

# 2913.301 Governmentwide commercial purchase card.

(a) The Government purchase card has far fewer requirements for documentation than other methods of purchasing. However, the same legal restrictions apply to credit card purchases that apply to other purchases using appropriated funds. If a purchase cardholder has questions about the lawfulness of a particular purchase, he or she must initially consult his or her appropriate office purchase card administrator, who will consult the Office of the Solicitor as necessary.

(b) GAO decisions surrounding the concept of the “availability of appropriations” are often stated in terms of whether appropriated funds are or are not “legally available” for a given expenditure. Restrictions on the purposes for which appropriated funds may be used come from a variety of sources, including the DOL Appropriations Acts, and decisions of the Comptroller General and his predecessor, the Comptroller of the Treasury.

(c) HCAs, administrative officers, and contracting officers are encouraged to review the GAO publication entitled Principles of Federal Appropriations Law. This document must be consulted when developing Office/Agency Purchase/Credit Card Program procedures. A number of the more common restrictions which “accounting officers of the Government” have had frequent occasion to consider and apply include, for example:

- (1) Payment of attorney's fees;
- (2) Purchase of food, entertainment or recreation;
- (3) Payment of personal membership fees; and
- (4) Payment of personal expense items such as gifts for employees, and entry fees for contests.

**Parent topic:** [Subpart 2913.3 - Simplified Acquisition Methods](#)