



APC Quarterly Newsletter

Volume XVI

September 2015

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Calendar of Events

September 2015	October 2015	November 2015
8th: Dormancy Report & Green Purchase	1st: 1st Day of New Fiscal Year	1st: Fifth Rollout
9th: Cardholder Suspension Lifts	6th: Dormancy Report	6th: Green Purchase
16th: Suspension Reports	7th: Green Purchase	10th: Cardholder Suspension Lifts
17th: APC Quarterly Meeting	9th: Cardholder Suspension Lifts	16th: Suspension Reports
23rd: Cardholder Suspension Lifts	16th: Suspension Reports	19th: APC Quarterly Meeting (Tentative)
	23rd: Cardholder Suspension Lifts	23rd: Cardholder Suspension Lifts

Save the Date! APC Quarterly Meeting

The next APC Quarterly Meeting is **Thursday, September 17, 2015, 1:30 pm ET**. All APCs are invited to join this discussion with the CCSC team, in person or by webinar.

The Q4 APC Quarterly Meeting will feature a guest speaker from PSD, who will share details on the upcoming process improvement initiative.



Agency of the Quarter

The Charge Card Service Center is pleased to congratulate the **Agency of the Quarter for Q3 FY15**, Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS) and Alecia Adams (NRCS APC). The **Q3 FY15 Honorable Mention** agencies are Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and Joseph Rainey (FNS APC), as well as Rural Development and Colin Beckford (RD APC). Congratulations!

To view your agency's metrics, visit [Q3 FY15 - Agency of the Quarter - Final Formula](#).

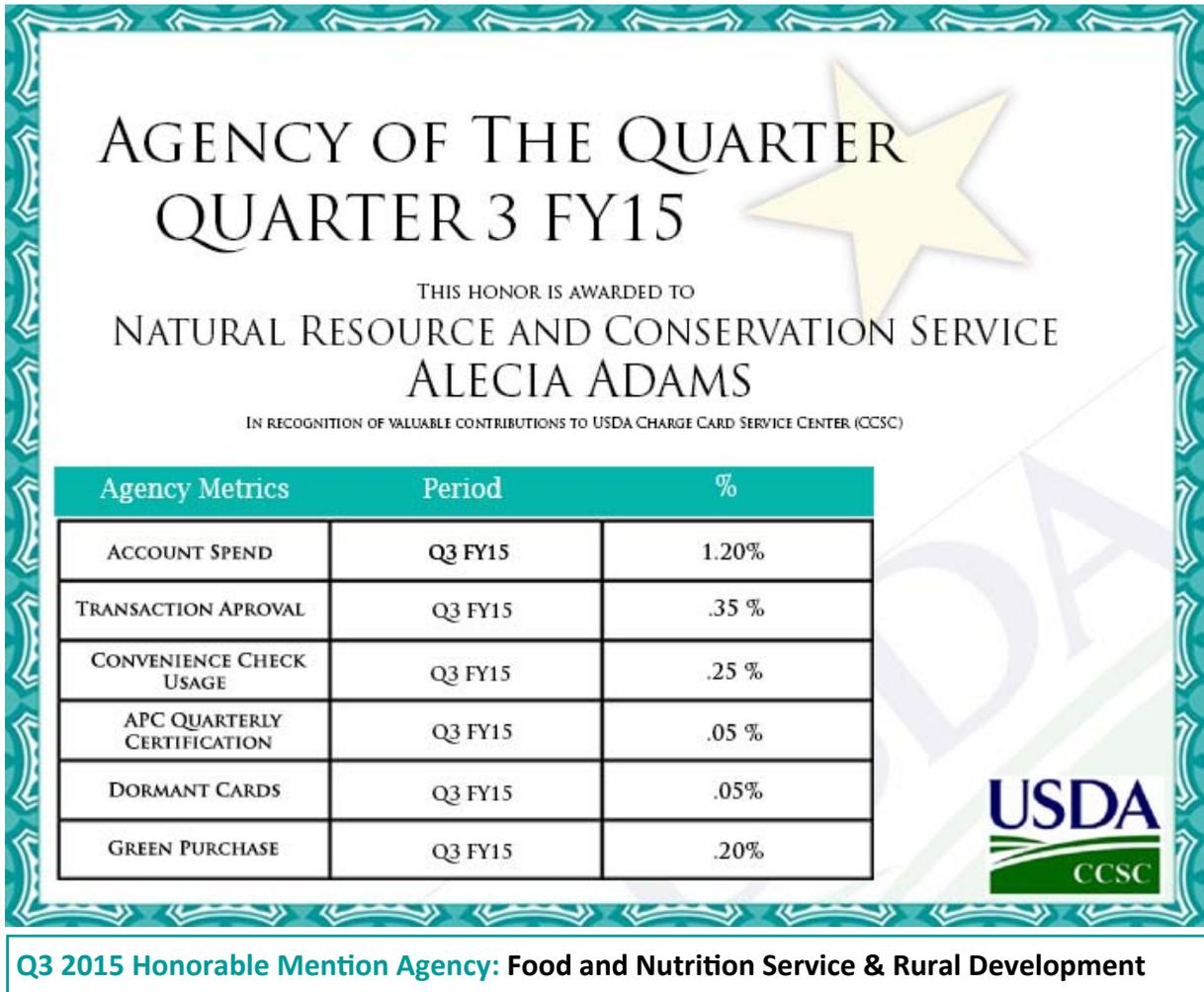


Figure 1. Agency of the Quarter Metrics

Did you know?



Overview, Benefits and FAQs on General Ledger Extract Control are now available on [the CCSC website?](#)

On October 1, 2015, the Single Purchase Limit will increase to \$3,500?

CCSC Purchase Card Tip

Always use a Government issued email when setting up new purchase cards account request in Access Online (AXOL). Purchase card information is subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. If a personal email is used, then the personal email is subject to a FOIA request and may be included in the FOIA request response.

Previously the CCSC updated cardholder data when processing a purchase card account request without requiring a corrected [Cardholder Request for Purchase Card](#) form. Now, a **corrected form** is required for audit purposes and for processing the purchase card account request.

Second Goal Achieved: APCs Begin Final Approving Purchase Card Account Setups

Earlier in the third quarter, CCSC rolled out the ability to process purchase card account setups directly into US Bank’s Access Online (AXOL) to more than 50 APCs and LAPCs representing FSA and FSIS. Both FNS and RD completed training and are now in the process of completing their scheduled rollouts.

In addition, CCSC activated final approval rights for the following agencies:

- ARS
- AMS
- ERS
- APHIS
- NASS
- GIPSA
- NIFA

Currently, 31 agencies, or 97 percent of agencies, are trained; about 68 percent of agencies, processing their own setups; and 9 percent final approving their own setups. After the completion of FNS’ and RD’ rollout, 97 percent will process their own setups.

To help more agencies reach the second goal, CCSC continues to work with agencies on their final approval ability.

Annual Purchase Card Training Makes Tracks in the Coming Months

CCSC will unveil a newly-revised annual purchase card training in the first quarter of FY16. For the remainder of the current fiscal year, the Procurement Systems Division (PSD)—Charge Card Service Center (CCSC) —in conjunction with the Procurement Policy Division (PPD) is defining both the policy and structure of the Purchase Card Refresher Training program.

The basics of the annual purchase card training are available while the full training program details are in progress. Agency Program Coordinators (APCs), Local Agency Program Coordinators (LAPCs), Approving Officials (AOs) and Cardholders will have a newly-revised and role-specific training in AgLearn.

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Annual Purchase Card Training Makes Tracks in the Coming Months (Continued)

Each year the APCs, LAPCs, AOs and Cardholders will complete the training. This requirement starts in FY16 and continues in the subsequent years.

In early FY16 CCSC will relay more details to the APCs on available training, deadlines, reporting instructions, compliance and other information.

New Fiscal Year Brings New Improvement Initiative

In FY16, the CCSC purchase card program will undergo a process improvement initiative. The Procurement Systems Division (PSD) will spearhead the forthcoming initiative.

PSD will review, at the minimum, the Purchase Card Program's project management practices, program effectiveness, policy definitions, as well as roles and responsibilities. (Most likely, PSD will gather APCs input during the review.) After analyzing the review findings, PSD will identify and implement improvements to strengthen the CCSC purchase card program.

The March 2015 *Office of Inspector General: Review of the Department's U.S. Bank Purchase Card and Convenience Check Data* and the post-report program scrutiny are the catalyst for the upcoming process improvement initiative and the forthcoming mandatory refresher training. (See **Annual Purchase Card Training Makes Tracks in the Coming Months** for more training details.)

Per the Office of Inspector General (OIG) report, USDA agency personnel approved questionable transactions due to inadequate training and guidance. This training-related finding captured the attention of organizations both external and internal to USDA.

Shortly after the report's release, *The Washington Free Beacon* ran an article dated March 25, 2015, regarding the OIG report's findings. As result of the newspaper article and the OIG report, the Office of Procurement & Property Management leadership briefed agency heads in April 2015, as well as the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry in June 2015.

The briefings covered both the OIG report's findings, as well as CCSC's current and future actions to prevent fraud, waste and abuse. The reported future actions include the process improvement initiative and mandatory refresher training.

Currently, the process improvement initiative is being planned. However, PSD will present more insight and answer initiative-related questions during the September 17, 2015, APC Quarterly Meeting. CCSC will update APCs throughout the initiative.

Year End Activities Are Approaching Fast

The end of FY15, the start of FY16 and year-end activities are fast approaching. To help with the year-end activities, key activities and dates are listed below.

Cardholders and Approving Officials

On October 1, 2015, cardholders may begin using the FY16 codes to reallocate their transactions, as appropriate. Of course, cardholders should contact their AOs to confirm the appropriate code.

In September 2015, cardholders should use the FY15 codes to reallocate their transactions. If a cardholder uses FY16 code in September 2015, then the cardholder may experience the following:

- A rejected transaction; or
- A permanently-locked transaction

On or before **Wednesday, September 30, 2015**, cardholders and Approving Officials (AOs) should remember to do the below activities.

Activity	Cardholder	Approving Official
Approve and reconcile all FY15 transaction that has posted to Access Online.	x	
Complete all related comments and items description information for compliance and audit purposes.	x	
Ensure submission of period-end estimates.	x	
“Final” approve all FY15 purchase card and convenience checks transactions.		x

On **Thursday, October 1, 2015**, both Cardholders and AOs begin handling any approvals and reconciliations (reallocations) in Access Online for Purchase. Also, remember, FY16 Default Accounting Codes (DACs) are added to existing purchase cards during October 3-4, 2015.

Then the newly-posted transactions in Access Online reflect the FY16 DACs starting **Tuesday, October 6, 2015**. At that time, cardholders should do the following actions as needed:

1. Ensure that each transaction in Access Online has the correct FY accounting to match the year in which the purchase was made.
2. If a mismatch, then reallocate appropriately to the correct accounting code.
3. If a prior year accounting is needed (i.e., FY15), ensure that year’s code is available.
 - If available, use that code for reallocation.
 - If unable to find the prior year accounting code in Access Online, ask APC/LAPC to work with agency’s financial point of contact.

Cardholders must review the transaction to ensure the correct selection of the transaction’s FY accounting code prior to clicking the “Save” button.

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Year End Activities Are Approaching Fast (Continued)

Coordinators

In early October 2015, US Bank updates all Purchase Card DACs in Access Online to reflect the FY16 values. **On October 7, 2015**, CCSC sends APCs a list of outstanding invalid DACs resulting from the conversion. The APCs correct the invalid DAC issues in each agency's list by **Friday, October 16, 2015**.

During this October 7-16 timeframe, CCSC reallocates outstanding non-extracted transactions (i.e., because of DAC issues) to the correct DAC.

For more details on year-end activities and FY16 Rollover Activities, please see the July 28th email on FY16 Rollover Activities or contact the CCSC at ccsc@dm.usda.gov.