period", this will give you a list of the accurate cycle dates to select from. See page 29 of the [P-card Reallocation Guide](#).

How will I remember which Box folder to upload the certification to?

Procurement sets this file up for you. In Box, click on “All Files” and it will be a folder that starts with your UMBC ID number and is formatted like this: *AB12345 - J. Martinez – P-card*.

Does the Bill To address need to say the main campus address or can it say the location I’m at which is the Rita Rossi Colwell Center?

The Bill To address should be: 1000 Hilltop Circle, Baltimore, MD 21250.

Is there a deadline for Peoplesoft Finance to reconcile P-card Statement, is it the 23rd of the month or 25th of the month?

The deadline is 25 days after the end of the prior billing cycle. The actual date changes from month to month due to weekends and holidays.

How can we simplify and/or streamline the reconciliation process so that it has less of an effect on our day-to-day operations?

It is as standardized as we can make it at the moment.

If you don’t reallocate in time, will you have to initiate Journal Entries (JEs)?

Yes, you’ll need to JE to the proper accounts. Transactions must be approved and reallocated by the 20th of the following month. Once they roll over to the general ledger they are no longer accessible.

Merchant Category Codes (MCC)

When a P-card declines, how do you know if it is a MCC issue or something else? What is the appropriate next step when it declines to find out what went wrong?

The two most common reasons for card declines are not enough credit left for the billing period and blocked MCC. There is a list of blocked MCC in the manual, but you won’t know what the merchant’s MCC is until you make the purchase. You can reach out to the PCPA or PCPAA to learn of the reason.

Do merchants generally know their code (MCC)?

Some do and some don’t. It is created when the merchant sets up their account to accept credit cards.

We host a Suits You Clothing Closet for students, which requires us to do one fairly large dry-cleaning run. Can we use the P-card for this student event? This is not for personal dry cleaning.

Dry cleaning is permitted for situations like this, as well as for tablecloths used for business purposes. Dry-cleaning is never acceptable for personal attire, including cap and gown. Some dry cleaners may have a blocked MCC for ‘personal services’ where the p-card cannot be used.

Where can we find which furniture is covered by Merchant Category Code (MCC)?

Furniture is not blocked by MCC. Due to State regulations, all furniture must be purchased through [Maryland Correctional Enterprises](#) (MCE) unless a [waiver](#) is granted by them.

Exceptions to use your P-card at a place other than MCE can be granted on a case-by-case basis with prior permission from Procurement staff.

Inventory

Regarding A/V equipment costing between \$1,000-\$5,000, do we need to go back and have items tagged?

Yes, the [sensitive inventory policy](#) governs what items must be tagged and inventoried regardless of payment method. We ask for a copy of the [inventory addition form](#) in the reconciliation to ensure that those assets have been tagged and to help with any future audit.

Is the Inventory Addition form needed for AV Equipment regardless of cost?

Only AV equipment costing between \$1,000 and \$5,000 must have this form completed. This includes display screens, televisions, cameras, and projectors. In addition, all computers, desktops, laptops, and tablets under \$5,000 must be tagged.

Split Purchases

Where can I find instructions on how to pay an invoice for over \$5,000, since the P-card can't be used?

If the expense has already been incurred, you'll need to enter a payment request and instructions can be [found here](#).

If an order requires a deposit that will later be deducted from the overall cost, is this considered a split purchase?

If the overall purchase does not exceed \$5,000, it is okay to pay a deposit. If it will be more than \$5,000, you should enter a requisition into PAW.

If you have a purchase of occurrences under a lump sum at \$2,000, does this fall under a split purchase or single sum?

Several purchases totaling less than \$5,000 is fine.

Food & Travel

Should the supervisor sign/approve a hotel bill that is paid three months before the room is used?

A hotel charge, often for no more than one night, can be prepaid before the event. Ideally, payment should be made at the time of the stay. Please ensure that pre-approval is obtained through the travel system.

Does a list of attendees need to be included to go along with a meal pre-approval form?

Yes, for all food purchases. That is a state requirement. If we're doing large events a flier for the event can be used as a substitute.

I heard that the P-card can be used at a grocery store for student events. However, the manual lists a broader list of reasons - authorized on campus activities (e.g., seminars, guest speakers, student programs or teaching purposes). Can you clarify?

The P-card can be used to purchase groceries for authorized campus events. Check out UMBC's policy on [Reimbursement for Business Meals and Purchase of Food Services Other Than Employee Travel](#). A fillable version of the Meal/Food Pre-Approval Form can be [found here](#).

Is all parking, including paying for a meter or a garage, allowed for travel?

Parking is a reimbursable expense for travel. If a P-card is accepted, you can use that. You'll need to ensure that you get a receipt and have approved travel if it's for overnight or out of state travel.

Is the purchase of fuel only a reimbursement expense?

No, P-cards can be used to purchase fuel. However, the purchaser must be the P-cardholder.

In Accounts Payable, we used to say that the meal tip can be up to 20% of the "subtotal" of the bill (pre-tax) for payment request reimbursements. Perhaps the P-card has that rule, as well?

The amount of tip should be no more than 20% of the subtotal. However, if gratuity is already included in the bill, you cannot then add an additional tip to the bill.

What if the two requests are submitted from the same person for \$5,000 each?

If one purchase was made by the cardholder before they had knowledge of the second purchase, it is not a split purchase. However, if someone asks you to purchase \$10,000 of supplies from the same supplier, yes, it would be a split purchase.

Are P-cards prohibited for airlines? like travel?

Yes, airlines, trains, and boats are all blocked by the MCC. Flights, trains, and boats must be booked through the travel system. P-cards can be used for car rentals using the [UMBC contracts](#).

I saw that the new user's guide says to fax a copy of the credit card to the hotel when paying for a guest. I've always had hotels ask for a signed credit card authorization form completed via Sertifi or sent via fax. Is it preferable to ask if they accept a faxed copy of the card instead of the form?

No - the credit card authorization form is fine to use and is actually preferred.

Is food at restaurants totally prohibited? We do post-event or donor-oriented dinners that are costly, and we fill out the meal pre-approval forms in advance for approved business purposes. I have been paying very expensive restaurant fees on my personal card and requesting reimbursement. Can the P-card not be used for this purpose instead?

Restaurants are a blocked MCC from the state that we cannot overrule. Caterers are allowed on the P-card. It is also possible that you could see if you can find a restaurant that is willing to accept a purchase order, where they would receive payment in about 30 days after the event.

I've heard conflicting answers about using places like Costco for snacks/supplies for student events. Can you please confirm if this is allowable as I don't believe they will accept a tax-exempt card unless there is a business account.

Departments can have business accounts with Costco, BJ's, and Sam's Club, etc. When the business account is created, the tax-exempt card can be used. Personal memberships at these warehouses are not permitted with the P-card.