



Travel Card Procedures



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Travel Card program is to establish a more efficient, cost-effective method of disbursing travel funds to employees. The Travel Card can be used with any travel-related merchant that accepts MasterCard as a form of payment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

These policies and procedures provide the general guidelines for using the Travel Card. Please read it carefully. The term Travel Card refers to a purchasing card that have been structured to allow purchases with travel related vendors. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in disciplinary action, including the possibility of termination.

Prudent, good business judgment must be exercised at all times when making purchases with the District Travel Card. Cardholders are expected to be as conscientious with district funds as they would their own. Before any purchase is made, the cardholder must ask: **“How will this transaction be perceived by the public we serve?”** Any purchase perceived as being excessive, exorbitant or inconsistent with educational business purposes will be scrutinized, and if deemed inappropriate, the cardholder will be required to compensate the District from their personal funds for the difference in reasonable and customary costs.

Your signature on the *Cardholder Agreement* shows that you understand the intent of the program and agree to follow the established guidelines. The following important points should be reviewed before using the Travel Card:

- The program does not affect your credit rating in any way. The Travel Card program carries corporate, not individual liability.
- All purchases made on the Travel Card must be pre-approved by the principal/budget director and must be for official school district purchases only.
- You are responsible for the security of the Travel Card and the transactions made with it.
- Travel Cards will be issued in the cardholder’s name. It is not permissible to loan your card to another individual or make purchases for others.
- Travel Cards will have transaction limits, please know what these are to avoid declined transactions.
- The cardholder agrees to safeguard the credit card and to immediately report a lost or stolen card to Citibank and the District.
- If you do not follow these guidelines when using the Travel Card, you will receive disciplinary action, including termination.
- You can use the Travel Card at any vendor or service provider that accepts MasterCard and is not on the restricted vendor list.
- All detailed original receipts for purchases must be submitted within 5 days of returning from a trip attached to the Final Travel Report form.
- The business office will reconcile the statement received from Citibank to ensure all charges are accurate. The statement will be reconciled using your detailed original receipts, so it is critical that all receipts be submitted on a timely basis.
- The Travel Card is not intended to avoid or bypass appropriate travel or payment procedures as outlined in the Hays CISD Business Procedure Manual.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Program Administrator – (Martha Smith, Director of Purchasing ext. 6063) The Program Administrator is designated to answer questions, address issues and oversee the administration of the program. The Program Administrator has a direct relationship with the Bank. All Travel Card requests must go through the Program Administrator.

Travel Specialist – (Connie Cox ext. 6096) The Travel Specialist will assist the Program Administrator in answering questions and ensuring compliance with fiscal guidelines. The Travel Specialist will assign the Travel Cards. The Travel Specialist will also reconcile the monthly statements and contact cardholders, as necessary, to resolve discrepancies and/or disputed charges.

Cardholder - The cardholder is responsible for following the guidelines with regard to purchases, selection of vendors, security of the card and retention of receipts. The cardholder must enter account code information (allocate costs) into GCMS within 5 days of the purchase posting and ensure that their Budget Authority approves each transaction online in GCMS. The cardholder will email a copy of the signed GCMS Expense Report to the Business Office by noon Friday(accounts.payable@hayscisd.net). Each campus/department must retain a copy of the receipt(s), a copy of the signed P-Card Disbursement Request and the original of the GCMS Expense Report for seven (7) years. Audits will be scheduled throughout the year to verify that purchases are made within correct Accounting and Purchasing procedures.

Budget Manager – (Principal/Administrator/Director) The Budget Authority is responsible for designating cardholders and for approving purchasing card receipts of cardholders to ensure they are within District Policy and procedures. The Budget Authority will also assist in assigning cardholder spending limits and monitoring adherence to purchasing card regulations. The Budget Authority is responsible for retrieving travel cards in the event of termination or change in the employment status of a cardholder under their supervision.

Customer Service

The travel card program is serviced using a team approach with the Bank’s Customer Service Center. This center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to assist the cardholder with general questions about the travel card account. If a card is lost or stolen, the employee should notify Customer Service immediately. **The customer service number is: 1-800-248-4553.**

TRAVEL CARD CONTROLS & PROCEDURES

Credit Limits

All travel cards have monthly/annual cardholder spending limits. Limits may vary for each cardholder and will be established by the Program Administrator in conjunction with the Budget Authority. Monthly limits automatically “refresh” each month.

Each cardholder will be given information on the limits of his/her card upon signing up for the program. In order to change limits on any card, your Budget Authority should forward a request in writing to the Program Administrator. Upon approval, the Program Administrator will then contact the Bank for processing. *Please allow 2 to 3 days to process any changes.*

Restricted Vendors

The travel card program will be restricted for use with certain types of service and merchants. If you present your travel card for payment to restricted vendors, the authorization request will be declined. Do not attempt multiple swipes of the card by the merchant, as this will trigger a security alert. Instead, please contact the HCISD Purchasing Office. Cash advances and alcoholic beverages are unacceptable purchases at any time. You cannot use the Travel Card for fuel in a personal vehicle. The Travel Card may be used for a rental car and for fuel for the rental car.

***Examples of Acceptable Charges**

Hotel	Air Travel
Parking	Rental Car

***Examples of Unacceptable Charges**

Supplies	Alcoholic Beverages	Phone Calls
Room Service	Entertainment	Meals

***These examples are for illustration only and are not all inclusive. When in doubt, please ask the Program Administrator, Budget Manager, or Travel Specialist for clarification.**

Request for Travel Cards

Campus principals and department directors submit requests for Travel Cards to the Program Administrator, Martha Smith, Director of Purchasing. Each request will be considered individually based upon the frequency of travel, type of travel, benefit to the campus/department, etc.

Card Use by another Employee or Student

Allowing another employee or a student to use the card may result in the card being deactivated at the Program Administrator's discretion. The cardholder may be denied card privileges.

Issuance of Travel Card

Travel Cards will be centrally distributed through the business office. When a new card is issued, the bank will send it to the Program Administrator for distribution to the cardholder. Cards will be released to cardholders after receipt of a signed cardholder agreement.

All employees wishing to use a travel card will be required to complete training and sign the Cardholder Agreement. Cards will be issued in the individual's name. It is not permissible to loan your card to another individual.

Travel Card Receipts

Always obtain a receipt when using the travel card. It is every cardholder's responsibility to ensure there is an original receipt for each purchase. Detailed original receipts must be presented for purchases –**the credit card charge slip is not considered adequate documentation.**

Receipts should be attached to the Travel Card Disbursement Request Form and sent to the Finance Office for processing. A copy of the receipt should be attached to a copy of the Travel Card Disbursement Request which includes accounting information (cost allocation) and Budget authority approval which will be retained by the campus/department for a period of seven (7) years.

All detailed original receipts will be reconciled with monthly statements and filed for audit purposes after the appropriate payments have been made to Citibank. If a receipt is lost or stolen, the cardholder should obtain duplicate copies of the receipts. If unable to obtain a receipt, the charges may become the personal responsibility of the cardholder and due within 30 days of the purchase to the business office.

Online Closeout of Transactions by Cardholder

The cardholder must enter account code information into Global Card Management System (GCMS) within 5 days of each purchase. Each campus/department must retain the receipt(s) and Expense Report

The Business Office will reconcile documentation submitted by the campus/department to transactions posted to the charge account by Citibank. The charge account will be reconciled using your GCMS printout, so it is critical that the GCMS printout be submitted in a timely basis.

Monthly Statement Reconciliation, Printing, Approval and Forwarding

The Citibank statement will be issued on the 3rd calendar day of each month.

Monthly, the Cardholder will:

- Reconcile the electronic statement received from the Citibank Global Card Management System (GCMS) to ensure all charges are accurate and allocated to the correct budget code.
- Reprint the Expense Report showing reviewed and approved statuses for the current statement period.
- Retain a copy of the approved Expense Report along with a copy of the receipts for the current school year.

The Secretary/Bookkeeper will:

- Verify that all transactions comply with the established policies and procedures, have proper supporting documentation (e.g. receipt, invoice, packing slip, etc.), have been reviewed by Cardholder, and have been charged to the correct account code.
- If a transaction is missing documentation, contact the Cardholder to obtain proper documentation.
- Make any necessary account code changes using the reallocation function of GCMS.
- Review the Cardholder's account activity on the system.

The Budget Authority will:

- Verify that all transactions comply with the established policies and procedures, have proper supporting documentation (e.g. receipt, invoice, packing slip, etc.), have been reviewed by Cardholder, and have been charged to the correct account code.
- Review your account activity on the system.

Travel Card Documentation Audits

The accounts payable department will export travel card documentation weekly. All aspects of pre-approval, adherence to purchasing procedures, proper coding, and post-purchase approvals will be reviewed. Audits will be scheduled throughout the year to verify that purchases are made within correct Accounting and Purchasing procedures.

Fraudulent Charges

If the cardholder becomes aware of or in review of their statement they find that fraudulent charges have been made to their card, they are to immediately contact the Citibank Customer Service department at **1-800-248-4553**. After contacting Citibank, notify the Program Administrator or designee. Prompt action can reduce the District's liability for fraudulent activity.

Insufficient Budget

Payments to Citibank will not be delayed due to insufficient department budgets. Payment will be made; however, all cards utilizing the account in question will be deactivated immediately. The cards will be reactivated after budget problems are resolved. Repeated budget problems may result in all cards for the account in question being deactivated at the Program Administrator's discretion for a 4-month waiting period.

Card Use by another Employee or Student

Allowing another employee or a student to use the card may result in the card being deactivated at the Program Administrator's discretion. The cardholder may be denied card privileges or required to attend training again before being allowed to use a card.

Sales and Use Tax

The District is a tax-exempt entity and does not pay or reimburse sales tax. The cardholder should present a sales tax exemption form when making travel arrangements. If taxes are charged and the merchant will not credit the charges or issue a refund, the cardholder shall be personally liable for reimbursement of all taxes and payment will be due to the Business Office within 30 days of the purchase.

Returns, Credits, and Disputed Charges

Should a problem arise with a purchased item, every attempt should be made to first resolve the issue directly with the merchant. All returns must be reimbursed by credit to the account; **cash refunds are prohibited**. Credit slips should be submitted in accordance with district guidelines.

Security of the Travel Card

The cardholder is responsible for the security of the card. Guard the Travel Card account number carefully. It should not be posted in a work area or left in a conspicuous place. It should be kept in a secure location.

Violations & Consequences

The only person authorized to use the Travel Card is the cardholder who is issued the Travel Card. The card

is to be used for business purposes only. The card is not intended for personal use.

Examples of Violations

- Not completing Expense Reports in a timely manner
- Improper purchases
- Personal use
- Allowing another person to use your Travel Card

Inappropriate use of the card or failure to abide by the Travel Card Policies and Procedures will result in revocation of the card and appropriate disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Employee Transfer

In the event of a transfer to another position within the District that also requires a Travel Card, it is not necessary to cancel or reorder the Travel Card. Report the transfer to the Program Administrator and the card will be modified to reflect the change. If the new position does not require a Travel Card, the card must be returned to the Program Administrator and deactivated.

Employee Termination

The travel card must be returned to the Program Administrator or Budget Authority upon termination from employment with the Hays Consolidated Independent School District. The purchasing card must be returned to the Business Office prior to the employee's departure from his or her employment. To the extent permitted by law, the district reserves the right to withhold the employee's final paycheck until such card is returned to the district.

Lost or Stolen Cards

If a Travel Card is lost or stolen, immediately contact the Bank's Customer Service. After contacting the Bank, notify the Program Administrator. Prompt action can reduce the District's liability for fraudulent activity. **The customer service number is: 1-800-248-4553.**

Lodging, Sales and Use Tax

Hays CISD qualifies for a government rate and this rate should be requested if offered by a hotel. Remember, room rates should be reasonable – don't stay at the Ritz when a more moderate hotel will do.

The District does not recommend obtaining lodging in the Austin/San Marcos area for conferences or trainings because it may be denied. Exceptions may be granted for officers in professional organizations.

The District is **exempt from Texas State Sales Tax** on lodging and hotel parking. The Texas Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate and the Texas Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification form is available on the Hays CSISD website. These forms should be provided to the hotel at time of check in. The traveling employee is responsible for requesting and obtaining credit for any Texas State Sales Tax charges. Room rate, city and other taxes should be the only charges showing. If the room was shared, indicate with whom the room was shared somewhere on the receipt. Incidentals should be paid with personal credit cards.

Even if a \$0 balance is showing when a bill is slipped under the room door the morning of departure, the traveler should check out at the hotel desk and get a finalized bill reflecting a \$0 balance and verify the bill does not include state tax or charges employee did not make.

Transportation

Transportation is the cost of traveling to and from a destination while on Hays CISD business. See below for specific guidelines related to modes of travel:

School District Vehicle

The use of school district vehicles are handled by the Hays CISD Transportation Department in accordance with their guidelines.

Rental Car / Fuel

Rental Car charges can be placed on the Travel Card. The District has a state contract with Enterprise and Avis. Our state contract includes a set rate. Insurance is included in the rate given. Under the state contract the District is covered for liability and a damage waiver is included. Fuel for the rental car can be charged to the Travel Card. A receipt showing charges made on dates of travel must be submitted with the final travel report.

Airfare

Airfare may be paid using a Travel Card prior to travel after completing the Employee Travel Request and prior approval has been received. Hays CISD will not purchase or reimburse for airfare insurance.

Public Transportation

Employees may use a district Travel Card to pay for public transportation. Any charges made to the Travel Card must be accompanied by a receipt and turned into the Business Office within 2 days of returning from trip. All original receipts for expenses paid by the employee must be attached to the Employee Travel Reimbursement Request form.

Meals

Meal cost will be issued as an accountable per diem and claimed on the District Travel Forms. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable. *Gratuities are limited to \$5.00 a day.*

NOTE:

Do not tape or highlight over information on cash register receipts as it causes the ink to fade away. Tape receipts, all the way across the top, to a clean sheet of white copy paper at least 1" (one inch) from the top of page. Do not cut a receipt, just fold it (do not tape the edges of the receipt).