



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

Purchasing Card Policy

City of Forest Park, Georgia

Adopted by Mayor and Council on **mm-dd-2024**

I. Program Overview and Purpose

The purpose of the Procurement Card (P-Card) Program is to establish a faster, more cost-effective method for authorized employees to make purchases of supplies, materials, equipment, and services for City business use. The program streamlines payments by reducing the administrative burdens and costs associated with traditional methods of payment.

The City of Forest Park P-Card Policy establishes minimum standards for use of the P-Card in order to ensure compliance with purchasing policies and procedures. **The City of Forest Park Procurement Code Ordinance and all related policies and procedures apply to the use of the P-Card. The P-card serves as a means of payment, not as an alternative to the City's purchasing policies and procedures.**

In 2015, the Georgia General Assembly established penalties into the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A. § 16-9-37) regarding the misuse of government p-cards.

(b) Any person who has been issued or entrusted with a financial transaction card by a government for specifically limited and specifically authorized purposes, provided such limitations and authorizations are in writing, and who uses the financial transaction card in a manner and for purposes not authorized shall be punished as provided in subsection (b) of Code Section 16-9-38.

Code Section 16-9-38 specifies that “a person subject to punishment under this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 or imprisonment for not less than one year nor more than three years, or both.”

Under this program, the P-Card is the only authorized card for use by city employees. P-Cards can only be used for official City of Forest Park business. Cards must be surrendered and accounts closed upon termination of employment for any reason or upon demand by The City of Forest Park.

All City Departments will designate one P-card Liaison to serve as the primary point of contact with the Finance Department. Departments should also ensure that a Backup Liaison is designated and ~~that~~ P-card Liaisons will also be responsible for the administration of the P-card Program within their respective department, including card administration, account maintenance and monthly billing statement reconciliation.

II. Use of P-Card for Personal Purchases Prohibited

Under no circumstances is a cardholder permitted to use the P-Card for personal purchases. Personal purchases are defined as the purchase of goods or services intended for non-work related use or for use other than official City business. Cardholders that unintentionally violate this rule shall notify the Department Liaison, complete the required documentation, and reimburse the City immediately. Unintentional violations of this rule shall be subject to the Progressive Discipline Guidelines noted later in this policy.

If a violation is determined to be intentional, the cardholder shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from City employment and criminal prosecution.

Any person who knowingly, or through willful neglect, approves personal or fraudulent purchases shall be subject to the same disciplinary actions as the cardholder.

III. Program Administration

A. Card Order Request

To be eligible for a P-Card, the applicant must be an employee of The City of Forest Park. Department Heads approve P-cards for their employees based on the applicant's job responsibilities and their need to make purchases. ***The issuance of P-cards should be reserved for those employees whose job duties regularly require the purchase of goods and services. Employees who require only the occasional use of a P-card should coordinate purchases through their Department's P-card Liaison.***

To begin the application process, a P-card Application is completed by the Department Head or Department Liaison, signed by the Department Director then forwarded to the P-card Coordination Team for review. The P-card Coordinator then submits the application to the Finance Director and City Administrator for final approval. The approved application is returned to the P-card Coordinator for processing and the card mailed to the P-card Coordinator in 7 to 10 business days.

B. Card Issuance

The P-card Coordinator notifies the cardholder and the cardholder's Department Liaison when the card is received. The P-card Coordinator is responsible for scheduling an appointment with the cardholder to pick up the new P-card, sign The City of Forest Park Cardholder P-card Agreement, and attend training. The cardholder is responsible for familiarizing himself/herself with the P-Card Policy.

C. Card Profiles

Each card is assigned a single profile. The profile specifies the Single Transaction Limit (STL), the Credit Limit (CL), and the Merchant Category Codes (MCC) that are permitted on the card. The Finance Director may develop a series of predefined card profiles that Department Heads may request be assigned to a cardholder. Deviation from the predefined card profiles, if provided, requires the approval of the Finance Director and City Administrator. Card profile options will be noted on the P-card Application.

If it is determined that a cardholder's card limits are restricting purchases that are required to perform job responsibilities, the Department Head may request an increase or decrease of the cardholder's card

limits. To request changes in a cardholder's credit limit and/or single transaction limit, a Cardholder Change Form must be completed and signed by both the cardholder and the Department Head. The completed and signed change form is then forwarded to the P-card Coordinator for review. The P-card Coordinator then submits the Cardholder Change Form to the Finance Director and City Administrator for approval. If approved, the form is processed by the P-card Coordinator and is effective immediately.

D. Lost or Stolen Cards

Cardholders are required to immediately report any lost or stolen P-card directly to the bank. The City of Forest Park is liable for all charges on the card until the lost or stolen card is reported to the Bank.

At the first opportunity during normal business hours the cardholder must promptly notify his/her Department Head and the Department Liaison (or the Backup Department Liaison should the Department Liaison be absent) about the lost or stolen card. The cardholder must also advise the Liaison if the Bank informed the cardholder that a replacement card would be processed.

The Department Liaison or backup must promptly notify the Finance Director and P-card Coordinator of the lost or stolen card and if the Bank advised the cardholder that a replacement card would be processed.

The Finance Director or P-card Coordinator will be responsible for ordering a replacement card in such cases when the Bank did not process a replacement card at the time the cardholder reported the lost or stolen card.

The cardholder should notify all merchants who have the card number on file to flag their records that the card was lost or stolen.

E. Card Cancellation

The P-card and the signed Return Card Acknowledgement Receipt form must be returned to the Department Liaison when an employee is terminated from employment, submits their notice of separation from The City of Forest Park, transfers to another department, or loses their purchasing card privileges for any other reason. Transfers within the same department may also require cancellation of the card if the cardholder's job responsibilities change and they no longer require the need for a P-card. Prior to the employee's last date of employment or transfer, the employee must sign and deliver all outstanding P-card receipts to their assigned P-card Liaison. The Department Liaison will submit the P-card and the signed Return Card Acknowledgement Receipt form to the P-card Coordinator. A copy of the signed form will be provided to the employee and a copy retained for the Department's file. The original will be kept in the employee's P-card file in the Finance Department.

IV. Program Roles and Responsibilities

A. Department Head

Department Heads are responsible for ensuring the integrity of the P-card Program within their Department by upholding City policies and procedures. All Department Heads are responsible for overseeing P-card activity and must have an understanding of the rules and regulations as contained in The City of Forest Park Purchasing Policy and purchasing procedures. While the Department Head holds the responsibility of oversight, the administration of the day-to-day activity and usage of the P- card will be managed through the designation of one or more Department Liaisons.

Department Head responsibilities include:

1. Maintain knowledge of City of Forest Park P-card Policy and Procedures and all other City of Forest Park policies and procedures to effectively oversee P-Card activity of the cardholders within their department.
2. Designate a Department Liaison(s) to manage the day-to-day activity and usage of the card. A back-up Liaison should also be designated and cross-trained.
3. Request P-Cards for employees in their department by submitting a signed P-card Application form to the P-card Coordinator for processing.
4. Request changes in credit limits, within the guidelines contained in the P-card Policy, by submitting a signed P-card Cardholder Change form to the P-card Coordinator for processing.
5. Review and approve cardholders' monthly transaction activity as part of the monthly approval process.
6. Promptly report any erroneous use of the P-card to the P-card Coordinator.
7. Ensure that appropriate disciplinary actions are taken for violation of P-Card Program policies and procedures.
8. Ensure P-cards are collected from cardholders upon termination, resignation, transfer, or when purchasing privileges are lost due to disciplinary action and that upon relinquishing P-Cards, cardholders sign the Return Card Acknowledgement Receipt.

B. Department Liaison

Department Liaisons are assigned the responsibility of managing the day-to-day P-Card activities and usage of the cardholders in their department. Secondary Department Liaisons should also be designated by each Department Head. The secondary Department Liaisons are designated as back up to the Department Liaison and have the same responsibility to manage the day-to-day P-Card usage and activities of the cardholders in their department in the Department Liaison's absence.

Department Liaison responsibilities include:

1. Maintain knowledge of City of Forest Park P-card Policy and all other City of Forest Park policies and procedures to effectively manage the day-to-day P-card activity and usage.
2. Monitor transactions and account activity weekly to ensure that all purchases are for legitimate City of Forest Park business use. ***Transactions must be reviewed/reconciled weekly to identify misuse or fraud and is necessary to qualify for the liability protection included with the P-Card Program.***

3. Collect all invoices/packing slips/charge slips/cash register receipts and phone/mail/fax/internet order forms and confirmations from assigned cardholders.
4. Complete the monthly reconciliation process:
 - a. Review and reconcile each assigned cardholders' invoices/receipts to their respective card statement.
 - b. Scan and attach all receipts and other related documentation to each cardholders' monthly statement in Munis.
 - c. Review all documentation to ensure:
 - i. Invoices/receipts are signed by the cardholder;
 - ii. Completed, signed, and approved Missing Receipt Affidavit are included when a cardholder does not have an itemized receipt or invoice documenting the purchase;
 - iii. State Sales and Use Tax was not charged;
 - iv. Purchases were for legitimate City business use;
 - v. Completed, signed, and approved Misuse forms are included along with evidence of reimbursement for any purchase made for personal or other than City of Forest Park business use.
 - d. Review and update, if necessary, the description and account code for each transaction.
5. Identify transactions which were erroneously charged sales tax and work with the cardholder to have vendor credit their account.
6. Attempt to resolve any disputes with a vendor that have not been resolved by cardholder.
7. Notify P-card Coordinator within 5 days of any unresolved disputes, noting the reason for dispute and a brief statement of steps taken.
8. Promptly notify P-card Coordinator of lost or stolen cards.
9. Collect P-card from cardholder and obtain cardholder's signature on the Return Card Acknowledgement form when cardholder is terminated, submits a notice of separation, is transferred to another department, transferred to another job within the department that does not require P-card privileges, or when cardholder loses P-Card privileges as a result of disciplinary action.
10. **Promptly notify P-card Coordinator to cancel a cardholder's card for employment termination, resignation by separation notice, transfer to another department, transfer to another job within the department that does not require P-card privileges, or for any other loss of P-card privileges as determined by the Department Head. Forward cancelled P-card along with the signed Return Card Acknowledgement form to the P-card Coordination Team.**
11. Review new P-Card Application forms and Cardholder Change forms for completeness and forward to P-card Coordinator for processing.

C. Cardholder

All cardholders are purchasing agents for The City of Forest Park. Accordingly, all cardholders must have a minimum understanding of City Procurement rules and regulations as contained in The City of Forest Park Purchasing Policy and purchasing processes. Cardholders must also be familiar with The City of Forest Park **Human Resources Policies & Procedures Manual, Chapter II - Ethics and Conduct**, and provisions of O.C.G.A. §45-10-3 regarding public officers and employees code of ethics and conflicts of interest.

Cardholder responsibilities include:

1. Maintain knowledge of City of Forest Park P-Card Policy and all other City of Forest Park policies and procedures.
2. Maintain security of the card, the account number, expiration date, and security code at all times.
3. Ensure all purchases are only for legitimate City business purposes and allowable purchases according to City Procurement Policy and P-Card Program policies. Misuse (inappropriate, unauthorized, or fraudulent use) of the card may subject the cardholder to disciplinary action, criminal prosecution, and/or termination of City of Forest Park employment.
4. Ensure all purchases comply with the City Procurement Code Ordinance and/or Procurement Policy which sets a no bid limit and requirements concerning Competitive Bidding.
5. Adhere to the purchase limits and restrictions of the P-card and ensure that all purchases are within all other spending and vendor guidelines established by The City of Forest Park.
6. Obtain “best value” for the City when making purchases with the P-card.
7. Ensure that the P-card is only used by the approved cardholder. Use by anyone other than the approved cardholder is strictly prohibited. The P-card is not transferable between cardholders or department personnel.
8. Obtain all vendor invoices, packing slips, cash register receipts and charge slips and for phone/fax/internet/mail purchases, print or make a copy of the order form. **The cardholder must sign each receipt before submitting to Department Liaison to signify their approval of the transaction.**
 - i. If receipt/invoice has been lost and a duplicate cannot be obtained, complete and sign a Missing Receipt Affidavit in lieu of receipt and provide to Department Liaison for scanning into Munis.
 - ii. Use of the form more than three times in one fiscal year may result in suspension of P-card privileges or other progressive discipline.
9. Attempt to resolve a dispute or billing error directly with the vendor. If a cardholder cannot resolve the dispute or error with the vendor directly, then the cardholder shall complete a Commercial Card Claims Statement of Disputed Item form and forward the original to the Procurement Card Coordinator and a copy to their Department Liaison. The cardholder must also ensure that an appropriate credit for the reported disputed item(s) or billing error appears on the statement in the current or subsequent P-Card cycle. If the credit is not in the current cycle, the information must be documented on the Payable Allocation Report or Activity Log. **Under no circumstances shall cash be accepted in lieu of a credit to the P-Card account.**

10. Report a lost or stolen P-card immediately to the Bank (24 hours a day, 365 days a year). The Department Liaison must also be notified of the lost or stolen P-card at the first opportunity during business hours.
11. Return P-card and complete Return Card Acknowledgement Receipt form immediately when terminating employment, transferring to another Department, or upon request to forfeit card.

D. City Administrator & Finance Director

The City Administrator and Finance Director are responsible for establishing overall policies and procedures to ensure the integrity of the P-card Program throughout the City. Primary roles and responsibilities include:

1. Establishing card limits and allowable merchant category codes
2. Providing final review of
 - a. P-card Applications
 - b. Requests for changes in card limits and merchant category codes
 - c. Monthly P-card Statement and Certification
3. Reviewing P-card policy violations and determining disciplinary action based upon P-card Policy and Human Resources Policies and Procedures.

V. Use of the Card

A. Cardholder Liability

The P-card is a “corporate” charge card that will not affect the cardholder’s personal credit; however, it is the cardholder’s responsibility to ensure that the card is used within the guidelines of the P-card Policy and all other City of Forest Park policies and procedures.

The City of Forest Park will not accept liability or financial responsibility for unauthorized use of P-cards, i.e. fraudulent use of account numbers, lost or stolen P-cards, and purchases made for personal use.

Failure to comply with the P-Card Program guidelines may result in permanent revocation of the card, notification of the situation to the City Manager, and further disciplinary measures that may include termination.

B. Purchasing Rules

The P-card is only a method for paying for purchases with making a credit card in lieu of a Purchase Order (PO). All purchases made with the P-card must be for official City of Forest Park business. Only the employee whose name appears on the face of the P-card is authorized to initiate transactions with the card. Use of the card by any other person is considered misuse of the card, even if the purchase is for legitimate City of Forest Park business. Use of the card for personal purchases is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment and criminal prosecution. All City of Forest Park procurement rules apply when using the purchasing card.

I. Purchases Under \$1,000

The purchasing of goods and services under \$1,000.00 (cumulative) may be made using the P-Card.

II. Splitting Orders

The splitting of orders to remain under the “no bid limit” or the single transaction/monthly credit limit is strictly prohibited. Likewise, purchasing similar items from several vendors or two or more cardholders in the same department purchasing similar items to remain under the no bid limit or p-card limit is also prohibited.

III. Purchasing Thresholds

Use of the P-card is authorized for purchases up to the “no bid limit” which shall coincide with the single transaction limit for all cards. Purchases over the “no bid limit” shall be authorized by the Finance Director and/or City Administrator and processed by the Finance Department.

Although each purchasing card is set with specific transaction limits, the cardholder is required to follow the policies established in Section IV.B of The City of Forest Park Purchasing Policy, including the requirement for three (3) quotes on purchases of \$3,000.00 and above.

IV. City of Forest Park or State of Georgia Contracts

Purchases made using a City of Forest Park or State of Georgia contract and exceeding \$3,000.00 shall be authorized by the Finance Director and/or City Administrator and processed by the Finance Department.

V. Recycled Material

Cardholders must adhere to the Purchasing Policy for promoting sustainability through the purchasing process.

C. Allowable Purchases

The P-card can be used for official purchases of supplies, materials, equipment, or services, where not otherwise prohibited or restricted. All purchases must be within assigned spending limits and follow the policies established in The City of Forest Park Purchasing Policy and the P-Card Policy. The City Administrator, with the concurrence of the Finance Director, may approve purchases in exceptional circumstances that exceed the limits established in this Policy when deemed in the best interest of the City.

Allowable purchases include:

1. Supplies, materials, goods, and services up to the cardholder’s approved Single Transaction Limit and/or approved cycle Credit Limit which are not otherwise excluded in the Prohibited Purchases section.
2. Memberships for professional organizations that support a City employee’s assigned job duties. Employees must obtain prior approval from a supervisor and/or Department Head. Department

Liaisons should ensure that membership charges are allocated to account number 523600 (Dues and Fees). Receipts must also reflect the start and end date of the membership period.

3. Conference/Training fees, Airline tickets, lodging, and vehicle rental with prior Department Director approval for City personnel traveling on official City business for which the per diem rate does not apply. Use of P-card for travel and conference/training expenses must comply with The City of Forest Park Policy and Procedures for Conferences, Training and other Related Travel. Department Liaisons should ensure that all training and travel charges are allocated to the appropriate account number (Travel = 523500; Education & Training = 523700).
4. Small recurring charges under certain guidelines:
 - a. Made by agreement between the cardholder and the vendor in coordination with Accounts Payable Division and approved by the Department Head;
 - b. Annual fee is broken down into a monthly charge and there is no monthly invoice or receipt to substantiate the monthly charge;
 - c. The cumulative annual expenditure shall not exceed \$50,000 or the threshold for formal bids, whatever is greater.
 - d. The Accounts Payable Division will maintain a log of approved recurring p-card transactions and will provide a list to Procurement, Department Heads and Liaisons on an annual basis.
 - e. Small Recurring P-Card Expenditure form must be completed by cardholder. The form along with a copy of the agreement must accompany the monthly statement reconciliation in Munis when the first charge is made against the P-card. Subsequent charges during the agreement period will not require paperwork to be submitted.

D. Prohibited Purchases

The following types of purchases are prohibited by City policy:

1. Personal purchases of any kind including those for the personal benefit of another individual.
2. Cash back with a purchase, cash advances including use of the card, card number or account number at ATMs, inside bank branches or at cash advance, quasi-cash and money transfer locations such as Western Union, Telecheck, etc.
3. Gift cards, without prior approval of a Department Head.
4. Stored value cards, calling cards, pre-paid cards, traveler's checks, money orders or similar products.
5. Entertainment.
6. Alcoholic beverages.
7. Fax machines and copiers.
8. Firearms, ammunition, explosives.
9. Expenses for which per diem rate applies. (See City of Forest Park Policy and Procedure for Training and Related Travel)
10. Unauthorized computer equipment including all printers, cell phones/PDA, tablet computers, computer memory, flash drives, external hard drives, or software of any kind that is licensed or requires installation.
11. Unauthorized purchases also include purchases generally considered legitimate that are disallowed or not approved by cardholder's supervisor.
12. Additional item(s) expressly prohibited by other City of Forest Park policies and procedures.

E. Sales Tax Exemption

Purchases made in Georgia are exempt from Georgia Sales Tax. Cardholders should use the State of Georgia Sales and Use Tax Certificate of Exemption as documentation. Purchases made in other states are subject to that state's sales tax. Cardholders are responsible for ensuring that merchants do not charge tax. If taxes are charged, the cardholder must contact the merchant to obtain a credit to the account. Documentation of attempts to obtain credit for any State Sales Tax charged in error must be maintained with the documentation for the transaction where the tax was charged. Taxes cannot be disputed with the Bank. **EXCEPTION: Purchases in restaurants only are not required to have sales tax removed due to the varying ability of restaurants to exempt sales tax. Cardholders may still attempt to have sales tax removed, however, if unsuccessful, the transaction will not be considered a policy violation.**

F. Making Purchases

Purchases may be made in person, by phone, fax, e-mail, Internet, or mail. If the purchase is made via the Internet, make sure it is a secure site. Look for "https" in the URL and check for the lock or key icon in the Security Status bar in the Address bar (do not enter confidential information if there is no lock or key icon on the Address bar). You should be confident that the site is using your information properly and in a secure manner before providing any information.

When making a purchase by fax, call the merchant and provide the card number over the phone instead of including it on the fax documentation. If the card number is provided over the telephone, the cardholder should be alert to others in the surrounding area that may hear the card information.

When making a purchase or placing an order using the P-card, remember the following:

1. Provide the merchant with the Tax ID number and/or Sales and Use Tax Certificate of Exemption;
2. Take advantage of any government discounts or price agreements, if applicable;
3. Supply your cardholder name and expiration date of the card;
4. Provide delivery instructions;
5. Obtain receipts/invoices showing the details and pricing for each item ordered;
6. Do not split orders or purchase the same item from several vendors to circumvent the \$3,000.00 no bid limit. (Cost of freight should be included in total purchase amount when considering the No Bid Limit.)

G. Documentation of Transactions

The cardholder is responsible for ensuring that every transaction has valid supporting documentation. The nature of the goods or services received will determine what information the invoice or receipt must contain. However, all invoices should contain basic information about the transaction. These are:

1. Vendor or merchant name
2. Transaction date
3. Line item information
 - i. Quantity
 - ii. Description
 - iii. Unit Price
 - iv. Line Price (quantity x unit price)

4. Total invoice amount
5. Confirmation of receipt of goods or services
 - i. If the documentation is a cash register receipt, then the cardholder's signature must be on the receipt. The signed charge transaction slip must also be signed and attached to the cash register receipt.
 - ii. If the items were shipped, the receiving employee must sign the packing slip and the invoice if it comes in the shipment and forward this documentation to the cardholder. The cardholder must then forward the signed packing slip, invoice and all other pertinent documentation to the Department Liaison.

H. Missing Receipt/Invoice

Should a receipt or invoice be lost or unobtainable from vendor, the cardholder must complete a Missing Receipt/Invoice Affidavit and forward it to the Department Liaison. Refer to the Progressive Discipline Guidelines found at the end of this policy for consequences of failing to obtain a receipt/invoice.

I. Credits

If cardholder returns merchandise a credit should be issued to the cardholder's P-card and a credit receipt obtained. **Under no circumstances should a cardholder receive cash or a credit voucher.** The cardholder should contact the vendor first to obtain the credit and ensure the credit is applied. If the vendor refuses to issue a credit to the cardholder's account, the next step would be to file the Disputed Item form for disputed items. Cardholders should avoid merchants with restrictive merchandise return policies.

J. Disputes

A cardholder should attempt to first resolve a dispute or billing error directly with the vendor. If the vendor agrees to issue a credit, the cardholder must ensure that an appropriate credit for the reported disputed item(s) or billing error appears on the current or subsequent P-Card statement cycle. The cardholder should also complete the required documentation and forward to the Department Liaison.

If the cardholder cannot resolve the dispute with the vendor directly, then the cardholder should contact the Bank. A dispute should be filed within 60 days of the transaction date. Cardholders should also complete the Disputed Item form and forward a copy to the Department Liaison.

Examples of transactions that should be disputed include:

1. Unauthorized charges
2. Differences between the amount authorized and the amount charged
3. Duplicate charges
4. Failure to receive goods
5. Returned goods that were not credited
6. Unrecognized charges

K. Fraudulent Charges

When a cardholder determines possible fraudulent charges on their card, they must promptly be reported to the Department Liaison who in turn, promptly notifies the Finance Director. The P-card Coordinator will report the fraudulent incident(s) to the Bank and request that the card be canceled, and a new card issued. The card is cancelled, and a new card and number is issued to the cardholder. A provisional credit is usually applied to the account.

L. Card Security

Cardholders should always treat the City of Forest Park P-card with at least the same level of care as one does their own personal credit cards and in accordance with this policy. The card should be maintained in a secure location and the card account number should be carefully guarded. The only person entitled to use the card is the person whose name appears on the face of the card. The card may not be lent to another person for any reason. However, a cardholder may use his or her card to make purchases on behalf of the City of Forest Park staff.

VI. Documentation

A. Program Documentation

At the close of the monthly billing cycle, the monthly statement for all cardholders will be emailed to each director. Statements will progress through a predefined workflow approval process. Throughout the preceding month, cardholders should be forwarding signed vendor invoices/packing slips/cash register receipts/charge transaction slips to the Department Liaison. The Department Liaison will reconcile the submitted documents of assigned cardholders to the monthly statement. The Department Liaison approves the statements to confirm review and reconciliation.

B. Statement Reconciliation

The Finance Team reviews each cardholder's monthly statement and related documents to substantiate the P-card statement charges. Additional reviews may be conducted by the Accounting & Procurement Divisions.

C. Records Retention

The Office of the Secretary of State maintains the official Records Retention Schedule for the State of Georgia. This information is available on their website at www.sos.georgia.gov by searching for Records Retention schedule.

1. Documents related to transactions are account records and must be maintained according to the requirement of Accounts Payable Files.
2. Documents related to the issuance of cards to employees are accounting records and must be maintained according to the requirements of Credit Card Administration Records.

VII. Program Compliance

A. Internal Controls

An internal control structure is established to ensure compliance with City Ordinances, City Purchasing Policy, P-card Policy, and all other City of Forest Park policies and procedures.

Internal controls include:

1. Appropriate separation of duties between making transactions (cardholders), review and approval of transactions for payment (approving officials), and payment of monthly billing statement (accounts payable).
2. Appropriate hierarchical review and approval of purchases by someone with supervisory authority over the cardholder and/or the authority to question purchases if needed.

B. Internal Audits

I. Monthly Reviews

At the end of each billing cycle and reconciliation process, the P-card Coordinator will review and log all exceptions and/or offenses. The monthly log will be forwarded to each Department Liaison and Department Head. The Department Liaison will be responsible for working with cardholders to remedy, if possible, the recorded exceptions.

P-card exceptions that result in a violation will also be documented each month. Notification will be sent to the cardholder, Department Liaison, and Department Head. The P-card Coordinator will be responsible for enforcing the Progressive Discipline Guidelines.

II. On-site Reviews

The Finance Team will conduct random audits to ensure compliance with the City's Purchasing Card policies and procedures. The review will be based on selected transactions and a periodic visual review of the purchased item if applicable. Upon request, the Department Liaison will assist the P-card Coordinator with the location of the purchased item.

The P-card Coordinator may also make recommendations to the cardholder, Department Liaison, and/or Department Head to improve various components of the P-card process. Continuous deficiencies in administering components of the P-card Program may result in disciplinary action up to revocation of P-card eligibility.

C. Disciplinary Action for Violations

When a serious Purchasing Card exception or violation is discovered, the Finance Team will investigate the surrounding circumstances and provide findings to the Finance Director, Department Head, and Department Liaison. Disciplinary consequences will be based upon the Human Resources and P-card Policies and Procedures. The Finance Director, in coordination with Human Resources, will notify the Department Head and City Administrator of the recommended disciplinary actions.

PURCHASING CARD (P-Card) - PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES (Within A Fiscal Year)

(Department Head & Liaison Notified with each Offense)

Offense	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Missing/Invalid Receipts (includes paying sales tax, no signature on receipt)	Violation Form filed after 2 occurrences	Suspension of p-card for 3 month after 3 occurrences	Revocation from p-card privileges and purchasing functions
Splitting purchase willfully	Suspension of p-card privileges for 6 months	Revocation from p-card privileges and purchasing functions	*Termination
Inappropriate/Unauthorized purchase (including unintentional personal use)	Violation Form filed and reimbursement to City	Suspension of p-card privileges for 6 months and reimbursement to City	Revocation of p-card privileges and purchasing functions
Allowing use of p-card by another	Suspension of p-card privileges for 3 months	Revocation of p-card privileges and purchasing functions	*Termination
Failure to provide documentation in a timely manner to Department Liaison	Violation Form filed	Suspension of p-card privileges for 3 months	Revocation of p-card privileges and purchasing functions
Use of p-card for personal gain or other non-compliant or inappropriate card use	Revocation of p-card privileges and purchasing functions at the discretion of the Director of Finance. *Termination and possible criminal prosecution at the discretion of the Department Head with consultation by the HR Director		

P-Card Glossary

Allocating – The act of entering codes to identify what sector of the organization’s General Ledger (GL) will be charged for a transaction.

Available Credit – The maximum amount that can be spent with the card in the remaining billing cycle.

Billing Cycle – The monthly billing period begins on the 28th day of each month and ends the 27th day of each following month.

Card ID – The last four digits of the card account number.

Card Profile – The settings that control the funding, spending, and reconciliation process for a group of cards. Each card must belong to a single card profile.

Cardholder – A user who is assigned at least one card.

Cardholder Agreement – An agreement signed by the cardholder acknowledging receipt of The City of Forest Park Purchasing Card and agreement to comply with the terms and conditions of the Agreement and the provisions of the P-Card Policy.

Charge Slip – Documentation provided by a vendor that reflects the authorization to charge the P-card. Charge slips are NOT substitutions for Receipts (see definition).

Credit Limit – The maximum spend or ceiling allowed on a card in one billing cycle.

CVV – The Category Verification Value (four digits) located on the back of a credit card.

Merchant – A vendor that accepts Mastercard p-card.

Merchant Category Code (MCC) – Merchant Category Code assigned to a merchant by Mastercard which identifies the primary goods or services that are provided by the merchant.

Munis – Short for municipal bond.

Purchase Date – The date on which the goods or services were purchased.

Reconciliation – The process of reviewing and signing off payable documents. Sometimes this must be accomplished at several levels (i.e., cardholder, manager, and accountant).

Receipt – The purchase documentation provided by a vendor that includes a transaction date, itemized list of purchases, and total purchase amount. Receipts may be generated by a cash register or can include invoices or other types of documentation for online, telephone, or fax purchases. Documentation that reflects the P-card charge with only a total purchase amount is NOT a receipt.

Single Transaction Limit – The maximum amount that can be spent on a single transaction with the card.

Transaction – A charge, credit, correction or other activity associated with the card.

Vendor – A business with which you have conducted business using a p-card entered in the system. For all practical purposes this term is synonymous with the term merchant.