

MTA's New Purchasing Card Will Make Buying Small Items Easier, Quicker

(May 17, 2001) Need a dozen ballpoint pens? A 3/16th-inch box wrench or a fluorescent light tube? But, you really don't want to requisition such a small item?

Well, help is on the way from Material Management's Purchasing Department.

Under a new program, Purchasing will issue a special type of VISA credit card – an MTA Purchasing Card – to department managers who request them for use by their employees. Using the cards will make it quicker, easier and more convenient to buy those small-dollar items every department needs to operate efficiently.



Margaret James of Material Management takes a look at one of the new MTA Purchasing Cards, a special credit card issued by VISA. James is administrator of the Purchasing Card program.

The Purchasing Cards have a \$1,000 cap per transaction and can only be used to buy supplies and parts. The cards are clearly identified as MTA property and can't be mistaken for an employee's personal credit card.

"The main advantage is that end-users will get the items they need quicker with less administrative time," says Ron Dupuis, director of Purchasing. He also notes that merchants will get paid more quickly when employees use the Purchasing Card.

Card holders are responsible

Card holders are responsible for the card's security, for documenting and reconciling monthly purchases and for compliance with the MTA's procurement policies. Purchase Cards shouldn't be used to avoid or to bypass appropriate purchasing procedures.

Department managers will determine the expenditure controls over the cards issued to their departments. They'll receive monthly reports on transactions made against their cards and are responsible for reviewing the charges.

Departments can use their Purchasing Cards to buy office supplies, tools, equipment and other items on-line from vendors who already have the MTA's discount programmed into agency's account.

In addition to saving time at both ends of an order transaction, the cards also are expected to save money.

"The rule of thumb is that it costs in excess of \$150 to process even a small purchase order," says Dupuis. "When someone saves time and money by buying an item with the Purchase Card, that's time and money we can use on our higher-dollar procurements."

The Purchasing Department successfully conducted a pilot program over the past year to test the program. The MTA participates in the VISA Procurement Credit Card program under an agreement with the State of California.

Managers who are interested in participating in the Purchasing Card program, or would like further information, should contact Margaret James, Purchasing Card administrator.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

