

The Ledger

A Newsletter of the University Controller's Organization

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*** IMPORTANT REMINDER ***

Next Payday July 2nd

Please advise all employees in your office that the next payday is **July 2, NOT** July 1 and **NOT** June 29! Ordinarily, when a payday falls on a weekend, it is moved to the previous work day, normally Friday. However, the state has mandated that the July 1 payday must always fall on or after July 1 into the next fiscal year for budgetary reasons.

New Finance Web Reports

The University and the Virginia Tech Foundation's Finance Brio reports will be replaced with a new Finance Web system in July 2001. The new system will eliminate the printing and query problems that many users have experienced. The Finance Brio reports will not be available after August 15, 2001.

Training has been scheduled for the new system in July 2001 on the dates listed below. If you currently use the Finance Brio reports, please plan to attend one of the training sessions. Please attend the session that is designated for you based on your last name. If you cannot attend the session indicated, please contact Shirlene Long at 231-9260 for assignment to another class. All training sessions will be held in 2150 Torgersen Hall. Training for off-campus employees will be provided at locations around the state. These employees will be notified at a later date about this training.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Last Name Begins With</u>
Monday, July 16	10am-noon	A-D
Wednesday, July 18	1pm-3pm	E-K
Monday, July 23	1pm-3pm	L-R
Tuesday, July 24	1pm-3pm	S-Z

Direct Deposit of Reimbursements

The Banner finance team has enhanced some of the processes and tables in Banner Finance and has created procedures to deposit travel and other reimbursements directly to bank accounts. Each time a deposit is made to the individual's bank account for an accounts payable transaction, the individual is notified by e-mail of the amount, the nature of the reimbursement and the bank associated with the deposit.

The first direct deposits were made on June 8, 2001. Travelers who elected to have payments made by direct deposit may occasionally want to have the payment made by check. To do so, enter the statement "Provide Paper Check" in the name and address block

of the reimbursement voucher. The Controller's Office staff will override the direct deposit option and a check will be produced.

For creating the initial direct deposit record, the individual's payroll bank account was used. If a person had more than one payroll deposit account, a note was sent to them explaining the new process. Individuals who wish to sign up for the accounts payable direct payment process may do so by completing the Accounts Payable Direct Deposit Authorization form found on the Bursar's Office web site at http://www.bursar.vt.edu/faculty_dd.htm . The completed form should be printed and sent to the Bursar's Office where the accounts payable bank information will be recorded in the Banner Finance system. The Banner system limits accounts payable deposits to one bank account.

If you have questions concerning direct deposit of employee reimbursements, please call 231-6418 and press 1 to be transferred to the Payment Distribution and Problem Resolution section of the Controller's Office.

Purchase of Airline Tickets

Effective July 1, 2001, the options for purchasing airline tickets are expanding. The university departments may purchase airline tickets for individual business travel by any one of the following four methods.

- Travel Authorization (TA) sent to one of the travel agencies on Virginia Tech contract.
- Traveler's Corporate American Express Travel Card.
- Department's American Express Corporate Purchasing Card.
- Personal funds.

The Commonwealth of Virginia requires the university to use one of these methods for making payments for air travel services. The university no longer has the option of making cash payments directly to the airlines or travel agencies.

The requirements for use of each option are explained below. There are pros and cons associated with each method of airline ticket purchase so the traveler should become familiar with those advantages and disadvantages before determining the means of purchasing the airline tickets. The Air Transportation Procedure found at <http://www.co.vt.edu/procedures/p20335e.htm> will be updated to explain the differences in the three means of purchasing airline tickets on or before July 1, 2001. It is imperative that the correct procedures be followed for the purchase of airline tickets.

Travelers may purchase individual business airline tickets from the travel agencies on university contract, from other travel agencies, from the airlines directly, or through the internet. Please see the details and requirements for documentation listed below for purchases made using each of the options.

Transportation Authorization (TA)

The completed TA form authorizes the six travel agencies who are on contract to charge the expenses for the services to the department's funds. There are no changes to this process. Departments must provide this form to the travel agencies no later than the time the tickets are issued. The traveler receives from \$200,000 to \$500,000 in flight insurance when this option is used. The agencies have the latest equipment to notify them when scheduled flights are changed or cancelled. The TA authorizes the travel agency to charge the expense to the

university central credit card. There are service charges from \$0 to \$15 for the issuance of a ticket. **This is the only option available for purchase of airline tickets for group travel where the cost of the travel for the whole group exceeds \$2,000.**

Travel Card

Travelers may use their Corporate American Express travel card (green card) for charging travel when they purchase through the internet or directly from the airlines. The travelers receive \$200,000 in business travel accident insurance and \$500 in baggage insurance when they use their American Express Corporate travel card to purchase airline tickets. The traveler **CANNOT** be reimbursed for the cost of the ticket until **AFTER** the trip occurs. The ticket receipt and a copy of the itinerary must be attached to the travel reimbursement voucher request form. **The cardholder cannot purchase tickets for group travel services using their Corporate American Express card.**

Corporate Purchasing Card

The American Express Corporate Purchasing Card (blue card) may be used for charging airline ticket expense for individual business travel purchased through the internet, directly from airlines, or from travel agencies. This card carries no baggage insurance or travelers insurance because it was not designed as a travel card. **This card cannot be used for any other travel expense, i.e. the first night of lodging cannot be charged to this card.**

If a cardholder uses the purchasing card to make airline ticket purchases, copies of the itinerary, a paid receipt, and an approved Travel Authorization form **MUST** be attached to the American Express Purchasing Card Payment Certification Form sent to the Controller's Office at the end of the payment cycle. Cardholders using this form of payment to purchase airline tickets must make sure they are purchasing tickets from a reputable source. Web-based purchases are allowed provided the web site security requirements outlined in the AMEX procedure found at <http://www.purch.vt.edu/html.docs/amex.html> are followed. The limit for airline ticket purchases made on the purchasing card is \$2,000. If you attempt to purchase an airline ticket for an individual that exceeds \$2,000, you should contact Debra Bales in the Purchasing Office to have the transaction limit temporarily raised above the \$2,000 (maximum limit for the Purchasing Card is \$5,000). Tickets cannot be purchased more than 90 days before the travel is to take place. **This card cannot be used for the purchase of group travel costing more than \$2,000.**

Personal Funds

Travelers may use their personal funds or credit cards to make payments for business airline tickets. The traveler **CANNOT** be reimbursed for the cost of the ticket until **AFTER** the trip occurs. The ticket receipt and a copy of the itinerary must be attached to the travel reimbursement voucher report form. **The cardholder cannot purchase tickets for group travel service costing more than \$2,000 using their personal funds.**

Group Travel

Any of the travel agencies on university contract may provide services for group travel. University departments who are responsible for group travel, such as study abroad groups, may not make commitments for this purchase without first attempting to purchase the services from one of the contract agencies. If the travel agencies on contract are unable to

provide the services, they have been instructed to provide you with a statement to that effect and you may then purchase services from another source.

Departments do have the option of sending a Requisition for Purchase form to the Purchasing Department when it is not feasible for one of the contract travel agencies to provide the service, i.e. travel for a national group or association is being organized by a central travel planner and includes airfare, lodging, meals and ground transportation.

Additional details regarding the purchase of airline tickets will be updated on the Controller's Office web site in the near future. If you have questions about the purchase of tickets, please contact someone in our travel section at 231-6418, option 2.

Electronic Accounting Voucher Document Numbers

The Accounting Voucher form is available online at <http://www.co.vt.edu>. The form is in Excel format and offers the University departments a way to type the needed information directly on the computer and print the document. The electronic form, however, does not provide a unique document number as the blue pre-printed combo form does. Departments that would like to track their electronic voucher forms can implement a numbering scheme that consists of a leading "D", the three-digit department number, and a unique four-digit number. The four digit number range to be used should begin with 0001 and run through 9999. (Example- D4400001) This scheme will provide 9,999 numbers that a department can use over several accounting years. When the numbers approach 9999, the department should contact the Controller's Office to determine a new series of numbers to use. Departments should put this number in the Document # field at the bottom of the Accounting Voucher so the fiscal staff in the Controller's Office can use that number as the Banner invoice number rather than assigning the next available number in the Banner system.

The Banner invoice number is 8 digits which is the maximum number allowed in the document number field. When the department assigns an 8-digit number to the accounting voucher, multiple vendor invoices cannot be paid on that document.

If you have questions or need further clarification, please contact Jeanie Quesenberry at 231-2544 in the Controller's Office.

Form W-9

Due to some confusion with the resident alien section of the W-9 form, we have revised the form for your use. The new form can be completed and printed from our web site:

<http://www.co.vt.edu/forms/W9.pdf>

The Internal Revenue Service requires us to request taxpayer identification numbers from all vendors with whom we do business. In order to comply with various IRS requirements, departments will need to request that **new individual or sole proprietor** vendors complete the W-9 form prior to processing their payment. The W-9 form should be attached to the accounting voucher. Faxed copies will be accepted. **For all non-individual vendors, such as corporations, the purchasing department will continue to request the W-9 forms.** Please note that W-9 forms are not required for travel vouchers. Also, if the vendor is not a U. S. citizen, they should usually complete a **W-8** form instead of the W-9. Please contact

Martha Laster Mullen, our Foreign National Tax Specialist, at 231-3754 or mlaster@vt.edu for payments to non-US citizens.

Questions regarding the W-9 process should be directed to Jeanie Quesenberry, our Accounts Payable Supervisor, at 231-2544 or e-mail jqe@vt.edu.

Banner Form FRIGITD Change

Two new options have been added to the Grant Inception to Date Form (FRIGITD). The form will now allow you to “option” over to the Grant Maintenance Form (FRAGRNT) to look up the sponsor name or the PI. An option has also been added to allow the user to check the project start and end dates on FRMFUND. These two new options are located on the left-hand side of the form.

We hope these changes will help those working with grants and contracts.

University Bookstore Purchases

The University Bookstore requires individuals who are using the Bookstore Charge Slip to possess and show a Hokie Passport identification card when making purchases. Unless the purchaser is a department head, the form must be signed by someone other than the individual who is picking up the goods. Department heads may sign and receive the goods for purchases up to \$100.

The University Bookstore cannot authorize the charging of gift items unless a previous authorization from the Controller's Office is attached to the bookstore charge slip. Gifts are not acceptable charges against public funds but some exceptions can be made if funds were collected for the purpose of purchasing those gifts, i.e. study abroad programs.

Itemized Business Meal Receipts

Itemized meal receipts are required for payment and have been required for business meals since June 1, 2000. This is to notify you that all restaurants in the Blacksburg area do provide itemized receipts and they are required before payment or reimbursement can be made.

The itemized receipt, the names of the participants and the purpose of the meeting must be included with the payment document to document the business necessity of the expenditure. Full details regarding business meals have been provided in previous editions of “The Ledger” and can be found at the Controller's web site.

Signature of Traveler

As you know, travelers are required to sign their own requests for reimbursement. If people from outside the university are to be reimbursed, they must also sign their own voucher as traveler. While it might seem easier to sign their names for them, if you do so you are not only committing fraud, you are also putting the university and all of its travelers at risk for tax complications. Our travel reimbursements do not have to be added to people's tax returns because we have an “accountable plan” per the Internal Revenue Service. The signature of

the traveler is part of what we have to provide in order for our reimbursements to qualify under an "accountable plan".

Some departments obtain the signature before the traveler leaves campus, when the receipts are submitted. Others fax a copy of the travel voucher to the traveler for their review, signature and return fax. A copy of that signed faxed form is attached to the original.

Garnishments, Child Support Orders, Federal or State Tax Levies

Virginia Tech is responsible for honoring all garnishments, child support orders, federal and state tax levies that are served to us. We have found that some departments are being served with these documents, especially at our off-campus locations. The Controller's Office (Payroll) is responsible for making sure all regulations are followed regarding these orders. If you should ever receive in the mail or be served any of these papers, notify Payroll immediately. Becky Pauley (rpauley@vt.edu) at 231-7844 and Karen Davis (khdavis@vt.edu) at 231-5203 normally take care of these situations. However, if you cannot reach one of them, please call the main number 231-5201, and some one will be glad to help you.

Once these notices are served to a Virginia Tech employee, the university becomes liable for their discharge. Typically the notices do not allow for much turn-around time. So we do need to act quickly. Failure to comply with the court orders contained in these notices can result in significant penalties, interest, and even liability for the principal amount which can run into several thousand dollars!

Garnishments are being issued by many courts when child support agreements are reached, and before there is any question of default. The idea is to get family support payments to the families more efficiently for all concerned. Therefore, you should not be surprised to see more of them.