

The Ledger

A Newsletter of the University Controller's Organization

Website: <http://www.controller.vt.edu>

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Funds Handling Procedures Updated

Funds handling (cash receipt) guidelines and procedures have been revised and updated. These procedures are available on the Bursar's web page www.bursar.vt.edu. A summary of the major changes are highlighted below:

- Areas accepting funds on a regular basis (three or more days per week) are required to obtain written approval from the Office of the University Bursar before becoming a cash collection point.
- Those areas with casual collections of funds (i.e., occasional refunds, reimbursements, rebates, etc.) are not required to obtain prior approval; however, they must follow the funds handling guidelines. For departments receiving casual collections of funds, deposits must be made each Friday or as soon as cumulative funds reach \$250 or greater.
- Departments with casual collections electing not to deposit daily assume more risk and are required to have acceptable safeguards in place.
- Department Heads, Directors, and other Managers are responsible for implementing and maintaining good business practices (internal controls) over cash receipts. Procedures should be written in detail outlining each step in the funds handling process for the Department Head, Director, or Manager, the cash handler, the depositor, and the reconciler (person reconciling deposits to the Banner Finance reports).

See the complete procedure on the Bursar's web page. Please contact Sandi Merrix (smerrix@vt.edu) at 231-6277 if you have questions.

New Procedure for Selecting and Paying Human Subject Participants

A new procedure is available on the Controller's Office web page www.controller.vt.edu providing guidance for selecting and paying human subject participants.

Research project results are often dependent on human subjects participating in various tests. As an incentive to encourage participation in the research, some grants provide funds for payments to the human subjects. When such payments are made, the disbursements are to be made as payments to independent contractors, not payments for work performed.

A few important highlights from the procedure are listed below:

- Participants cannot be international visitors such as, but not limited to, F-1 or J-1 students because these individuals cannot work as independent contractors in this country.
- The department must secure a completed copy of IRS form W-9 or W-8BEN when payments exceed \$75 (de minimis level at Virginia Tech).
- The department must notify the participant that these payments are taxable income.

See the complete procedure at <http://www.co.vt.edu/procedures/p23715c.html>. Please contact Jeanie Quesenberry (jque@vt.edu) at 231-2544 if you have questions.

Departmental Reconciliation Training

A one-hour training course on monthly departmental fund reconciliations will be held on Tuesday, August 3, taught by Nancy Gruber, Manager of General Accounting. The session will be in Durham 261 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. This training will provide an overview on procedures to reconcile funds and the department's responsibility for reconciliation and documentation. This is the same training class that was offered on June 22.

In addition to the on-campus location, the training will be video broadcast to Tidewater AREC and Alexandria Research Institute. If you can travel to one of those sites, please let us know. We will consider adding other video broadcast locations based on need and availability.

The training is limited to 60 participants, so registration is important. To register for the training, please contact Margie Sentelle <<mailto:sentelle@vt.edu>> or phone at 231-2369.

Future training will be offered every six months. For anyone who is not able to attend the training at this time, the training materials are available on the Controller's Office web page at <https://www.controller.vt.edu/training/index.html>.

New and Improved Journal Entry Transfer Form

There is a new and improved version of the journal entry transfer form available on the Controller's Office website located at <http://www.co.vt.edu/>. Click on "Forms and Templates" on the left hand side to access the form.

Some of the changes include:

- There is no longer a need for a continuation form. The new form allows a maximum of 35 lines to be entered and subsequent pages of the journal entry will print as necessary without user intervention. When the "Print" button is clicked, all pages of the journal entry will automatically print.
- There is a new button called "Clear Entry". When this button is selected any information that has been entered on the form will be deleted and the form will be clear again.

- There is a new button called “Export”. This feature should only be used for journal entries with a large number of transactions. When this button is selected, the journal entry will automatically be saved as a text file. It can then be sent to Debbie Carden (cardenda@vt.edu) in the Controller’s Office (or the excel spreadsheet can be saved and sent to the Controller’s Office). *The department will still need to print the journal entry transfer form and send to Debbie Carden along with the proper backup documentation and approval signature as usual.* Sending the file to the Controller’s Office will streamline the process and avoid possible data entry errors by the Controller’s Office. Once the file is sent to Debbie, she will process this file and it will update Banner Finance.

If you have any questions or problems with the new form, please contact either Doug Irvin at 231-3381 or Nancy Gruber at 231-8554.

Remember to Update Signature Cards and Payroll Report Email Addresses

During a recent Internal Audit, several departmental signature cards maintained by the Controller’s Office had employees listed that are no longer employed by the department. Signature cards need to be updated when departmental employees leave or change duties. Please request new signature cards for completion from Dorothy Carter (dicarter@vt.edu) at 231-8618. This is especially important at the beginning of a new academic year when naturally a large number of changes in department heads and other fiscal staff occur.

In addition, email addresses maintained by the Controller’s Office for distributing salary overtime and wage reconciliation reports need to be changed when employees leave or change duties. Please send these changes to Eddie Shumate (eshumate@vt.edu) at 231-3005.

Travel Services Authorization

University departments request airline services from the university-approved travel agents using a Travel Services Authorization (TA). The TA must be completed before the department or faculty member authorizes the travel agency to make the final commitment for the airline tickets or hotel arrangements. The TA authorizes the travel agents to charge airline tickets to the university’s credit card. After the charge is made, the travel agents send the TA and a copy of the traveler’s itinerary to the Controller’s Office to be used for charging the cost of the tickets to departmental funds.

Recently, some departments have failed to provide the completed TA form to the travel agents in a timely manner. When the TA is not provided in a timely manner, the Controller’s Office cannot distribute the charges on the semi-monthly credit card bill. A few departments generally hold up the posting of charges to funds for all departments. We ask that you please complete the TA forms and provide them to the travel agents at the time the tickets are booked so charges can be posted to operating and sponsored programs funds. If you have questions about this process, please contact Wilda Lay in the Controller’s Office at wlay@vt.edu or 231-8613.