



Purchase Card Policy

INTRODUCTION

The Fort Vancouver Regional Library District (FVRL) recognizes that the use of purchase (credit) cards is a customary and economical business practice to improve cash management, reduce costs, and increase efficiency. The Finance Director shall implement and administer the following standards related to the use of purchase cards by FVRL employees.

Washington RCWs [43.09.2855](#) (as used in this section, purchase card means a card or device issued under an arrangement pursuant to which the issuer gives a cardholder the privilege of obtaining credit from the issuer) and [42.24.115](#) allow local governments to provide agency credit cards for staff as long as there is a policy and procedure governing their distribution, limits, usage, payments and any other necessary rules to ensure compliance. FVRL's Executive Director is authorized to adopt any additional rules necessary to implement the provisions of this policy.

The Finance Director is authorized to obtain purchase cards under this policy, which provides for the distribution, authorization, control, purchase limits and payment of bills through the use of the purchase cards by FVRL employees. The Finance Director shall implement accounting controls to promote the proper use of purchase cards and reduce the risk of loss or misuse.

Purchase cards may be used by authorized employees for purchasing goods, services, supplies and other items from vendors; incurring registration, and training or travel expenses in connection with the performance of their duties or on behalf of FVRL (where such expenses have been included and approved in the budget).

ISSUANCE, USE AND CONTROL OF PURCHASE CARDS

Purchase cards may be directly issued to those employees who, in the opinion of their Division Director and the Finance Director, have job responsibilities which could be more easily facilitated by the use of a purchase card and the purchase card use would benefit FVRL.

- **Assigned Purchase Cards:** If an employee's name appears on the face of the card, the employee is responsible for all purchases made with the card and the only person authorized to use the card. A purchase card should always be kept in a secure location.
- **FVRL Purchase Cards:** FVRL purchase cards may be provided to branch, department or division employees for purchases or travel when it is advantageous or necessary for FVRL to conduct its business and the employee does not have an assigned purchase card. These cards may be checked out from Accounting a few days prior to need. While the card is in an employee's possession, they are responsible for all purchases made with the card and are the only person authorized to use the card.



Before being issued a FVRL purchase card, each employee will be required to sign a FVRL Purchase Card User Agreement (Attachment A) acknowledging that they have read and understand this policy, and that they understand violation of the policy will subject them to disciplinary action.

All FVRL purchase card users must follow these general guidelines:

- Purchase only goods and services required to perform job-related tasks
- Keep expenditures within the purchase card's limits
- Don't use the card to purchase items on the exception list
- When possible, obtain pricing and in-stock availability prior to purchase
- Ensure that the vendor immediately authorizes the purchase
- Obtain a detailed copy of the receipt showing the last four digits of the card number
- Retain all receipts, packing lists, emails and other substantiating documentation related to the purchase

All purchase card receipts and other documents identifying purchase card expenditures in detail must be delivered to the Accounting Department within five (5) business days from the date statement details are available to the card user.

Employees involved in any aspect of purchasing are acting as agents of FVRL and have a responsibility to act in the best interest of the organization, which includes not personally favoring a specific vendor at the expense of FVRL.

AUTHORIZATION AND CONTROL

The Finance Director or their designee (Purchase Card Administrator) shall create and maintain accounts with the credit issuer or purchase card company. The Purchase Card Administrator shall maintain a ledger of individuals and departments using purchase cards, including the date the card was received, and act as a liaison between the purchase card company and the individual cardholders.

- Purchase card limits shall be set administratively for each card, depending on expected purchases during a typical billing cycle. The Finance Director may approve additional purchase capacity as needed on a temporary or on-going basis.
- Expenses related to authorized travel (hotel, airfare, ground transportation, registration, fees and meals) may be charged to a FVRL purchase card provided the purchases are preapproved by the Executive Director or their designee, and the employee returns from travel with all receipts in accordance with the FVRL Travel and Subsistence Policy and related procedures.
- The purchaser is responsible for ensuring receipt of the materials or services ordered and resolving any delivery problems, damaged goods issues, or other discrepancies with the vendor.



- If item(s) purchased with a purchase card need to be returned to a vendor, the purchaser should follow the vendor's return policy and ensure that proper credit is posted for any returned item(s). Failure to provide detailed documentation as required by the policy may result in the purchaser being responsible for the charge.

The Executive Director is authorized to revoke the use of any purchase card issued and immediately require the surrender of a purchase card. Purchase cards must be returned to FVRL immediately upon ending employment.

UNAUTHORIZED CHARGES

Any employee using a FVRL purchase card for unauthorized purchases or for personal use may be subject to disciplinary action and shall be billed by FVRL for all such unauthorized charges. Disallowed charges, or charges not properly identified, will be paid by the employee before the purchase card bill is due. If a situation arises where an employee is responsible for charges and the timing of the payment may result in interest and/or late fees, the Finance Director must be informed immediately. Any employee with a demonstrated history of unauthorized charges may be barred from obtaining or using a FVRL purchase card.

The following purchase card uses are NOT allowed:

- Charges made without pre-approval of the purchase card user's direct supervisor, department head, Division Director or Executive Director
- Payment for personal items and services
- Cash advances of any kind including money orders/travelers checks
- Purchase of gift cards or cash cards
- Purchase of alcoholic beverages

If certain charges are disallowed as a result of an internal audit or violation of current FVRL policy, such charges must be repaid. Misuse of a FVRL purchase card may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination and legal action.

Lost or stolen cards

Employees will immediately notify the Purchase Card Administrator, Finance Director or supervisor if their purchase card is lost or stolen as it is imperative that the card be frozen to prevent unauthorized use. If the loss is the result of a robbery, please call the police and file a report. Failure to report a lost or stolen card could result in the employee being held responsible for any unauthorized charges.

Unauthorized charges by a third party

The Purchase Card Administrator will be responsible for tracking expenditures on the cards on a



monthly basis and identifying any fraudulent use not detected by the purchase card issuer. Employees may be asked to assist with resolution of unauthorized use.

Payment of Bills

Cardholders are required to have all purchase card receipt(s) and other documents identifying the purchase card expenditure(s) in detail, delivered to the Accounting Department within five (5) business days of the statement activity made available to card users.

ATTACHMENT A

[Purchase Card User Agreement \(PDF\)](#)

POLICY HISTORY

Board Approved: Original 7/16/2018; Revised 8/10/2024