



# THE CART

What's happening in Procurement at Virginia Tech

May 2025

## End-of-Fiscal-Year Procurements

To ensure adequate time for procurement, receipt, and payment, requisitions should be submitted to Procurement by the follow deadline:

**Friday, May 9** Requisitions for purchases under \$200,000 should be submitted to Procurement by this date to allow sufficient time for processing, receipt, and payment.

**Friday, June 27** Final date for fully reconciled P-card charges to be posted to FY25 funds.

Purchase orders may continue to be processed in HokieMart after May 9.

Please note that these deadlines do not apply if goods or services can be received and invoiced before the Controller's Office final invoice processing deadline on **June 13**. If goods or services cannot be received and invoiced by that date, users must set the accounting date to 7/1/25 on their requisition to avoid an encumbrance against FY25 funds.

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## Understanding Tariffs and Virginia Tech Procurements

Acquiring equipment from international vendors is sometimes necessary to support academic research, instruction, or facility operations. However, when importing goods into the United States, it's important to account for tariffs—taxes imposed on foreign products by the federal government.

A tariff can substantially increase the cost of equipment purchased from abroad. For instance, if you import lab equipment valued at \$25,000 and it's subject to a 7% tariff, the total cost rises by \$1,750.

Some items used in education or research may qualify for special exemptions, but many others do not—especially if they are considered industrial or commercial in nature.

### When and How Tariffs Are Applied

Tariffs are assessed when goods arrive at U.S. customs, not at the time of purchase. The duty is calculated based on the declared value of the item, plus shipping costs and (in some cases) insurance.

Because the importer of record is responsible for paying the tariff before Customs releases the shipment it is essential to clarify shipping terms with the vendor early in the purchasing process. The University's standard shipping terms are Free-On-Board (FOB) Destination which means the seller is responsible for all costs and risks, including tariffs, until the goods reach the destination. However, many international Vendors may attempt to reject FOB Destination in favor of Incoterms that result in the Buying Entity having responsibility for tariffs/duties.

### University Terms and Conditions

Procurement has updated the Standard PO Terms and Conditions to contain language that requires Vendors to show supporting documentation of any tariffs applied and gives the University the ability to cancel the PO at its sole discretion for material increases in tariffs. These terms are intended to give the University ultimate approval of any unexpected tariffs applied to purchases.

### Best Practices

- **Request a tariff estimate at the time the Quote(s) are received.** As mentioned, the tariff is not applied until the goods arrive at U.S. Customs, but the Vendor should be able to provide an estimated tariff at the time of Quote which should be taken into account as part of the total purchase price.
- **Shipping Terms.** The University should always attempt to negotiate for shipping terms such as FOB Destination or Incoterm Delivery Duty Paid (DDP) so the Seller is responsible for any duties paid. This will not always be possible, but purchasers are advised to ensure shipping terms and responsibilities are clear prior to order issuance.

## Understanding Tariffs and Virginia Tech Procurements (con't)

- **Buy Domestic when possible.** The best method of avoiding unexpected tariffs is to purchase goods domestically to avoid any import tariffs.
- **Consult the University's Custom's Broker.** The University maintains a term contract with a Custom's Broker Airschott ([sales@airschott.com](mailto:sales@airschott.com)) (703) 471-7444). For complex purchases that require import of goods it is recommended to contact Airschott for assistance.
- **Check for tariff exemptions or educational waivers, especially for scientific and laboratory equipment.** See [International Trade Administration Form ITA-338P](#).
- **Budget considerations.** Understand that when purchasing imported goods there could be shifts in the tariff applied between the point of PO issuance to the point the goods arrive in Customs. Procurement has added the above-mentioned language to PO Terms and Conditions, but there may be instances where it is in the best interest of the University to proceed with a purchase despite material increases. Departments are advised to take this into account when budgeting for purchases that will be affected by tariffs/duties.

### Conclusion

Given recent shifts in global trade policy it is more important than ever to consider tariffs at the time of purchase. Recognition of potential duties early in the procurement process helps avoid unexpected costs, supports more accurate budgeting, and ensures that purchases align with funding limitations.

## New Punchout for Janitorial Supplies

We are excited to announce that General Sales of Virginia Inc. is now live as a new Punchout Supplier! Founded in 1983, General Sales of Virginia is a locally owned distributor of janitorial supplies, with all operations based in Roanoke, Virginia. You can find their Punchout catalog under the Maintenance & Repair Punchout Catalogs category on the HokieMart homepage.



General Sales offers Virginia Tech a 20% discount on standard catalog items, as well as special pricing negotiated by the Procurement office on select products. Departments will see these discounts reflected in their purchase order price. Additionally, all orders over \$500 receive an automatic 1% discount that will be displayed on the e-invoice.

Our General Sales representative is Shawn Burchett. He can be reached at [shawn@gscva.com](mailto:shawn@gscva.com) or by phone at 540-835-4791 if you have any questions about products, pricing, or discounts. If you have any questions about this new Punchout, please feel free to contact HokieMart at [hokiemark@vt.edu](mailto:hokiemark@vt.edu)

## Important Reminders About P-card Compliance: Chemical Purchases, Names Changes & International Transactions

### Expanded Compliance Reviews in Key Areas

With greater transparency in PCard transactions, ensuring compliance with university policies is now more important than ever. This month’s updates highlight key reminders around chemical purchases, international transaction, name changes.

Moving forward, Procurement and compliance teams are placing additional focus on transactions involving:

- **Software** - to ensure compliance with licensing, cybersecurity, and accessibility requirements
- **Chemicals** - to support safety regulations and tracking protocols
- **International vendors** - to satisfy tax documentation requirements (e.g., W-8 collection)

### Reminder: Chemical Purchases Are Prohibited on PCard

Chemical purchases should not be made using a PCard. All chemical orders should be placed using HokieMart to ensure:

- Compliance with safety and environmental regulations
- Accurate tracking of hazardous materials by Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)
- Use of approved suppliers and access to contract pricing

Common chemical suppliers in HokieMart include:

- Airgas
- Life Technologies
- VWR
- Sigma-Aldrich
- EMD Millipore
- Spectrum Chemical
- Matheson Tri-Gas

These vendors are fully integrated in HokieMart, streamlining the purchase process and ensuring departments stay compliant.

### International Purchases: IRS Requirements and Compliance Expectations

When purchasing goods or services from foreign vendors the University is obligated to meet IRS requirements. This means departments may be required to obtain a valid IRS tax documents (W8, W8BEN). This form certifies non-U.S. tax status and determines appropriate tax withholding.

## Important Reminders About P-card Compliance (con't): Chemical Purchases, Names Changes & International Transactions

Incomplete or missing documentation may result in:

- IRS penalties
- Withholding complications
- Delays in processing or reconciliation

The Tax Compliance team may contact departments regarding international PCard purchases. Your prompt and accurate response is appreciated to help ensure full compliance and avoid audit issues.

### Name Change? Don’t Forget to Update Your PCard

If you've recently changed your legal name, please take the following steps to update your Virginia Tech Bank of America Pcard. This is necessary to ensure that you will be able to reconcile your account.

1. Submit the **P12B form** and a photo of your updated Social Security card to HR via the secure Dropbox.
2. Email the **Purchase Card Team** at [purchasecard@vt.edu](mailto:purchasecard@vt.edu) to begin the name change process with Bank of America.

### Key Takeaways: What You Can Do?

- **Use HokieMart first:** Whenever possible, route purchases through HokieMart instead of using a PCard.
- **Know the requirements:** Especially for international, software, or chemical-related purchases.
- **Respond promptly:** Timely replies to the compliance team will help avoid audit concerns, payment delays and card suspension.



## New Feature Alert: Exporting Search Results

Users in HokieMart can now export search results directly to Excel. This new functionality provides easier access to the wealth of purchasing data stored in HokieMart and supports improved reporting and tracking of departmental spending.

The ability to export search results makes it easier to analyze purchase activity, monitor open orders, and create custom reports based on your department's specific needs.


Instructions on exporting search results can be found by clicking the blue icon  on the search results page or by viewing our [Export Search Results Guide](#).



## Tip & Trick: Save Time with Saved Searches in HokieMart

Did you know you can save your search results in HokieMart? If you frequently use specific filters or column settings to find purchases, saving your search criteria can be a real time-saver. Just add them to your “My Searches” list for quick and easy access anytime.

Saved searches work across all document types—Purchase Orders, Invoices, Requisitions, and more. Whether you're tracking invoices awaiting receipt or regularly checking Shared Department orders, filtered searches make it easier to stay on top of your routine business tasks.

Instructions on saving any searches can be found by clicking the blue icon  on the search results page or by [viewing our Creating a Saved Search Guide](#).

## Supplier Spotlight:



### RPM Design Pro: Partnering with Virginia Tech for Comprehensive Marketing, IT, and Strategic Printing Services

RPM Design Pro is excited to introduce our range of marketing, IT, and strategic printing services to the Virginia Tech community. As a new VASCUPP contract holder and SWaM-certified, we are ready to meet the unique needs of Virginia Tech. With 19 years in business, we are also a certified Women Business Enterprise (WBE), Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB), Minority/Women Business Enterprise (WMBE), and a GSA Contract Holder.

Our expertise extends beyond traditional marketing services, include website development, hosting, maintenance, social media marketing, digital ads, print materials, and content development. We specialize in strategic printing and will provide high-quality, cost-effective solutions tailored to Virginia Tech's needs. Whether it's annual reports, promotional materials, or custom projects, RPM Design Pro ensures that all print materials are produced with the highest quality and precision.

Additionally, RPM Design Pro is an authorized software reseller for a wide range of subscriptions, including Adobe, Dropbox, NVIDIA, Opentext, Palo Alto, Microsoft, and more. By partnering with us, Virginia Tech can save valuable resources while accessing the highest quality products and exceptional customer service. We pride ourselves on being highly responsive, ensuring that Virginia Tech's technology needs are met quickly and efficiently.

In addition to our IT solutions, we can help Virginia Tech create and manage effective digital campaigns, enhance user experiences on their websites, and produce engaging content that aligns with the university's institutional goals. With our commitment to quality, efficiency, and a personalized approach, RPM Design Pro is the ideal partner to support Virginia Tech's marketing, IT, and strategic printing needs.

For more information, visit [rpmdesignpro.com](http://rpmdesignpro.com) or contact us at 904-495-9597 or [connect@rpm-designpro.com](mailto:connect@rpm-designpro.com).

Important Notice:  
UPS Now Charging \$5 Monthly Fee for Paper Invoices

Attention Virginia Tech departments using UPS for shipping:

Effective immediately, UPS has implemented a new billing policy that includes a \$5 monthly fee for departments that continue to receive paper invoices by mail. This fee will appear on your monthly UPS bill and applies regardless of the number of shipments made.

To help your department avoid this additional charge, we strongly encourage all UPS users to transition to paperless billing by creating an online UPS account. Through this account, departments can view, download, and manage invoices electronically at no extra cost.

Steps to Switch to Online Billing:

1. Create a UPS User ID Profile: Visit <https://www.ups.com> and create a new user profile if you don't already have one.
2. Log in and Add Your UPS Account: Once logged in, go to your profile and select “**Payments and Accounts.**” Choose “**Manage Payment Options**” and then “**Select Existing Account.**” You will need an invoice dated within the last 90 days to authenticate and link your account.
3. Access the Billing Center: Once your account is added, you will be able to access the UPS Billing Center. From the top menu, click “**Products and Services.**” In the first column at the bottom, select “**Pay Bill.**” Navigate to “**Manage Bills - Billing Center.**” *Note: In most cases, once the account is added to your profile, you will be automatically registered for the Billing Center. If prompted again, use a recent invoice to re-authenticate.*

Additional Notes:

- Multiple users can be added to the same UPS account if needed.
- Invoices are available in PDF format for easy viewing and printing.

If you have any questions or encounter any issues during setup, please contact Virginia Tech’s UPS representative, **Cynthia Torrez**, at **800-550-4184, ext. 114-2009**, or via email at [ctorrez@ups.com](mailto:ctorrez@ups.com). You may also reach out to Kim Widrig in Procurement at [kdcromer@vt.edu](mailto:kdcromer@vt.edu) for additional assistance.



Study Abroad RFP

A friendly reminder that the Global Education Office and Procurement have posted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Custom Faculty Led Study Abroad Providers - RFP# 952642505 which can be found on [Procurement's sourcing Portal](#).

Companies that are providing custom faculty lead study abroad programs to the University need to participate in this RFP by submitting a proposal in line with the instructions and scope of work as detailed in the RFP document.

Training for  
HokieMart  
Requestors:



- May 28th 2025
- Jul 30 2025
- Aug 27th 2025
- Sep 24th 2025
- Oct 29th 2025
- Dec 3rd 2025

Registration Required  
through [PageUp](#)

UPCOMING  
EVENTS

ABC’s of Procurement Part 1  
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