

14-4. Restricted Transactions

The following list identifies supplies and services that are generally prohibited from purchase. Under the following conditions, the below items are allowable to purchase with the GPC.

a. **Advance Payments.** Advance payments are generally prohibited unless authorized by a specific appropriation or other law. See 31 USC 3324. The purpose of this prohibition is to avoid losses to the Government which would result if contractors failed to perform the services or provide the goods which had been paid for. Exceptions include but are not limited to subscriptions or training based on an SF 182, Authorization, Agreement, Certification of Training. *Advance payments* are authorized for Tuition Assistance in accordance with AR 621-5. Limitations on advance payments do not apply to advance payments authorized by law for subscriptions or publications. Advance payment is authorized in [31 USC 3324\(d\)\(2\)](#) for “charges for a publication printed or recorded in any way for the auditory or visual use of the agency.” CHs must place subscription orders in the name of an organization or a position title (e.g., Building Manager or Director, XXX Division) rather than in the name of an individual employee. CHs must retain the renewal notice or a statement that reflects the beginning and ending date of the subscription service.

b. **Business Cards.** Commercial printing of business cards is prohibited. Cardholders may use the GPC to order business cards from AbilityOne and National Industries for the Blind.

c. **Bottled Water and Ice.** Bottled water is generally prohibited. Cardholders may use the GPC to buy water when potable drinking water is not available on the premises or when the drinking water currently provided or available on the premises is harmful if consumed. Cardholders must obtain approval from their legal advisor prior to purchase and include approval documentation in the purchase file. (B-247871, B-324781, B-310502, and B-318588)

d. **Coins.** Cardholders may use the GPC to buy coins in accordance with the specified policy in HQDA memo, Policy for the Procurement and Presentation of Coins, dated 14 December 2016.

e. **Commercial Unmanned Aerial Systems.** Use of the GPC to purchase commercial unmanned aerial systems (e.g., “drones”) is prohibited in the DPC 15 August 2018 memorandum titled “Government-Wide Commercial Purchase Card Prohibited Purchases.” See DPC 1 March 2019 memo titled “Limited Exception to the General Government Wide commercial Purchase Card Unmanned Aerial Systems Purchasing Prohibition.”

f. **Conference Registration Fees.**

1) **Local In-person Training Conference.** Cardholders should use the GPC to pay the registration fee. Attendance may require conference approval from chain of command and legal office.

2) **Conference that Requires Official Travel.** Cardholders may use a GPC for a standalone, advanced payment of the registration fee. Attendance may require conference approval from chain of command and legal office.

3) **Virtual Training Conference.** Cardholders should use a GPC to pay the registration fee. Conference approval is not required per AR 1-50, 1-8.

g. **Equipment, Systems, and Services Using Covered Telecommunications Equipment or Services as a Substantial Component or Critical Technology.** FAR 13.201 prohibits use of the GPC, on or after August 13, 2019, to procure or obtain, or extend or renew a contract to procure or

obtain, any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as a critical technology as part of any system, unless an exception applies, or a waiver is granted.

h. Food, Meals, and Refreshments. Food is generally prohibited to buy with the GPC, but it may be purchased under the below allowable exceptions. CHs must obtain approval from their legal advisor prior to purchase and include approval documentation in the purchase file. When purchasing food, CHs may use the GPC to buy disposable serving materials (e.g., paper plates and napkins, plastic forks). Use of GPC to rent or purchase fine china, linens, and other luxury materials is prohibited.

1) **Non-Government Sponsored Meeting or Conference.** Cardholders may use GPC to pay for food if the cost of food is a non-separable portion of a registration or attendance fee that covers attendance and meals. CH may also use the GPC if food is necessary to obtain full benefit of the meeting or conference. (B-233807, Aug. 27, 1990)

2) **Agency Paying for Food for an Employee Attending a Government-Sponsored Conference.** Cardholders may use the GPC if food is necessary to obtain full benefit of the conference and the conference involves matters of topical interest to multiple agencies and/or nongovernmental participants. Also, without statutory authority to charge a fee and retain the proceeds, the host agency may not charge a registration or other fee to defray the costs of providing food. (B-198471, May 1, 1980 and B-288266, Jan. 27, 2003)

3) **Agency Hosting a Formal Conference.** Cardholders may use the GPC if the conference includes registration, published substantive agenda, and scheduled speakers; the food is a legitimate conference expense; and the conference involves matters of topical interest to multiple agencies and/or nongovernmental participants. Also, without statutory authority to charge a fee and retain the proceeds, the host agency may not charge a registration or other fee to defray the costs of providing food. (B-300826, March 3, 2005)

4) **Light Refreshments at Government-sponsored Conferences.** The agency sponsoring the conference may use the GPC to provide light refreshments on breaks at Government-sponsored conferences only for Government employees on travel orders (TDY status). Use of GPC to buy refreshments for non-Government employees or for Government employees not on travel orders is prohibited.

5) **Agency Hosting a Focus Group.** Cardholders may use the GPC if the focus group advances a specific statutory mission; the participants are federal employees; and the expenditure contributes materially to the achievement of the specific statutory function. (B-304718, Nov. 9, 2005)

6) **Routine Agency Meeting Held to Discuss the Internal Day-to-Day Operations of the Government.** Cardholders may use GPC if the meeting is held at an outside facility, and the cost of food is included, at no extra charge, in the fee for the conference space. (B-281063, Dec. 1, 1999)

7) **Training.** Cardholders may use GPC if participation in the meal is necessary to obtain the full benefit of the training. (39 Comp. Gen. 119 (1959)) Sponsoring agency may serve refreshments/meals at training where the food is necessary to achieve the objectives of the training program. The food must be incidental to the training, and the event must meet the definition of training in 5 USC 4101(4). Attendees would fail to complete the training if they missed the meal.

8) **Award Ceremony.** Cardholders may use GPC if the recipients will be publicly recognized, and the authorized agency official has determined that food advances the recognition of the awardee.

Sponsoring agency may serve light refreshments at award ceremonies honoring individuals recognized under a Civilian Employee Incentive Award Program. Use of GPC to pay for refreshments at the following types of ceremonies is prohibited: retirement, promotion, graduation, recurring quarterly recognition, commanders' call, PCS, and longevity. (65 Comp. Gen. 738 (1986))

9) **Cultural Awareness Ceremony.** Cardholders may use GPC if the food is part of a formal program intended to advance EEO objectives and make the audience aware of the cultural or ethnic history being celebrated. The food must be a sample of the food of the culture, and be offered as part of the larger program to serve an educational function. (B-301184, Jan. 15, 2004)

10) **Official Representational Funds (ORF).** Cardholders may use the GPC to extend official courtesies, including meals and refreshments, to authorized guests in accordance with AR 37-47 or appropriate agency regulations. The GPC must be dedicated solely for use of ORF expenditures.

11) **NAF/Chaplains.** Cardholders may use the GPC to buy food in support of chaplain-led programs to assist members of the Armed Forces and their immediate family members in building and maintaining strong family structures. Allowable expenses include the cost of transportation, food, lodging, supplies, fees, childcare, and training materials for members of the Armed Forces and their immediate family members while participating in such programs, including participation at retreats and training conferences (10 USC 1789(b) and AR 165-1).

i. Fuel.

1) **Fuel for Special Purpose Vehicles.** Cardholders may use GPC for fuel for special purpose vehicles such as a forklift, tractor, lawn mower.

2) **Fuel for Rental Vehicles.** Cardholders may use GPC for fuel for vehicles rented 30 days or less for official purposes, when not in a TDY status. If in TDY status and need to purchase fuel for the rental vehicle, requester must use a Travel card.

3) **Fuel for Army NAF-owned Vehicles.** Cardholders may use GPC for NAF vehicle refueling in accordance with NAF vehicle refueling policy requirements in the JTR and DFAS 4200.2-1.

4) **Fuel for Personally owned Vehicles.** GPC is prohibited. Requester must use travel card.

5) **Fuel for GSA Fleet vehicles.** GPC is prohibited. Requester must use the GSA Fleet card.

6) **Fuel for Vehicles owned or leased by DoD.** Requester should use the DoD Fleet card.

7) **Bulk Fuel.** Requester should use the Logistics Fuel Card (LOGFUEL). The fuel may also be purchased via contract.

j. Gift Funds in support of Army donor program where nonappropriated funds are permitted.

k. Long-term Lease of Land and Buildings.

1) Lease of real property (i.e., land and/or buildings) for a term longer than 30 days is prohibited.

2) Lease of real property for a term shorter than 30 days is permitted.

l. Professional Credentials. Per 5 USC 5757, an agency may use appropriated funds or funds otherwise available to the agency to pay for expenses for employees to obtain professional

credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, state-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certification; and examinations to obtain such credentials. The authority under subsection (a) may not be exercised on behalf of any employee occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position.

m. **Subscriptions.** Advance payment is authorized in 31 USC 3324(d)(2) for “charges for a publication printed or recorded in any way for the auditory or visual use of the agency.” Cardholders must retain the renewal notice or a statement that reflects the beginning and ending date of the subscription service. Cardholders must purchase mission-related subscriptions to magazines, journals, and technical data in the name of the agency only rather than in the name of an individual employee. Advance payments are authorized for subscriptions to prevent disruptions in service. Subscriptions must not have an automatic renewal at the end of the subscription period. Before leaving their role, CHs should notify their BO and A/OPC so that the subscription may be cancelled or transferred to another account as appropriate.

n. **Tires.** Cardholders may use [FedMall’s Global Tires Program](#) contract.

o. **Vehicle-related expenses.** These expenses are generally paid with the travel or fleet cards. CHs may use GPC if paying with travel or fleet card is inappropriate, e.g., NAF and Air Force vehicles.

p. **Weapons, Ammunition, and Explosives.** Use of the GPC for purchases of these items is generally prohibited. As controlled DoD commodities, weapons, ammunition, and explosives are assigned to the Army (see DFARS 208.70), which has contracting responsibility to supply all DoD Components with weapons, ammunition, explosives, and other commodities listed in DFARS PGI 208.7006. DoD Components are to submit their commodity requirements via MIPR to the assigned Component in accordance with DFARS 208.7002 and DFARS PGI 208.7002-1. See Chapter 16 for exceptions to policy.

Parent topic: [Chapter 14 - Prohibited and Restricted Purchases](#)