

Essex County Credit Card Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to establish the responsibilities and guidelines for expenses processed using a credit card issued to certain individuals by Essex County. Credit cards are an alternative approach to purchasing products and services. A credit card will not replace normal purchasing procedures, but will be used in instances where it is the most advantageous or cost effective.

Scope

This policy applies to administrative staff who, with approval of the County Administrator, have been issued a credit card. Credit card privileges may be rescinded at any time if policies and/or procedures are not followed. These procedures provide the guidelines under which cardholders may utilize a County credit card.

General

1. Credit cards are to be used by authorized County personnel to transact County business in a more efficient manner.
2. Cardholders must follow the County Procurement Policy.
3. It is the cardholder's responsibility to ensure that vendors are advised that, as a governmental agency, Essex County is exempt from sales tax for purchases of tangible personal property or services excluding lodging, meals, and basic consumption use items. The cardholder must take appropriate measures to ensure that the County is not charged tax on purchases. The Virginia Sales and Use Tax Certificate of Exemption (Form ST-12) is available in the Finance Office and on the County website.
4. Cash advances of any kind linked to County credit cards are strictly prohibited.
5. Personal expenses of any kind are strictly prohibited.
6. If by unintentional causes, personal expenses are incurred, the purchaser will be personally liable for those transactions and must reimburse the County immediately for personal expenses incurred.
7. A cardholder found to have used a card for personal expenses may be subject to disciplinary action.
8. Cards are not to be linked to any form of loyalty points program.
9. Use of the card is governed by Section 19 "Travel" in the Essex County Personnel Manual regarding allowable expenses.

Issue of Credit Cards

Credit cards shall be signed for using the form provided at Appendix 1. Completed forms shall be kept on file in the Finance Office.

Credit Limit

Credit limits applied to each credit card shall be approved by the County Administrator. Any changes to the account limits shall be authorized by the County Administrator.

Management of Cards

All issued cards shall:

1. Be signed on the reverse side of the card upon receipt;
2. not be used for any use other than that outlined in this policy;
3. be the responsibility of the person to whom a card is issued, including the security of the card;
4. if a card is lost or stolen the cardholder must immediately notify the credit card company at the toll-free customer service number associated with the card. In addition, the Finance Manager must be notified that the card is lost or stolen on the first available business day.
5. a card may only be used by the person to whom it is issued and staff members who are authorized by the holder;
6. expired credit cards must be returned to the Finance Manager who will ensure cards are destroyed.

Transaction Methods

Transactions shall be incurred on the following basis, without exception:

1. Transactions shall be allowed on condition that a receipt is received by the purchaser.
2. Telephone transactions shall be allowed; however, a printed receipt must be obtained.
3. Internet transactions shall be allowed; however, a receipt must be obtained.
4. If no supporting documentation is available, the cardholder will provide a written declaration detailing the nature of the expense.

Handling of Monthly Credit Card Statements

1. Cardholders will receive and reconcile the credit card monthly statement.
2. Receipts and/or supporting documentation shall be attached to the monthly statement on which the corresponding purchase appears; failure to provide proper documentation, may cause loss of privileges to use a County credit card.
3. A budget code and brief description summarizing the purchase shall be written on the statement for each transaction.
4. Cardholders shall submit statements to the Finance Office for payment processing as soon as possible to ensure that late fees are not incurred.

Termination of Employment

Credit cards shall be returned immediately on termination of employment to the Finance Office. Returned cards shall be cancelled by the Finance Manager.

Breaches of this Policy and Procedure

Breaches of this policy will be investigated as potential breaches of County policy and disciplinary actions will be taken according to the outcome of the investigation.

Availability of Policy and Procedure

This policy will be available for inspection in the Finance Office and on the County website www.essex-virginia.org.

Appendix 1 – Credit Card Issue Form

Name _____

Position _____

Type of Card Issued _____

Credit Card Number _____

Date Issued _____

Credit Card Limit _____

I have read and understood the Essex County Credit Card Policy and shall abide by the guidelines as outlined in the policy.

Signed: _____

Title: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED BY:

Finance Manager

County Administrator

Date

Date