

MAPP 04.01.11 P-Card Guidelines

I. **DEFINITIONS**

- A. Local Fund Procurement Card: A charge card issued to an employee of the university for the purpose of making authorized purchases on the university's behalf with local funds only. The university will issue payment for charges made with the Local Fund Procurement Card. Though federal funds (defined later) have additional restrictions, they are considered a type of "local" fund and could be used to pay for allowable transactions on Local Fund Procurement Cards.
- B. P-Card Program Administrator: University employee responsible for administering the Procurement Card Program for the university and acting as the primary liaison between the university and the bank.
- C. P-Card Program Coordinator: University employee responsible for processing/canceling cards, monitoring card transactions, processing payments to the bank, and training cardholders and department business offices for proper use of card and online bank system.
- D. Transaction Limits: A dollar limitation of purchasing authority assigned to the Cardholder for each total charge made with the Procurement Card. The standard transaction limit for purchases is \$5,000.00 per transaction. College/Division Administrators may establish lower limits on a per card basis. A single transaction/charge may include multiple items but cannot exceed the transaction limit. Transactions may not be split to avoid exceeding the transaction limit.
- E. Monthly Spending Limit: A dollar limitation of purchasing authority assigned to a Procurement Card on total charges made during a monthly billing cycle. The standard monthly spending limit is \$15,000.00 per credit card. College/Division Administrator may establish lower limits on a per card basis or request higher limits, if needed.
- F. Expense Report: A listing of all transactions charged to the Cardholder's Procurement Card account through the end of the monthly billing cycle. This report is generated from the online bank system provided by the bank that issues the P-Card.
- G. Supporting Documentation: A merchant produced or non-university document that records the relevant details for each item purchased including quantities, cost of item, , total charge amount, date of purchase, merchant's name and address, and description of what was purchased (e.g. itemized sales receipt, original invoice, packing slip, credit receipt, etc.).

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- H. Fraudulent activity: The intentional use of a P-Card for non-university purposes.
- I. Merchant Category Code (MCC): A code selected for a merchant to identify their type of business and merchandise sold.
- J. College/Division Business Administrator (CDA): The chief business officer within each college or division. The CDA is ultimately responsible for overseeing the use of P-Cards within their college/division.
- K. Business Contact: Individual who has been delegated the responsibility of reviewing, documenting, and/or assigning cost centers and accounts to P-Card transactions by the College/Division Administrator.
- L. Split Purchase: More than one transaction on the same day to the same vendor for which total amount is \$10,000 or more when federal funds will be used for any part of the transaction; or is \$15,000 or more when non-federal fund will be used for the entire transaction: or any activity that is an attempt to circumvent the University's bidding process (see MAPP 04.01.01). Also, a single transaction cannot be split between federal and non-federal funds if the total transaction amount is \$10,000 or more.
- M. Federal Funds: All funds received directly or indirectly from a federal government agency. A list of University of Houston fund codes, including federal funds, is located at: <https://uh.edu/office-of-finance/references/>

II. APPLYING FOR A NEW P-CARD

A. Completing Application

A Local Fund Cardholder Application/Approval form (Addendum A) must be completed for each prospective cardholder, approved by the appropriate College/Division Administrator, and submit the application to Accounts Payable via DocuSign along with the result of Authorization for Criminal History Investigation (see section B below).

B. Completing HR Form: Authorization for Criminal History Investigation

Employees in job positions authorized to use Procurement Cards (P-Cards) are considered to be in security-sensitive positions, as defined by Texas Education Code §51.215 and Texas Government Code §411.094.

Each prospective cardholder must complete HR form "Authorization for Criminal History Investigation" (<https://uh.edu/human-resources/talent-acquisition/chri/>) The form must be completed via the self-service portal. HR will notify the department of the result via e-mail. The HR e-mail notification authorizing the prospective cardholder to receive a P-Card should be attached to the P-Card Application Form and submitted to AP via DocuSign.

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If the prospective cardholder previously completed the “Authorization for Criminal History Investigation” process within the past six (6) months, he/she will not be required to complete the process again. In such cases, the department should attach the previous e-mail notification from HR with the background check results (or obtain another email from HR based on the prior results) to the P-Card Application Form and submit it to Accounts Payable via DocuSign

C. Online Training and Acknowledgement of Responsibility

The applicant must complete online training that is designed for cardholders, which includes an acknowledgement of responsibility for proper use of the card, before the card will be released to the applicant. This training may be requested via P.A.S.S. and will be completed in T.A.P Employee Online Training.

D. Direct Deposit

For security purposes, all Procurement Card applicants and cardholders must receive their salary or wage from the University of Houston as a direct deposit, rather than a check. The CDA is responsible for verifying this information when they sign the Application/Approval form.

III. CARDHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Safeguarding of the P-Card

1. The cardholder is responsible for safeguarding the P-Card and account number at all times.
2. The cardholder should not allow anyone else to use the P-Card and/or P-Card account number to make purchases on their behalf. The card number should not be saved in a shared ordering account. .

B. Making a Purchase with the P-Card

1. All P-Card transactions must directly benefit the university and be in compliance with university, state, and federal rules and regulations.
2. The following cannot be purchased with a P-Card:
 - a. Items for personal use
 - b. Items for non-university purposes
 - c. Items prohibited by a sponsored agreement when using sponsored project funds to pay for P-Card transactions, which include but are not limited to:
 1. Alcoholic beverages
 2. Late fees and late interest payments
 3. Taxes for which the University of Houston is exempt
 - d. Purchases over the threshold per MAPP 04.01.01. Splitting purchases are prohibited.
 - e. Cash advances
 - f. Consulting services
 - g. Travel-related expenses (except for registration fees, which are not

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- considered a travel expense)
- h. Gasoline for a rental car or personal vehicle
 - i. Financial services
 - j. Scholarships, stipends, tuition and fees
 - k. Purchases that require a Purchase Order per MAPP 04.01.01
 - l. Purchases using PayPal, unless the vendor only accepts PayPal as a payment method and the required documents are uploaded (See III. C. 8).
 - m. Gratuity exceeding 20% of the transaction amount on transactions that normally require gratuity, such as business meals.
 - n. Other purchases prohibited by Texas Administrative Code, Title 34, Part 1, Chapter 5, Subchapter E, Rule 5.57.
 - o. Other purchases prohibited by university policy (e.g., flowers for employees or family members of employees)
3. The cardholder should purchase from university-preferred merchants whenever possible to take advantage of pricing and terms negotiated on a university-wide contract basis. (<https://uh.edu/office-of-finance/purchasing/institutional-contracts/>). If an exclusive contract exists, purchase should be made from that vendor.
 4. Prior to making purchases over \$500, the cardholder must confirm that the vendor is not on “Vendor Hold” with the State of Texas. The cardholder is required to upload the finance system query result or screenshot of the Texas Vendor Hold Search website (<https://fmcpa.cpa.state.tx.us/tpis/search.html>) indicating that the vendor is not on hold. If the vendor is on hold, another vendor must be selected. Instructions for verifying vendor status are at: <https://uh.edu/office-of-finance/references/>
 5. When making purchases from Texas vendors, the cardholder must claim exemption from State of Texas sales tax using the university’s Tax Exemption Certificate located at: <https://uh.edu/office-of-finance/tax-information/official-tax-documents/>

If a Texas vendor charges more than \$10 of sales tax to the P-Card, the cardholder must take the following actions:

- Within 15 days of the transaction, request the vendor in writing to issue a credit for the sales tax back to the cardholder’s card. Upload this document as a backup document along with the Expense Report for the card.
- Verify the credit is received in the same or following billing cycle. If not, follow-up with the vendor.
- If the vendor refuses to give the credit back, discontinue using that vendor, if possible.
- If sales taxes are charged to grant cost centers, they must be reallocated to appropriate local cost centers.

If a P-Card cardholder is not sure whether a purchase is allowed, the cardholder should not make the purchase until they confirm with their College/Division Administrator, the P-Card Program Coordinator, or P-Card Program Administrator that it is allowable. Colleges/divisions may set additional purchase restrictions for the Procurement Cards issued to their

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employees.

C. Supporting Documentation

1. The cardholder is responsible for obtaining an itemized receipt or other form of supporting documentation (see I.H.) for each purchase and submitting it to the department business office.
2. When making a purchase that requires a delivery, the cardholder is responsible for verifying that the order and supporting documentation is received by the appropriate university business office.
3. Purpose and benefit of each transaction must be written on the supporting documentation or otherwise provided to the department business office.
4. All advertisements or printed items with any University of Houston logo, logotype, or trademark must be approved as follows:
 - a. Staff Employment Ads:
Human Resources Department
 - b. Faculty Employment Ads:
Office of Equal Opportunity Services (EOS)
 - c. Non-Employment Ads:
Vice President of University Marketing and Communications or his/her designee
5. Gift cards or certificates may be purchased if they are approved by the appropriate College/Division Administrator on the Gift Card Request Form (<https://uh.edu/office-of-finance/forms/>). Approved Gift Card Request Form must be provided as supporting documentation. In addition:
 - a. Gift cards must be kept in a secure campus location (e.g., locked drawer or safe) until distributed.
 - b. The distribution of the gift cards/certificates must be documented, including date of distribution, name of recipient, and signature of recipient acknowledging the receipt. If the gift cards are for a confidential human subject study, the department must retain distribution records in their files for seven fiscal years after the grant expires. Otherwise, distribution records must be uploaded to the P-Card document page in the Finance System when the distribution is complete.
 - c. Someone other than the gift card custodian will review the gift card records at least once a month to verify that all distributed and undistributed gift cards are accounted for and will report any discrepancies to the College/Division Administrator.
 - d. If the department awards a gift card/certificate to an employee, the department is also responsible for reporting this amount to the Tax Department as the employee's taxable benefit in accordance with SAM 03.D.06.
 - e. If the department awards a gift card/certificate to a non-employee and the total amount received by the non-employee in a calendar year is \$600 or more, the department is responsible for submitting the non-employee's W-9 Form and reporting the amount to Accounts Payable, so that the non-employee can be issued a Form 1099-MISC.
6. If the department awards merchandise (i.e., not cash or a gift card) to an

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employee and the fair market value of the merchandise is more than \$50, the department is responsible for reporting the amount to the Tax Department as the employee's taxable benefit in accordance with SAM 03.D.06. If the department gives award merchandise to a non-employee and the total fair market value of the merchandise received by the non-employee in a calendar year is \$600 or more; the department is responsible for submitting the non-employee's W-9 Form and reporting the amount to Accounts Payable.

7. The following information must be provided for official functions, including business meals, as required by MAPP 05.02.02, Official Functions and Discretionary Expenditures:
 - a. Date and location of event
 - b. Detailed description of the nature and purpose of the function
 - c. If 10 or fewer attendees, names of the participants, their titles, instructional affiliations, relation to the university
 - d. If more than 10 attendees, name of honored guest, the number of attendees, the general relationship of the guests to the university
 - e. Approval from dean or director for refreshments or meals limited to faculty and staff
 - f. The Official Functions Approval Form (Addendum A) approved by the dean or director and the responsible vice president, if the total cost of the function is anticipated to exceed \$5,000
 - g. Business meals, including beverages, tax, and gratuity, shall not exceed \$100 per person. No exceptions will be made.
8. PayPal must not be used unless the vendor only accepts PayPal as an on-line payment method. If PayPal payments are needed, cardholders must obtain the following documents to support the purchases:
 1. Screen snapshot of the vendor website indicating that the vendor is only accepting PayPal payments
 2. Itemized receipt issued by the vendor
 3. E-mail from PayPal confirming the purchase

D. Verification of Charges

No later than the last day of each month, cardholders must review and sign the Expense Report (see the signature guidelines provided in MAPP 05.02.01 section III. B.) for the billing period just ended to indicate the following:

1. All charges were made by the cardholder and are listed on the report for the correct amount.
2. All charges are for university business purposes and in compliance with university policy.
3. All supporting documentation and information has been provided to the department business office and is attached to the Expense Report.

Any exceptions to the above should be noted on the Expense Report by the cardholder and any disputed charges should be reported to the P-Card Program Coordinator as indicated below.

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E. Disputed Charges

1. If an erroneous charge appears on the Expense Report, the cardholder must ask the vendor to reverse the charge.
2. If the vendor agrees to reverse the erroneous charge, the cardholder must write a memo indicating when the request was made and submit the memo to the department business office in lieu of an itemized receipt.
3. If the vendor refuses to reverse the erroneous charge or agrees to reverse the charge but does not do so by the end of the next billing cycle, the cardholder should notify the P-Card Program Coordinator in Accounts Payable immediately and call the number on the back of their P-Card to dispute no later than 60 days after the end of the billing cycle where the transaction originally appeared. The cardholder must then complete and submit a copy of the Statement of Disputed Item Form (Addendum C) to the department business office in lieu of an itemized receipt.

F. Returns and Exchanges

1. The cardholder is responsible for contacting the merchant when merchandise purchased with the P-Card is not acceptable and arranging a return for credit or an exchange.
2. If merchandise is returned for credit, the cardholder is responsible for obtaining a credit receipt from the merchant and submitting the receipt to the department business office. Receiving cash or checks to resolve a credit is prohibited.
3. If merchandise is returned for credit, the cardholder should verify that a credit appears in Expense Management (formerly GCMS) ~~GCMS~~ by the end of the next billing cycle.
4. If merchandise is to be exchanged, the cardholder is responsible for returning the original merchandise to the merchant and obtaining a replacement as soon as possible. Documentation showing the proper resolution of the exchange must be submitted to the department business office.

G. Annual Training

The cardholder is required to complete online training annually to maintain their P-Card. The training must be completed via T.A.P Employee Online Training and requires each cardholder to acknowledge their cardholder responsibilities before completing the session.

H. Lost/Stolen Cards

1. If a P-Card is lost, stolen, or damaged, the cardholder must notify the bank immediately at 1-800-248-4553 (outside the U.S. call collect 1-904-954-7314). Representatives are available 24 hours a day to provide assistance.
2. The cardholder must notify the P-Card Program Coordinator of the lost/stolen/damaged card within 24 hours.
3. If a P-Card is found after it has been reported lost or stolen, it must be destroyed by cutting it in half. The same procedure applies if a card is damaged. The P-Card Program Coordinator must be notified and both card halves must be submitted to the department business office to be

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shredded and discarded.

I. Cancellation of Cards

If a card is not lost or stolen, but needs to be cancelled for some other reason, the cardholder must notify the College/Division Administrator and the P-Card Program Coordinator. The P-Card should be cut in half and both card halves must be submitted to the department business office to be shredded and discarded.

IV. COLLEGE/DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The College/Division Administrator is ultimately responsible for overseeing the use of P-Cards within their college/division. Unless otherwise indicated, the CDA may delegate P-Card administrative tasks to other individuals within their college/division, called Business Contacts, but retains primary responsibility for ensuring that transactions are appropriately reviewed, approved, documented, assigned the correct cost center and account, and that the other tasks described below are completed in a timely manner. The CDA may request the inactivation or cancellation of a P-Card within their college/division at any time at their discretion.

A. Tasks that Cannot be Delegated by the College/Division Administrator:

1. Approving a Cardholder Application/Approval form (Addendum A) for a new P-Card
2. Requesting a change in the single transaction limit or monthly spending limit for a P-Card
3. Reporting changes to Business Contacts for P-Card cardholders within the college/division
4. Completing annual training for business officers. In addition to the Business Contacts, all College/Division Administrators whose college or division has a P-Card must complete annual training.

B. Cardholder Maintenance

1. The CDA (or designee) must notify the P-Card Program Coordinator by email when a P-Card should be cancelled for one of the following reasons:
 - a. Cardholder no longer requires a P-Card
 - b. Cardholder is transferred to a different department
 - c. Cardholder is separated from the University
 - d. P-Card is lost, stolen, or damaged
 - e. Inappropriate use of P-Card
2. The CDA (or designee) must notify the P-Card Program Coordinator by email of any default cost center changes. Note: Cost centers that have a Project ID beginning with "G" or "C" may not be used as a default cost center.
3. The CDA must notify the P-Card Program Coordinator by email of any changes to Business Contacts within the college/division. This request must come from the College/Division Administrator and cannot be delegated.

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C. Billing Cycle Activities

The CDA (or designee) must complete the following tasks by the 20th of each month for the most recently completed billing cycle:

1. Enter account and cost center, if other than default cost center, into the online bank system for each card transaction associated with the department. All transactions must have local cost centers.
2. Verify that items charged to contracts/grants are allowed by sponsor.

The CDA (or designee) must complete the following tasks by the last day of each month for the most recently completed billing cycle:

1. Ensure that purpose/benefit information is properly documented for each transaction. Purpose/benefit may be recorded on receipts or in the online bank system.
2. Verify that all transactions are supported with the receipts or other supporting documents (i.e., invoice, packing slip, etc.).
3. Ensure that the full credit card number is not visible on any receipts or backup documentation before they are uploaded to the Finance System. Only the last four digits of the card number may be displayed on uploaded documents.
4. Obtain signatures (see the signature guidelines per MAPP 05.02.01 Section III. B). from the cardholder and certifying signatory on the Expense Report. The certifying signatory reviews for:
 - a. Appropriateness of transactions
 - b. Correct cost center and account
 - c. Complete supporting documentation
 - d. Cardholder signatureThe certifying signatory cannot be the cardholder on the Expense Report.
5. Ensure that transactions are approved by appropriate certifying signatories who have the cost center authority.
6. Ensure that purchases requiring contracts are fully executed by the service date.
7. Ensure that all purchases are made in compliance with the purchase guidelines in this policy. Obtain additional approval/documentation if necessary.

The CDA (or designee) must upload the Expense Report, receipts, and other supporting documentation, if required, to the UHS Finance System no later than 30 days after the end of the billing cycle.

D. Monitoring Pending Credit

The CDA (or designee) must closely monitor credits claimed by the cardholder. Each pending credit claimed by the cardholder should be followed by an actual credit entry in the online bank system. The CDA (or designee) should also verify that the cardholder submits a Statement of Disputed Item Form to Accounts Payable in a timely manner, if required.

E. Review for Irregular Transactions on P-Cards

The CDA (or designee) must review all transactions on the P-Cards issued to employees within the college/division. The review should be completed no later

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than 30 days after the end of the billing cycle. The CDA is responsible for identifying and investigating irregular transactions, such as transactions prohibited by university policy. If fraudulent activity is suspected, the CDA must report the suspected fraud in accordance with SAM 01.C.04, Reporting/Investigating Fraudulent Acts.

F. Review the Information Provided by Accounts Payable

Accounts Payable monitors billing cycle activities and notifies the CDA by email of selected transactions. The CDA (or designee) is responsible for investigating the transactions. If any unauthorized transactions are noted, the CDA (or designee) must notify AP promptly. Though Accounts Payable utilizes certain criteria to monitor the P-Card Program, the CDA is still responsible for reviewing all transactions for appropriateness, not just the transactions identified by Accounts Payable.

G. Requesting Override or Credit Limit Increase

1. If an appropriate P-Card transaction cannot be processed because of the merchant category code restriction, the CDA (or designee) may email the P-Card Program Coordinator to request an override of the restriction.
2. If P-Card transactions cannot be processed because the amount exceeds the dollar limit of the P-Card, the College/Division Administrator may email the P-Card Program Coordinator to request a temporarily increase in the single transaction limit or a temporarily or permanently increase in the monthly spending limit. This request must come from the College/Division Administrator and cannot be delegated.

H. Sales Tax to Texas Vendors

The CDA (or designee) will monitor whether their cardholders are claiming exemption from State of Texas sales tax when purchasing from vendors located in Texas. If a Texas vendor charges more than \$10 for sales tax, the cardholder should contact the vendor to receive a credit for the tax.

I. Liability Balance

The CDA (or designee) enters account and cost center, if other than default cost center, into the online bank system for each transaction. System generated vouchers will be created based on the account/cost center to initiate payments to the bank. If some transactions do not pass budget checking or if federal funds are used for a P-Card transaction costing \$10,000 or more, account 20109 and the default cost center will be used to process payment for those transactions. The CDA is responsible for monitoring the P-Card liability account balance monthly in the default cost center and researching/clearing the liability balance for account 20109 in the cost center within 30 days. The balance of account 20109 must be zero at the end of the fiscal year.

J. Annual Training

College/Division Administrators and Business Contacts must take online training annually that is designed for business officers. The online training requires each

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CDA and Business Contact to acknowledge their responsibilities before completing the session. CDAs and Business Contacts who are also P-Card cardholders are only required to complete the business officer training, since it includes information covered in the cardholder training.

V. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE RESPONSIBILITIES

The P-Card program is administrated by Accounts Payable. General responsibilities of Accounts Payable are as follows:

- A. Provide training to College/Division Administrators, Business Contacts, and cardholders
- B. Issue/cancel P-Cards
- C. Maintain P-Card cardholder data
- D. Assign user access to online bank system
- E. Process overrides requested by the CDA (or designee) for appropriate transactions
- F. Process transaction limit and monthly spending limit changes requested by the CDA (cannot be delegated)
- G. Assist cardholders with reporting disputes
- H. Download transactions from the bank system into system generated vouchers and process the vouchers for payment
- I. Reconcile bank charges with payments to the bank and verify the payments posted correctly in the bank system
- J. Provide monthly Excel reports of all P-Card transactions to CDAs for their review
- K. Provide monthly Excel reports of selected P-Card transactions to CDAs for their review
- L. Work with Business Services to verify cardholders, College/Division Administrators, and Business Contacts complete annual training requirements

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VI. **SANCTIONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY**

A. Unauthorized Transactions

1. If Accounts Payable becomes aware of transactions that violate university policy, Accounts Payable will notify the cardholder and the College/Division Administrator by email.
2. If this type of violation is repeated three times during the life of the card, the card will be cancelled. The cardholder will not be eligible to receive another P-Card for the following six months. The cardholder must take instructor led AP training before receiving a new P-Card.
3. The following violations fall into this category:
 - a. Cardholder allows someone else to use his/her card
 - b. Split purchases
 - c. Travel charges
 - d. Flowers for employees or their relatives
 - e. Gratuity exceeding 20%
 - f. Purchases without required approvals
 - g. No screen snapshot or query showing the vendor is not on vendor hold
 - h. Personal purchases (including personal purchases by error)
 - i. Other inappropriate use
4. Cardholders are responsible for paying back the amount they owe due to their unauthorized purchases that did not benefit the university (e.g., personal purchases, flower for employees, gratuity exceeding 20%, etc.). Although these corrective actions are required, the violations will still be counted against the cardholder to determine if the card should be cancelled.

B. Lack of Supporting Documentation and/or Approval

1. If Accounts Payable becomes aware that an Expense Report has not been uploaded to the Finance System by the deadline or does not include the documentation or approval required by this policy, Accounts Payable will notify the cardholder and the College/Division Administrator.
2. If this type of violation is repeated three times during the life of the card, the cardholder and/or Business Contact designated by the College/Division Administrator will be required to complete instructor led AP training to maintain the P-Card. If a cardholder and/or Business Contact does not complete the training, the P-Card will be cancelled. Once the card is cancelled, the cardholder will not be eligible to receive another P-Card for the following six months. The cardholder must take instructor led AP training again before receiving a new P-Card.
3. The following violations fall into this category:
 - a. Expense Report not signed or uploaded to Finance System by the deadline
 - b. Expense Report not signed by the cardholder or certifying signatory
 - c. No screen snapshot or query showing the vendor is not on vendor hold
 - d. No appropriate approval for advertisement
 - e. No additional documentation/approval for business meals and official functions

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- f. No itemized receipt (or other acceptable form of supporting documentation indicated in Section I.H.)
- g. No documentation indicating that a vendor was contacted in writing when Texas sales tax was charged.
- h. No beginning and ending dates for subscriptions or memberships

C. Annual Training Not Completed

1. If cardholders do not complete annual training within the required timeframe, their P-Card will be inactivated until the training has been completed.
2. If College/Division Administrators and Business Contacts do not complete annual training within the required timeframe, Accounts Payable may inactivate the P-Cards that they administer until the training has been completed.

D. Liability Balance Not Zero at Year End

If the P-Card liability balance is not zero at the end of the fiscal year, the associated P-Card will be inactivated until the liability balance is cleared.

E. Accounts Payable May Inactivate or Cancel

Accounts Payable may inactivate or cancel a P-Card at any time at their discretion. If this occurs, they will notify the College/Division Administrator of the reason for the inactivation or cancellation.

Reference: MAPP 04.01.11

Additional procurement restrictions apply in accordance with the university policies (SAMs and MAPPs).