



Upper Lake Unified
School District
Purchase Card Program
Handbook

CAL-Card Guidelines and Procedures

Business Services

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ATTACHMENT:

Acknowledgement of CAL-Card and Handbook Receipt Form

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Upper Lake Unified School District Purchase Card program using the CAL-Card from US Bank.

The purpose of the purchase card program is to assist sites and departments in meeting the needs for making travel and conference arrangements and for smaller purchases of instructional supplies (up to \$400 including sales tax) that may be needed in a short time frame. At the same time, retaining necessary controls to ensure compliance with District procedures, federal and state regulations is of the utmost importance. The program is intended to supplement, not bypass, the purchasing process.

This handbook will provide you with the particulars of the program, including general guidelines, reconciliation/record keeping procedures, and customer service information. It is important to read the information carefully, as you will be responsible for adhering to the District-established policy and procedures.

Failure to comply with District procedures, federal or state regulations may result in immediate and permanent revocation of Cardholder or approver privileges. Serious events of misuse (see page 9) may result in termination or prosecution of the individual(s) involved.

Possession of a purchase card is a privilege. The standard purchasing method using purchase requisitions is available to every school and department. Responsible use, timely reconciliation and accurate, appropriate record-keeping will ensure a successful experience with this program.

Your feedback is encouraged and is an important part of the program. The business department staff is striving to refine this program to ensure it meets your needs.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Issuance and Activation:

As a Cardholder, you will be asked to sign a form acknowledging receipt of the card and agreeing to adhere to the guidelines established in this handbook. Most importantly, you are the only person entitled to use the card and the card must not be used for personal purchases. As each card is permanently linked to an individual employee, the card cannot be transferred from one employee to another.

The card will be activated when you receive it. Although the card will be issued in your name, your personal credit history will not affect your ability to obtain a card, nor will your personal information be provided to the bank. The District is responsible for payment of all purchases.

CAL-Cards are now being issued as EMV chip cards. Your new card will have an embedded microprocessor in it, along with the magnetic stripe on the back. At certain locations, you may be asked to insert your card into a terminal as opposed to swiping it.

If there's a need to change any of your account information, such as your school/department affiliation, send an email to the Chief Business Official.

Usage:

The CAL-Card may be used at any merchant that accepts Visa, providing the merchant category has not been blocked by the District's program. Examples of blocked merchants include liquor stores, florists, and jewelry stores. It may be used for in-store purchases as well as online, phone, fax or mail order purchases.

When using the CAL-Card with merchants, please be sure to obtain an original, itemized receipt for your records. For online, phone, fax and mail orders, please instruct the merchant to send an original, itemized receipt with the merchandise. Receipts may be printed out for online orders. An original is required for your records in order for them to be deemed "auditable".

Budget Information:

Purchases made via the CAL-Card are not encumbered in the District's financial system (Escape) as purchases made via the purchase requisition process are.

Sometimes, this can make it difficult for principals, department heads, administrative assistants, or secretaries to track expenditures and available balances in their department/site budgets in a timely manner.

Purchase orders for Travel and Conference or other vendors that do not accept purchase orders can be set up for the US Bank Cal-Card to encumber funds and facilitate the budgeting process. It is recommended that the purchase order process be used for the Cal-Card for any vendors that do not accept purchase orders. Only emergency purchases should bypass the purchase order process.

For this reason, it is important that upon receipt of the monthly CAL-Card Statement that a Purchase Order Requisition is generated in Escape to process the timely payment of the charges made against the CAL-Card.

Limitations and Restrictions:

The business department will assign credit limits to your card, including a single transaction limit (one swipe of the card) and a monthly limit (which is refreshed on the 22nd of each month). This means your card will be declined if you attempt to make a purchase or purchases that will exceed your limitations. For most users, the limits are:

Single Transaction Limit - \$1,000

Monthly Transaction Limit - \$3,000

Do not split a purchase to avoid the single transaction limit. Splitting of any purchase will result in an immediate warning and possible permanent revocation of Cardholder privileges.

Exceptions to the standard limits may be granted under certain circumstances and upon approval from the Chief Business Official. When requesting an increase in your limit, please email the following information to the Chief Business Official.

- Justification for the increase
- Amount of the increase needed
- When and for how long needed (all increases are temporary)
- Items being purchased. No exception will be granted for purchases of equipment (single item > \$500.00) or any Prohibited Purchases listed in this handbook.

The CAL-Card program also allows for merchant category blocking. If a particular merchant category is blocked (e.g., jewelry stores), and you attempt to use your card at such a merchant, your purchase will be declined. Management has made an effort to ensure the vendors/suppliers used during the normal course of District business are not blocked. If your card is declined at a merchant where you believe it should have been accepted, please contact the business office.

Lost or Stolen Cards:

The Cardholder is responsible for the security of the card and any purchases made on his/her VISA account. If you believe the card is lost or stolen, immediately report this information to US Bank at 1-800-344-5696 (Customer Service). Immediately after reporting to US Bank, you must inform the Chief Business Official. It is extremely important to act promptly in the event of a lost or stolen card to avoid District liability for fraudulent transactions.

Because the card is issued in your name, all follow up to a lost/stolen card must be done by the Cardholder (the business office cannot assist you with this, per bank regulations). You will be asked to identify any fraudulent charges which will be reversed. You will also receive an affidavit via US Mail to complete. This must be completed and returned in a timely manner, or the fraudulent charges will be put back on your card.

As with a personal charge card, you will no longer be able to use the account number after notifying the bank of a lost or stolen card. A new card should be issued within 48 hours of notice to US Bank. It will be mailed to the attention of the business office, and you will be notified via email when it arrives.

PURCHASES

Authorized Purchases:

- Supplies totaling up to \$400 (including sales tax and shipping). This may include instructional supplies, books (not including approved textbooks), and computer and printer supplies (software, cables, and cartridges, not technology hardware). Do not split a purchase to avoid the single transaction or daily limits. (with approved purchase order when possible)
- Online airfare purchases for travel to/from a conference. (with approved T&C purchase order)
- Lodging for conference attendance. (with approved T&C purchase order)
- Food for travel/conference (Check GSA limits at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>; includes tax and no more than a 20% tip). They cannot be combined for a "per diem" total. The original itemized receipts need to include the names of the participants (initialed by each participant) and specific food/activity. The purchase of alcohol is prohibited and should not be listed on the receipt. (with approved T&C purchase order)
- Car rental for travel/conference. (with approved T&C purchase order)
- Food for staff meetings. The Cardholder must include the sign-in sheet of all attendees and a copy of the meeting agenda when reconciling the charges. (with approved purchase order)

Prohibited Purchases

- Technology hardware (regardless of price) or equipment over \$500. Purchase of computers, iPads, Chromebooks, printers, etc., is not allowed
- Items for personal use of yourself, staff or students, such as gifts, gift cards, flowers, T-shirts, etc. Note: Any item purchased as a gift or reward for a staff member or anyone else who is not a student constitutes a gift of public funds and is strictly prohibited.
- Alcohol
- ASB, PTA or any outside foundation purchases. These are separate entities and no purchases between the District and outside entities may be commingled.
- Medications
- Gift cards
- Approved Textbooks — should be purchased by Educational Services

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- Custodial supplies—should be purchased by Maintenance and Operations Department
 - Leases or rentals—except car rental
 - Any single transaction exceeding Cardholder's single transaction limit as established and pre approved by the business office.
 - *Note: Splitting the purchase of a high cost item in order for it to be accepted by the VISA system will result in an immediate warning and possible permanent revocation of Cardholder privileges.*
 - Use of the card by anyone other than the authorized Cardholder—this is part of the credit card agreement. If you loan your credit card to another employee, you are responsible for any issues or infractions that may occur.
 - Cash advances
 - Services or labor of any kind, including repair or installation.
 - Subscriptions of any kind, including online licenses, printed or digital publications (***these are only permitted when charged by District Business Office Personnel with proper authorization***).

REVOCATION OF CARD PRIVILEGES

The guidelines and procedures outlined in this handbook are mandatory for all Cardholders. Violations will result in an immediate warning and possible permanent revocation of Cardholder privileges.

- Purchase of any item listed under “Prohibited Purchases”
- Splitting a purchase to circumvent single, daily or monthly transaction limits
- Failure to reconcile the Cardholder Statement and generate Purchase Requisition for timely payment processing
- Failure to submit to Accounts Payable the signed CAL-Card Statement and original itemized receipts in a timely manner.

Misuse of the card or failure to comply with the above guidelines for authorized purchases under the purchase card program may result in cancellation of your card privileges, disciplinary action or possible termination of employment.

SEPARATION FROM DISTRICT EMPLOYMENT

The CAL-Card must be surrendered to the business office prior to separation from District employment. Cut the card in half and send it to the Chief Business Official. The cardholder will need to reconcile purchases through the statement period ending in the month of resignation.

STATEMENT RECONCILIATION PROCESS

Unlike personal credit cards, the District purchase card is a District liability. The Cardholder's personal credit history has not been taken into account when a card has been issued, nor has US Bank been provided with any employee's personal information.

The CAL-Card Statement billing cycle ends about the 22nd of each month. Charges made after the 22nd of the month, will be reflected on the following month's statement.

Statements will be received in the District Office and will be delivered via email. If Cardholder does not receive their Statement by 28th of the month, contact the Chief Business Official.

Review and Submission:

Upon the Business Office's receipt of the monthly statement from US Bank, Cardholders are responsible for:

- Reviewing all charges, ensuring that all charges were made by them and that all charges are legitimate.
- Generate a Purchase Requisition ***before the transaction*** and copies of all receipts in the Purchase Requisition for approval. Once approved, a Purchase Order will be issued to be used to process the payment.
- Submit your receipts in the travel and conference form, and provide all original receipts to the Business Office for auditing purposes. In the event a receipt is misplaced, contact the vendor/merchant to issue a duplicate. Letter of Receipt in lieu of missing receipt(s) needs to be signed by the Cardholder and department's Director/Manager and will be reviewed and subject for approved by the business office depending on the type, amount of charges and number of repeat offenses. Cardholder may be personally liable for items with no receipt. Card privileges may be revoked for repeat occurrences.
- Contact the business office if you anticipate an issue with completing the statement reconciliation in a timely manner.

Disputed Charges:

It's always better to resolve a discrepancy quickly. If a Cardholder believes a merchant charged him/her incorrectly or there is an outstanding quality issue, the Cardholder must first contact the merchant and allow the merchant the opportunity to resolve the error or problem and provide a credit, if that is appropriate. This is a VISA requirement.

The Cardholder must still obtain an original, itemized receipt for a credit transaction (such as a refund, return or exchange). It is quite possible the credit won't appear until the following statement period and that is acceptable.

If the merchant disagrees an adjustment is necessary, the Cardholder must complete a dispute form. The dispute must be received by US Bank within 60 days of the transaction date. Please inform the business office if this situation arises.

Sales and Use Tax:

The District is NOT exempt from sales or use tax (the only items not subject to sales/use tax are food items). The amount of sales or use tax charged is dependent on a variety of factors including the city and state where the goods are physically received.

All goods received by the Upper Lake Unified School District are currently taxed at the rate of 7.25%. The District will calculate and remit the appropriate rate of sales/use tax directly to the State of California if it is not charged by the merchant. Cardholders should review their receipts carefully.

If sales/use tax is not listed on the receipt, or if the incorrect rate is charged, please indicate so in the Purchase Requisition line item description. This is only necessary for out-of-state or out-of-county purchases. Local purchases should reflect the appropriate amount of sales tax.

District records are subject to audit by the California State Board of Equalization, the regulatory body that oversees collection of sales tax. This is the reason why close monitoring and accurate reporting of tax when purchasing from an out-of-state, out-of-county or internet merchant is important.

DISTRICT CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact one of the following individuals. We welcome your feedback and ideas for improving the program and thank you for your cooperation in adhering to the ULUSD CAL-Card Policies and Procedures.

Purchasing Department	Fiscal Services Department
Program Administrator Natasha Bjur, Fiscal Specialist nbjur@ulusd.org 707-275-2338 Ext. 3028 • Request new CAL-Card • Temporary Increase of Limits • Collects Receipts • Process Payments	Statement Review Natasha Bjur, Fiscal Specialist nbjur@ulusd.org 707-275-2338 Ext. 3028 • Review documentation requirements • Approve Purchase Requisitions • Collects Receipts • Process Payments
Chief Business Official Michael Kauble, Chief Business Official mkauble@ulusd.org 707-275-0338 • Assistance with merchant blocking • Inform lost/stolen card	Accounts Payable Annie Castro, Budget and Finance Analyst acastro@ulusd.org 707-275-2338 Ext. 3027 • Process payments • Follow up on required documentation not submitted • Approve Purchases - Registrations

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Why does the District participate in the CAL-Card program?

The District is interested in exploring ways to streamline processes and reduce costs, as well as aid employees with procuring needed goods for their schools and departments quickly and efficiently.

- What is the procedure when I pay for something with my District Purchase Card?

The process is the same as when using your personal credit card. You must always ask for an original, itemized receipt for your records, particularly for online, phone, fax and mail orders.

- How will I know if I have exceeded my monthly limit?

You can check your outstanding balance and purchases by contacting the Program Administrator.

- Are there any restrictions associated with the use of my card?

Yes. In addition to compliance with District policy, federal and state regulations that guide use of the card, other controls and standard limits are placed on your card including:

- Single transaction dollar limit
- Monthly dollar limit
- Please refer to this Guidelines and Procedures handbook for your specific limits and capabilities.

- What should I do if a supplier does not accept the District Purchase Card?

If your card is refused at a merchant where you believe it should have been accepted, please call US Bank Customer Service at 1-800-344-5696 to determine the reason for declination. Depending on the result of your inquiry, you may need to contact the Program Administrator. If he/she agrees the merchant category should be added to the program or that your single/cycle limit should be increased, he/she can modify the restrictions on your use of the card.

- How will I know if the District is getting billed correctly for the purchases I have made?

You will receive a statement at the end of each billing cycle. You must review and reconcile the statement. Any disputed or fraudulent transactions must be reported to US Bank and the Purchasing Coordinator informed as quickly as possible.

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- What should I do if I have a problem associated with something I bought with my District Purchase Card?

If you believe you have been charged incorrectly, please refer to the "Disputed Charges" section on page 11. If there is a need for a return, exchange, or warranty repair, please contact the Program Administrator for assistance.

- Once I receive the card, can I begin using it immediately?

Yes.

- What should I do if my card is lost or stolen?

It is extremely important to call US Bank's Customer Service toll-free number (1-800-344-5696) immediately in the event your card is lost or stolen. Immediately following your call to the bank, you must notify the Program Administrator.

- What should I do if I need to change my monthly or single transaction limits?

See Limitations and Restrictions (page 5).

Upper Lake Unified School District

Acknowledgement of CAL-Card and Handbook Receipt

I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Upper Lake Unified School District Purchase Card Program Handbook.

I also acknowledge receipt of the CAL-Card as indicated below:

CAL-Card Number: _____

I understand that I am limited to the amounts listed below when using this CAL-Card for authorized and valid ULUSD purchases. I acknowledge that the CAL-Card will only be used for those expenses that are budgeted.

Single Transaction Limit: _____

Monthly Transaction Limit: _____

I understand the restrictions of the use of this CAL-Card and that misuse will result in the loss of Cardholder privileges. I accept responsibility that purchases made with this CAL-Card are for official business for Upper Lake Unified School District.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Department/School Site: _____

Date Card Received: _____