# **Policy 215: PURCHASING CARD**

Category: Administration

Covered Individuals: All CEI Employees

Approved: 03/10/2025

Formerly Approved: 09/24/2024

**215.1 Policy**

This Purchasing Card Program is designed to establish a more efficient, cost-effective method of purchasing and paying for approved small-dollar transactions. College of Eastern Idaho purchasing cards may only be used for College business transactions and College purchases of less than $2,000.00. The purchasing card may not be used for any personal purchases.

The cardholder identified on the purchasing card is the only user authorized to use that card. Faxing or scanning of purchasing cards is not allowed.

**215.2 Procedures**

Card Administrator: Procurement Coordinator, Phone: 208-535-5315, Email: purchasing@cei.edu.

**Purchasing Card Issuance**

Application and agreements for the purchasing card (p-card) require the approval of the applicant’s supervisor, the card administrator, and the Business Office.

All cardholders will be asked to complete and submit two forms:

1. Purchasing Card Application, reviewed and signed by the cardholder, the cardholder’s supervisor, and the card administrator.
2. Purchasing Card Cardholder Agreement, reviewed and signed by the cardholder and card administrator.

The forms may be found on the website: *cei.edu/procurement-services*. The Purchasing Card Application and Purchasing Cardholder Agreement establishes the account and assigns the credit limit. The cardholder is the only person entitled to use their individual card. For group cards, the division manager designates authorized users of the card. Each purchasing card is linked to a specific employee; therefore, the card cannot be transferred from one employee to another. Group cards are linked to specific divisions; the card cannot be transferred from one division to another.

Upon receipt of the purchasing card, the Card Administrator will email the Purchasing Card Policy and Procedures to the cardholder. The cardholder will be asked to read, understand, and sign the Acknowledgement of Responsibility at the end of the document. By signing the Purchasing Card Application, Purchasing Cardholder Agreement, and the Acknowledgement of Responsibility, the cardholder agrees to adhere to the guidelines as set forth in the policy and procedures.

**Purchasing Card Usage**

* The card may be used for in-store purchases and phone, online, or mail orders.
* Do not disclose the complete card number on any form or application or store the number in an electronic file system (such as Apple Pay, Google Pay, etc.)
* Under no circumstance are purchasing cards to be utilized for personal purchases.
* CEI is tax-exempt, and purchases should exclude sales tax. The tax-exemption number is located under the cardholder’s name on the card. If the merchant requires the tax exemption certificate, it can be found at the following web address: *cei.edu/procurement-services*.
* Upon termination, the card must be returned to the CEI.
* Employment transfers within CEI require an assessment of the continued necessity of a purchasing card for the new role.

**Individual Employee Purchasing Card**

* Only the designated cardholder is authorized to utilize the card.
* The purchasing card is issued in the cardholder’s name, who assumes full responsibility for all completed transactions.
* The cardholder is solely responsible for safeguarding the card and its secure storage.
* Transferring the card from one employee to another is prohibited.
* Shared use of a card between employees is prohibited.
* The cardholder is responsible for reviewing transactions and submitting final expense reports.

**Group Cards**

A card may be issued to a division manager for use by staff in their division.

* The Division Manager issues the group purchasing card to authorized persons for limited use, typically for specific or one-time purchases.
* Group purchasing cards must be securely stored, such as in a safe or locked cabinet.
* Group purchasing cards are not to be carried continuously.
* Documentation of purchases (receipts, invoices, packing slips, etc.) is handled in the same manner as individual assigned cards and is managed by the Division Manager
* Transferring the card from one division to another is prohibited.
* Shared use of the card between multiple divisions is prohibited.
* The Division Manager is responsible for reviewing transactions and submitting final expense reports.

**Telephone, Catalog, or On-Line Order**

Purchasing Cards may be used for telephone, catalog, or online ordering when the vendor does not accept purchase orders.

* All telephone, catalog, or online orders are to be shipped to CEI’s main address, 1600 S 25th E, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83404:
  + Ensure the full shipping address and instructions are given along with your name (e.g., name, department name, 1600 S 25th E, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83404).
* When placing an order, ask that shipping charges be included and record them on the order form.
* Request the vendor to include a sales receipt in the package or to be emailed.
* Shipments are delivered and received by the business office, where procurement will organize the packages before pickup.
* When shipments are ready for pickup, the Business Office will email the cardholder.
  + Although you may receive notification of delivery of your shipment, you must also receive an email from the Business Office before retrieving your package.
* When receiving a shipment, the cardholder must thoroughly inspect it for accuracy and completeness.
* The cardholder bears full responsibility for rectifying any discrepancies or managing damaged shipments.
* In the event of a return, the cardholder is responsible for coordinating the return with the supplier and informing the Card Administrator of any unresolved matters.

**Account Maintenance**

If any account information, such as email address, credit limits, or restrictions, needs to be updated or requested, please complete the Purchasing Card Maintenance Form found at cei.edu/procurement-services and forward to the Card Administrator.

**Lost or Stolen Cards**

In the event of a lost or stolen card, prompt notification should be made to the issuing bank of the P-card. Subsequently, the card administrator must be promptly informed.

Timely action is significantly important in such circumstances to reduce the risk of liability for fraudulent transactions.

Following notification to the issuing bank, the card will be promptly canceled, and a replacement card will be issued.

**Changes in Employment**

Upon termination of employment, Human Resources should immediately notify the Card Administrator to deactivate the terminated employee’s purchasing card. The purchasing card is to be retrieved by the Human Resources Department. A Purchasing Card Maintenance Form is then completed, attached to the purchasing card, and forwarded to the Card Administrator.

For employees transferring from one role to another within CEI, a new application is completed to determine if the purchasing card is necessary for the new role. Should the new role require the employee to carry a purchasing card, the card administrator will make the necessary changes to reassign the card to the new department. If the new role does not support the necessity of a purchasing card, the card must be returned to the card administrator, who will cancel it.

**Purchasing Card Cancellation**

To cancel a card, complete the Purchasing Card Maintenance Form, attach the purchasing card, and submit it to the Card Administrator. Purchasing cards are canceled upon receipt.

**Purchasing Card Audits**

Each purchasing card is audited monthly. One purpose of this audit is to review card transactions and verify they comply with the Purchasing Card policy and procedures. In the event of inquiries or discrepancies, the Card Administrator will contact the cardholder for clarification and resolution.

**Purchasing Card Non-Compliance**

If the cardholder fails to comply with the Purchasing Card Policy or procedure or the issuing bank’s policy or procedure, the cardholder’s supervisor will be notified, and the auditor will complete a Purchasing Card Non-Compliance Warning Form. This is to be reviewed and signed by the cardholder. Corrective action may include mandatory training, deactivation, or permanent revocation of the card. The cardholder may also be required to reimburse CEI for any charges that violate the Purchasing Card policy or procedure.

**Limitations and Restrictions**

In accordance withPurchasing Policy 214, the credit limit is set at $2,000.00 per card. Splitting up or dividing purchases to surpass this limit is strictly prohibited. Requests for credit limit exceptions can be made by completing the card maintenance form and submitting it to the card administrator.

Certain vendors and commodities have been blocked from utilization in the program. The transaction will be declined if you attempt to use the purchasing card at any of these merchants.

If the purchasing card declines a transaction, and the cardholder feels it is an error, contact the Card Administrator.

**Authorized Purchases**

The purchasing card program is intended for purchases of products and supplies needed during the normal course of business. Total purchases cannot exceed the established credit limit of $2,000.00 within a billing cycle. As a reminder, purchases made with an established vendor must be completed using a purchase order, not a purchasing card.

Authorized purchases may include:

* Office supplies
* Lab supplies for the classroom (details of purchase will be required)
* Janitorial supplies
* Parking fees
* Taxi, shuttle, or ride-sharing fees
* Airfare charges
* Car rental
* Classified and legal ads
* Hardware and small tools
* Low-cost subscriptions
* Equipment repairs
* Conference registration

**Purchases Requiring Pre-Approval**

These are purchases that require pre-approval. Below are some items that require pre-approval and who must authorize the purchase.

* Meals (foods intended to fulfill a breakfast, lunch, or dinner serving)

Meals purchased for recognized student clubs must be pre-approved by the Coordinator of Student Life. All other departments must have Vice Presidential approval.

* Information Technology purchases (see Policy 214 Purchasing and Procurement)

Regardless of the amount, all information technology (IT) purchases must be pre-authorized by the Chief Information Officer (CIO) or designated personnel.

* + IT purchases requiring pre-approval include a broad range of items, including but not limited to:
    - Computers, tablets, and laptops
    - Printers and scanners
    - Software, software licenses, or software subscriptions
    - Third-party tools, including web-based software and applications account set up requiring personal information
    - Computer firmware
    - Monitors
    - Televisions, projectors, cameras, and any other audio/video equipment
    - Backup systems
    - Server hardware and networking equipment
    - Telephones
    - Any other device capable of connecting to CEI’s network system.
  + Exceptions to the above policy are peripheral devices, which are items that help enhance the basic functionality of your computer and are usually connected through a USB port. Peripheral devices include:
    - Keyboards
    - Mouse
    - Speakers
    - Microphones that connect via USB port only
    - Cameras that connect and function via USB port only
* Travel expenses require pre-approval per Travel Policy 411. This includes but is not limited to:
  + Rental car and associated expenses, including fuel
  + Airplane Tickets and baggage fees
  + Accommodation expenses
* Any purchase not specified in this Purchasing Card Policy requires pre-approval by the Business Office.

**Unauthorized Purchases**

The purchasing card is strictly intended for purchases from merchants who align with our prudent use of state and tax funds. It is crucial to exercise discretion and uphold standards of professionalism. Although a transaction may serve a legitimate business need, it is essential to recognize how it can be perceived. All transactions with this card are subject to scrutiny by the public, including auditors, legislators, and media outlets. As a cardholder, you agree to the accountability associated with spending taxpayer funds and be called upon to justify purchases. If you are uncertain about a transaction, seek clarification with Procurement before purchasing.

Unauthorized purchases include but are not limited to:

* Purchases with Vendors that are set up in Colleague
* Medical office visits (doctors, dentists, chiropractors, etc.)
* Fuel in personal vehicle
* Fuel in CEI vehicle (fuel cards are assigned to CEI vehicles)
* Donations
* Items up for bid (eBay, Mercari, Facebook Marketplace, etc.)
* Office decorations
* Flowers and plants
* Birthday or other departmental celebration cakes, cards, or decorations
* Gifts
* Gift Cards (Please refer to Policy ### Gift Cards, Gift Certificates, and Other Prizes and Awards Policy)
* Consulting fees/independent contractor payments
* Any type of service
* Alcoholic beverages
* Cell phone charges
* Office furniture, including office chairs and chair balls
* Cash advances
* Entertainment
* Personal items
* Information Technology purchases (see above)
* Any questionable purchases

In addition to the above unauthorized purchases, the purchasing card cannot be used to pay for transactions charged by the College of Eastern Idaho, its affiliates, and events on campus. This includes:

* CEI’s in-house bookstore
* Catered your Way
* All purchases where CEI is the recipient of the payment (transactions for cardholders are to be coordinated with the Business Office)

**Exceptions**

CEI recognizes the need for the college president and members of the President’s Advisory Council (PAC) to host or attend official events which advance and promote the College’s reputation, status, and economic position of the college. As an exception to above listed unauthorized purchases, the president or members of PAC may incur expenses for these official events.

The Business Office will consider other exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

In certain situations, purchases exceeding the credit limit may be approved by the budget owner and may require approval of the appropriate Vice President.

**Receipts**

The cardholder is responsible for supplying an original itemized receipt for each purchasing card purchase.

This itemized receipt must have the following information:

* Vendor or Seller name
* Vendor or Seller contact information
* Date of transaction
* Itemized list of purchases with corresponding prices

Should the original receipt be misplaced or lost, the cardholder must contact the merchant directly to request a duplicate. Faxed receipts are acceptable as long as they replicate the original document accurately.

If it is not possible to obtain a duplicate receipt, the cardholder must submit a Purchasing Card Missing Receipt Form.

A transaction without a receipt or equivalent documentation will not be approved under any circumstance and will require the cardholder to pay the charge.

**Travel Receipts**

Traveling receipts for expenses charged to the purchasing card(p-card) will be required for two (2) expense reports:

1. P-Card Expense Report—Original receipts for travel expenses charged to the purchasing card must be submitted with the monthly Expense Report.
2. Travel Expense Report - Upon your return to campus, provide copies of receipts for travel expenses charged to the purchasing card and submit them with your Travel Expense Report, as required in the College Travel Policy (Policy 411).

**Reconciliation**

Reconciliation begins by completing a monthly P-Card Expense Report. It is the cardholder’s responsibility to complete a P-Card Expense Report for each billing cycle. The completed report is submitted to the appropriate approver. The approver is responsible for reviewing the submitted P-Card Expense Report and approving the charges.

The billing cycle runs from the first to the last day of the month. If the last day falls on a weekend or holiday, the cycle will stay open until the next business day.

It is the cardholder’s responsibility to review their account online throughout the billing cycle and monitor all activity.

At the end of each billing cycle, the cardholder can retrieve the P-Card Expense reports online. Cardholders are responsible for verifying the legitimacy of all transactions posted. If a discrepancy exists, the cardholder is responsible for resolving it. The expense report must be approved and turned in to the Business Office by the deadline indicated via email.

**Approval for Payment Timeline**

The cardholder must code all transactions with a General Ledger (GL) code and a Sub-Object code, accompanied by a description of the purchase (in the comment field). They should be submitted to the approver no later than five (5) days after the cycle closes.

The approvers must review transactions for accuracy of the GL code, Sub-object code, and comment description and submit them to the Card Administrator no later than the ninth (9th) day of the month.

The Card Administrator will then audit the transactions, verify the GL, and submit them to the Controller for payment.

Note: It is essential that both cardholders and their approvers adhere to the monthly deadline as this information is necessary for Business Office control functions, such as reconciliation with the bank and grants and processing general ledger account entries.

**Disputed or Fraudulent Charges**

Any fraudulent charge, i.e., a transaction not authorized by the cardholder, must be reported immediately to the issuing bank for the purchasing card and the Card Administrator. The contact information for the P-card’s issuing bank is located on the back of the card. Reporting transactions promptly will help prevent CEI from being held responsible for fraudulent charges. The details of the fraudulent transaction should be reported on the Purchasing Card Incident/Dispute Form.

Disputed charges can result for various reasons, such as:

* Failure to receive goods or services
* Altered goods
* Defective goods
* Inaccurate charge, including duplicated charge
* Missing credits for returned goods or canceled services

The cardholder is responsible for addressing issues related to disputed items, erroneous charges, or returns.

Initially, the cardholder should attempt to resolve the disputed charge by contacting the vendor.

If the disputed charge cannot be resolved with the vendor, the cardholder should immediately contact the card administrator and open a dispute claim with the issuing bank. The details of the disputed transaction should be reported on the Purchasing Card Incident/Dispute Form.

**Violation**

Failure to comply with this policy and/or procedures may result in the suspension or revocation of the purchasing card and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Improper use of this card may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

A cardholder who violates the terms of this policy or uses the card for personal use, gain, or benefit will be required to reimburse the College of Eastern Idaho within thirty (30) days for all incurred charges and fees related to the collection of those charges.