

The Ledger

A Newsletter of the University Controller's Organization

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GE/MASTERCARD TO REPLACE AMERICAN EXPRESS

University Travel Card

The University Travel Card will soon convert from American Express to a new General Electric MasterCard. The conversion is currently scheduled to take place in mid-October 2005. Each individual who currently has an AMEX Travel card will be required to complete a new application for the GE Travel MasterCard.

Departments should plan for the conversion accordingly and submit travel reimbursement vouchers immediately after completion of trips. Prompt payment of the American Express travel card will facilitate the transition to the GE/MasterCard travel card. The American Express card will not be cancelled until travelers have received their new MasterCard.

The Commonwealth's Department of Accounts has recently indicated that the American Airlines UATP Card will be replaced by the Airline Agency Bill/Agency Pay Travel Card. Implementation is currently scheduled for late October 2005. The UATP Card will be cancelled by the state on September 30, 2005. During the period that UATP is down, travelers can use the department's Purchasing card or their personal cards to pay for travel. Our information regarding this change is limited. We will keep you informed as we learn more details.

If you have questions regarding changes involving the university travel card, please contact Roger Thomas (thomasr@vt.edu) at 231-8551 or Nancy Gruber (looneyn@vt.edu) at 231-8554.

Purchasing-Small Purchase Corporate Card

Although the exact details are not yet known, the University Purchasing Card Program will soon convert from American Express to a new General Electric MasterCard. This new Purchasing Card is accepted by many more vendors and offers additional features that will be implemented at a later date after all state agencies are completely converted. The initial conversion is currently scheduled to take place in mid-October 2005.

The Commonwealth's Department of Accounts (DOA) expects the switch to cause minimal disruption to cardholders. We will keep you informed as we know more

details, such as when to destroy your AMEX card, and when and how you will receive your new MasterCard.

In the meantime, departments should plan for the conversion accordingly.

** The AMEX card should not be used for a deposit where the remainder of the payment will be made after October 5th.

** Follow up with vendors on outstanding AMEX credits and/or charges as needed to ensure that all transactions clear by October 19th. If you have transactions that you do not believe will clear by that date, please contact the Program Administrators below so that provisions can be made.

** Effective immediately, do not establish any new vendor accounts linked to your current AMEX Purchasing Card.

** Cardholders with existing vendor accounts linked to AMEX Purchasing Cards (e.g. FedEx accounts), should have the vendor disable the AMEX account no later than September 30, 2005. Following the conversion, you can have the vendor re-enable the account, linking the account to the new MasterCard.

This is advance information. The details of the conversion have not been finalized. We will keep you informed as more information comes forth from DOA about the conversion process.

If you have any questions regarding this change or the Purchasing Card Program in general, please contact Debra Reed (dbales@vt.edu) at 231-8548.

LODGING RATES AT THE INN AT VIRGINIA TECH

The Inn at Virginia Tech will offer University departments a special "VT rate" of \$82 when the state rate of \$60 is no longer available and the hotel is not in a sell out situation. Departments should ask for the "VT rate" when the state rate is not available. When the hotel is sold out or almost sold out, the discounted rates are not available. There are two main reasons for the hotel to be sold out:

* A big conference or event has booked most of the hotel. This may or may not also impact rates at other Blacksburg hotels.

* The whole town is booked for a special event like Tech football games or graduation. Rates at all area hotels are impacted.

Departments should call 231-8000 first to make reservations; however, if departments run into difficulties or require additional information, they may call the Lodging Manager, Alisa Hewitt, at 231-0105 or the on-site Director of Sales, Teresa Hughes, at 231-0111, if the question relates to a group.