

**ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STAFF REPORT**

For the meeting of June 9, 2021

TO: Ross Valley Fire Board

FROM: Kevin Yeager, Deputy Director Fire

SUBJECT: Authorize the Cal-Card Purchasing Policy Update

---

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Fire Board authorizes the Cal-Card Purchasing Policy Update that provides guiding principles for purchases of supplies, materials, equipment, and travel expenses.

**BACKGROUND**

The Department adopted the “Cal-Card Purchasing Policy on July, 2006. The Cal-Card policy outlines the instructions on the proper use of the Cal-Card (credit card); the credit card is a supplement to the procurement process as stated in the Federally Funded Procurement Policy.

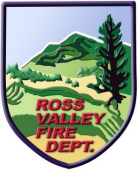
**DISCUSSION:**

The new update includes new sections such as responsibilities, combines general guidelines into one single section, and adds a procedure section to be used as reference when issuing and using a Cal-Card. Moreover, the updated policy outlines the card holders’ duties and responsibilities when using the Cal-card (credit card), as well as the single daily purchase limits and BC’s approval needed before purchasing any supplies, materials, equipment, and travel expenses. Further, this policy ensures the Department continues adhering to the proper procurement processes.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

**Attachments:** CAL-Card Purchasing Policy (2021) – Attachment #1  
CAL-Card Policy (2006) – Attachment #2



# ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Policies and Procedures  
Administration  
Rules of Conduct

<b>CAL-Card Purchasing Policy</b>	<b>Date Revised: 05/2021- By: M. Gonzalez</b>
<b>Date Created: 07/06</b>	<b>Page 1 of 4</b>

## SECTION 1: PURPOSE

The "Cal Card Purchasing Policy" objective is to provide guiding principles to the personnel of the Ross Valley Fire Department for purchases of supplies, materials, equipment, and travel expenses, not to exceed limits established by the Department's Approving Official (Fire Chief or designee).

## SECTION 2: POLICY

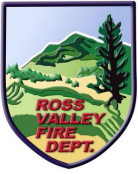
A CAL-Card (credit card) shall be issued to Ross Valley Fire Department personnel to conduct department business. Cards will be given to Chief Officers, Captains, and Support Staff and may be issued to additional personnel on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Approving Official.

## SECTION 3: RESPONSIBILITY

Authorized cardholders shall be responsible for the administration and approval of all credit card purchases made with their credit card.

## SECTION 4: GENERAL GUIDELINES

- A. The CAL-Card card shall have the employee's name and Ross Valley FD on the card. Authorization to use this card is restricted to the individual and it shall not be delegated. No member of the employee's staff, family, supervisor, or anyone else may use this card. It has been specially designed to avoid confusion with an employee's personal credit cards. The card is to be used for **OFFICIAL** business and **MAY NOT BE USED FOR PERSONAL PURCHASES**.
- B. Approved personnel shall be sent a U.S. Bank Purchasing Card after Cardholder setup has been completed by the Program Administrator and processed by U.S. Bank. Cardholders should immediately acknowledge receipt of the card by calling U.S. Bank to activate the account. Cardholder will be asked for information such as business telephone number, zip



# ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Policies and Procedures  
Administration  
Rules of Conduct

<b>CAL-Card Purchasing Policy</b>	<b>Date Revised: 05/2021- By: M. Gonzalez</b>
<b>Date Created: 07/06</b>	<b>Page 1 of 4</b>

code, 16-digit account number, and last four digits of social security (please contact the program administrator to obtain social security number).

- C. The credit card is a supplement to the procurement process. As with other procurement methods, the following conditions must be met when using the credit card:
  - I. Every single purchase may be comprised of multiple items, but the total, including tax, cannot exceed the single purchase dollar limit on the credit card.
  - II. When a purchase exceeds the limit established by the Approving Official, normal purchasing procedures shall be followed.
  - III. Cardholders must ensure that sufficient funds are available before making any purchases. The Agency Program Coordinator and/or Approving Official, can assist in verifying funds are available.
- D. The issuance of a credit card in the employee's name shall not allow the credit card company to perform any credit check on the employee's credit. The credit card company shall not request any personal information from the employee, nor should any personal information be furnished.
- E. When normal purchasing processes are not utilized due to the nature of the purchase (e.g., emergencies, travel, strike team assignment), written justification shall accompany receipts for said purchases.
- F. **Prohibited Use:** The CAL-Card shall not be used for non-business items nor inappropriate item/services
- G. **Misuse of Card:** Misuse of the credit card or noncompliance with this policy as determined by the Approving Official shall result in the immediate revocation of the credit card and all its privileges.
- H. **Request for Additional Cards:** Requests for additional cards for new cardholders will be submitted via email to the Administrative Assistant and shall include justifications for the additions.



# ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Policies and Procedures  
Administration  
Rules of Conduct

CAL-Card Purchasing Policy

Date Revised: 05/2021- By: M. Gonzalez

Date Created: 07/06

Page 1 of 4

- I. **Separation of Employment:** Employees separating from service with the Department must turn in the Department-issued credit card to the Finance Division before or on the last day of employment. Once the card has been returned, the Finance Division will notify the card company of the employee's separation of service and destroy the credit card.

## SECTION 5: PROCEDURE

- A. **Receipts:** To accurately account for all transactions, it is imperative that each cardholder places **ALL RECEIPTS** in their corresponding sleeve in the accordion folder in the cabinet outside the Administrative Assistants office as transactions are completed. If necessary, the receipts can be emailed to the employee's Battalion Chief or the Administrative Assistant for printing and place in the folder.

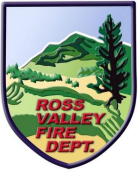
By the 23<sup>rd</sup> of each month, each cardholder shall return their monthly credit card transaction receipts. Each receipt must be stamped and approved and must have the following information:

- Amount
- Account number: budget line to allocate the expense to (e.g., 01.10.12345.00)
- Vendor
- BC's Approval (signature required)
- Date

Note: If a receipt has been lost or is unavailable, the cardholder shall provide an Affidavit of Lost or Unavailable Receipt. The following form must be used:



CalCard Lost  
Receipt Form.pdf



# ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Policies and Procedures  
Administration  
Rules of Conduct

**CAL-Card Purchasing Policy**

**Date Revised: 05/2021- By: M. Gonzalez**

**Date Created: 07/06**

**Page 1 of 4**

After affixing the corresponding receipts to the monthly invoice, if available, each cardholder shall sign the statement on the cardholder line indicating that the charges are appropriate. The supervisor of the employee shall sign the statement on the "Approver" line. Credit card statements, complete with receipts and required signatures, should be made available for timely payment; otherwise, late payment may render the cards unavailable for use.

**B. Declined Transactions:** A transaction can be declined for various reasons, such reasons can be; (1) card has not been activated, (2) too many transactions conducted in one day, (3) transaction exceeds the credit limit, (4) etc. When this happens, contact customer service at the phone number on the back of the CAL-Card and the program administrator for assistance regarding the issue.

**C. Disputes:** A dispute is a questionable purchasing card transaction posted to your Cardholder statement. This transaction will not be paid for until problem is resolved. There are several reasons why a dispute might occur. Some examples include (1) Merchandise/service not received; (2) Merchandise returned; (3) Unauthorized purchases; (4) Duplicate processing; and (5) Unrecognized.

If neither cardholder nor anyone authorized to use the card recognize the transaction, the program administrator shall be contacted for further steps.

**D. Lost or Stolen Card:** Immediately notify your Program Administrator and U.S. Bank Customer Service; the number can be located in the card statements. If your purchasing card is lost or stolen, or if you believe your account number has been compromised in any way. Provide the following information:

- Your complete name and card number;
- The date U.S. Bank Customer service notified; and
- Any purchase(s) made on the day the card was lost or stolen

A new replacement card will be mailed to you and a new account number will be assigned.

# ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT – MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

TITLE: II. Personnel

CHAPTER: Cal Card Program

ARTICLE:

SECTION:

DATE: 07/06

DATE REVISED: 01/17

BY: J. Lewis

## 1.0. PURPOSE:

To provide instructions on the proper use of the Ross Valley Fire Department's CAL-Card (credit cards) for purchases of supplies, materials, equipment and travel expenses, not to exceed limits established by the Department's Approving Official (Fire Chief).

## 2.0. POLICY:

A CAL-Card (credit card) will be issued to Ross Valley Fire Department personnel for the purpose of conducting Department business. Cards will be issued to Chief Officers, Captains and Support Staff. Cards may be issued to additional personnel on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Approving Official.

## 3.0. PROCEDURES:

### 3.1. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- 3.1.1. The CAL-Card card will have the employee's name and Ross Valley FD on the card. Authorization to use this card is restricted to the individual. It may not be delegated. No member of the employee's staff, family, supervisor or anyone else may use this card. It has been specially designed to avoid confusion with an employee's personal credit cards. The card is to be used for **OFFICIAL** business and **MAY NOT BE USED FOR PERSONAL PURCHASES**.
- 3.1.2. When receiving a credit card, the employee will receive a copy of the certification and receipt of credit card which indicates the maximum dollar amount of each single purchase and a total for all purchases made with the credit card within a given month. The Approving Official will establish the limits.
- 3.1.3. The credit card is a supplement to the procurement process. As with other procurement methods, the following conditions must be met when using the credit card:
  - 3.1.3.1. Each single purchase may be comprised of multiple items, but the total, including tax, cannot exceed the single purchase dollar limit on the credit card.

- 3.1.3.2. When a purchase will exceed the limit established by the Approving Official, normal purchasing procedures shall be followed.
- 3.1.3.3. Cardholders must ensure that sufficient funds are available prior to making any purchases. The Agency Program Coordinator, and/or Approving Official, can assist in verifying funds are available.
- 3.1.4. The issuance of a credit card in the employee's name shall not allow the credit card company to perform any credit check on the employee's personal credit. The credit card company shall not request any personal information from the employee, nor should any personal information be furnished.
- 3.1.5. Purchases must not be split to circumvent the Department's purchasing policy.
- 3.1.6. When normal purchasing processes are not utilized due to the nature of the purchase (i.e. emergencies, travel, strike team assignment), written justification shall accompany receipts for said purchases.

### 3.2. BILLING STATEMENTS:

- 3.2.1. At the end of a billing cycle, the Card Company will send a statement for each cardholder to the Fire Department, showing all transactions made during the billing cycle.
- 3.2.2. In order to accurately account for all transactions, it is imperative that each cardholder place **ALL RECEIPTS** in their corresponding sleeve in the accordion folder in the cabinet outside the Administrative Assistants office as transactions are completed. If necessary, the receipts can be emailed to the employees Battalion Chief or to the Administrative Assistant for printing and place in the folder. ALL receipts must be stamped and approved with the amount, date and account number relating to the purchase.
- 3.2.3. After affixing the corresponding receipts to the monthly invoice, ~~if available,~~ each cardholder shall sign the statement on the cardholder line indicating that the charges are appropriate. The supervisor of the employee shall sign the statement on the "Approver" line. Credit card statements, complete with receipts and required signatures should be made available for timely payment; otherwise, late payment may render the cards unavailable for use.

### 3.3. DISPUTES:

- 3.3.1. When items purchased with the credit card are found to be defective, the cardholder has the responsibility to return the item(s) to the merchant for replacement or to receive a credit on the purchase. If the merchant refuses to replace or correct the faulty item, then the purchase of this item will be considered to be in DISPUTE and will not be paid for until resolved.
- 3.3.2. A disputed item must be noted on the cardholder's Statement of Account so it will not be paid until the problem is resolved.

**3.4. REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL CARDS:** Requests for additional cards for new cardholders will be submitted via email to the Administrative Assistant and shall include justifications for the additions.

**3.5. LOST/STOLEN CREDIT CARDS:**

**3.5.1.** Should any employee lose or have his/her credit card stolen, it is their responsibility to contact the credit card company immediately. The employee losing the card must also notify the Approving Official within one (1) working day after discovery of losing the card.

**3.5.2.** The employee shall provide the credit card number, full name, the date reported to the police if stolen, date the credit card company was notified and any purchases made the day the card was stolen or lost to the Approving Official.

**3.5.3.** A new card with a new account number will be mailed to the Finance Division within two (2) working days of notification to the credit card company. The card will be reissued to the employee.

**3.6. SEPARATION OF EMPLOYMENT:**

**3.6.1.** Employees that are separating from service with the Department must turn in the Department-issued credit card to the Finance Division prior to or on the last day of employment.

**3.6.2.** The Finance Division will notify the card company of the employee's separation of service and destroy the credit card.

**3.7. CARD RESTRICTIONS:**

**3.7.1.** Credit cards shall not be used to receive any cash advances.

**3.7.2.** Additional restrictions may be applied by the Approving Official.

**3.8. MISUSE OF CARD:**

**3.8.1.** Misuse of the credit card or noncompliance with this policy as determined by the Approving Official shall result in the immediate revocation of the credit card and all its privileges.