

NIH POLICY MANUAL

26101-41-E - Self-Service Store Charge Cards Issuing Office: OALM/OLAO/DLS (301) 496-3395 Release Date: 06/15/07

1. **Explanation of Material Transmitted:** This NIH Manual Chapter establishes and updates specific procedures for the IC's to follow to safeguard and control the use of the NIH Self-Service Store charge cards. This issuance includes management controls and periodic reviews, not specified in previous version.

2. **Filing Instructions:**

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A. Purpose:

This Manual Chapter provides policy and guidelines for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Central Storeroom Self-Service Store (SSS) charge card program and authorized users, to assure controls and proper safeguards are adhered to.

B. Background:

The Office of Logistics and Acquisition Operations (OLAO), Division of Logistics Services (DLS), manages the SSS as part of the NIH Central Stockroom program, providing convenient walk-in shopping and delivery services. Stocked items include laboratory, chemical and administrative supplies. Customers make purchases using charge cards issued annually by DLS.

C. Policy:

The NIH policy is to use the SSS charge cards to purchase supplies for official Government business only. The SSS services are available to all NIH ICs, as well any Federal Government agency with an approved interagency agreement in place. Only authorized users shall be issued charge cards. The authorized user is responsible for control of the assigned charge cards and to exercise necessary controls to prevent abuse or use by unauthorized personnel. The NIH Executive Officers have complete responsibility to request and control the use of charge cards in their respective ICs.

D. Procedures:

1. **Requesting Charge Cards**

IC Executive Officers may request charge cards from DLS and must sign for receipt of the card(s). IC Executive Officers may designate individuals (usually Administrative Officers) as card custodians who must accept full responsibility for the use of each card received.

The card custodian may re-delegate responsibility for the control and use of a charge card(s) (e.g., to a specific laboratory) but must provide DLS with the name, title, organization and telephone number of those individuals to whom authority has been re-delegated. A re-delegation memo must be given to the charge card custodian and retained in his/her file. These procedures must also be followed if any changes in the original designation occur. As part of the original request for charge cards, IC Executive Officers must certify that the charge card safeguard provisions have been developed and periodic inspections will be made to insure procedures are being followed.

2. Issuance of Charge Cards

The number of charge cards issued to an IC is limited to the actual number of cards required to meet organizational needs. If an IC needs multiple cards for the same Project Number, a justification is required to support the request. For example, geographic separation of organizations assigned the same Project Number may require multiple cards.

Annually, the DLS shall require all ICs to validate their applicable Project Number and verify their continued need to use the charge card. The DLS will verify all authorized Project Numbers with the Office of Financial Management. The SSS shall refuse to accept any card without a valid Project Number, a lapsed card, or an unauthorized card. The SSS staff shall refer the customer using invalid charge cards to the IC card custodian to resolve the problem.

The DLS shall expedite requests for replacement cards if cards are lost, damaged, or stolen. Immediately report any lost or stolen charge cards to the DLS on (301) 496-3395.

3. Safeguarding Charge Cards

The card custodian must take appropriate measures to safeguard charge cards issued to them and ensure that only responsible NIH personnel are authorized to use the cards. It is required that SSS charge cards are secured under lock and key when not in use and accessible only to authorized users. The card custodian must maintain a register for the charge card to monitor the issue/return of the card. Charge card users shall return the card and store receipt to the card custodian immediately after use to ensure proper control of card.

4. Review of Charge Card Purchases

SSS charge card receipts identify the stock number, description, quantity and cost of items purchased. Card custodians should review the charge receipts at the time of purchase to verify the legitimacy of the purchase in support of the IC's mission. Upon completion of review, the card custodian must initial and date each receipt. If misuse of a charge card is evident, it shall be reported immediately to the DLS on (301) 496-3395. SSS charge card receipts must be retained for three years by the charge card custodian.

5. Presentation of NIH Identification Card

Authorized NIH users of SSS charge cards must present their official NIH identification card and an active SSS charge card when making purchases at the SSS. Customers from other agencies must present a valid identification issued by their agency and their active NIH SSS charge card.

NO SALE WILL BE PROCESSED THROUGH THE SSS CHECK-OUT REGISTERS, WITHOUT THE SSS CASHIER VERIFYING AUTHORIZATION THROUGH A VALID FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ISSUED IDENTIFICATION CARD AND AN ACTIVE NIH SSS CHARGE CARD.

SSS staff shall write the user's identification card number on all store receipts. A copy of each transaction is maintained by the SSS. Copies of the record of transaction can be obtained by the IC Executive Officer or his designated representative upon request.

6. Review of IC Charge Card Controls

a. The DLS staff will schedule and conduct periodic on-site courtesy reviews to ensure each IC complies with the provisions of this Manual Chapter. Specifically, the DLS staff will evaluate the measures the card custodian takes to safeguard and control the charge cards(D.3.). They shall review the purchases and credits to ensure the IC takes reasonable measures to prevent fraud, waste or abuse of Government supplies or Government funds (D.4.).

b. The DLS staff will schedule and conduct periodic on-site reviews of the SSS records to ensure proper record keeping is maintained and are in compliance with NIH Manual 1743, Keeping and Destroying Records, Part1, Section 1900-C.

E. Records Retention and Disposal:

All records (e-mail and non-e-mail) pertaining to this chapter must be retained and disposed of under the authority of [NIH Manual 1743](#), Keeping and Destroying Records, Appendix 1, NIH Records Control Schedule, Item1900-C-1 "Cost and Stores General Correspondence Files."

1. As stated in Paragraph D.4., SSS charge card receipts must be retained for three years by the card custodian.

2. NIH e-mail messages (messages, including attachments, that are created on NIH computer systems or transmitted over NIH networks) that are evidence of the activities of the agency or have informational value are considered Federal records. These records must be maintained in accordance with current NIH Records Management guidelines. Contact your IC Records Officer for additional information.

3. All e-mail messages are considered Government property, and, if requested for a legitimate Government purpose, must be provided to the requester. Employees' supervisors, NIH staff conducting official reviews or investigations, and the Office of Inspector General may request access to or copies of the e-mail messages. E-mail messages must also be provided to members of Congress or congressional committees if requested and are subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. Since most e-mail systems have back-up files that are sometimes retained for significant periods of time, e-mail messages and

attachments may be retrievable from a back-up file after they have been deleted from an individual's computer. The back-up files are subject to the same request as the original messages.

F. Management Controls:

The purpose of this manual issuance is to establish specific procedures to be followed by the ICs to safeguard and control the use of the NIH Self-Service Store charge cards.

1. Office Responsible for Reviewing Management Controls Relative to this Chapter - OLAO/DLS, Inventory Management Branch

2. Frequency of Reviews - Periodic

3. Method of Review- Staff from the DLS will schedule and conduct periodic on-site reviews to ensure the IC complies with this manual chapter. This review includes evaluating the measures the card custodian takes to safeguard and control the charge cards. They shall review the purchases and credits to ensure that the IC takes reasonable measures to prevent fraud, waste or abuse of Government supplies or Government funds. Also, they will review the SSS records to ensure proper record keeping is maintained and in compliance with NIH Manual 1743.

4. Review Reports - DDM, OLAO, DLS

Delpro Report # L2041002- Stock order list for reviewed Project Number

Review Reports are sent to the Deputy Director for Management (DDM). Reports should indicate that controls are in place and working well or included in any management control issues that should be brought to the attention of the Deputy Director for Management.

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