

TurkPrime or Mechanical Turk Processing

TurkPrime is a paid service that provides an online market research panel for conducting academic research studies and surveys.

Mechanical Turk is a service provided by Amazon. Mechanical Turk enables the university/client to pay research study participants for their involvement, participation and completion of a research study/survey.

Mechanical Turk or TurkPrime can only be paid for with a University Purchase Card. Billing for the service is different depending on when your Mechanical Turk account was established.

Accounts established prior to March 2023 will deposit funds to the account and it will have a declining balance as the service is used and funds are paid to the recipients.

Mechanical Turk accounts established after March 2023 will be required to enter the Purchase Card information as you establish the account. Recurring charges will be allowable for TurkPrime and Mechanical Turk on the purchase card. Your card will be charged once during the month for the total amount due. The purchase card transaction limit of \$2,000 applies to these charges, as well as a \$10,000 annual maximum for these charges. It is the cardholders responsibility to ensure that the annual total of the recurring charges does not exceed \$10,000.

If requested by Procurement or the Controller's Office, the department should be prepared to provide the business justification of the need and use of these services.

The requesting department will submit a Sole Source Justification to the Procurement Department outlining the project/survey services offered through Mechanical Turk, and the projected fees for the service if the product is expected to exceed \$10,000. The reconciliation log should be maintained by the purchase card holder showing the use of funds for academic research purposes.

- The department will contact [the Office of Sponsored Programs](#) to seek approval if fund use is related to a sponsored program. The documentation will show the contact person from the Office of Sponsored Programs giving approval to use funds for this purpose.
- If the amount is expected to exceed \$10,000 and the Office of Sponsored Programs has authorized the use of grant funds, Procurement is able to authorize the transaction as an allowable transaction for the department's Purchase Card holder. The purchase card holder will need to submit [a lift/exception form](#) to [the Purchase Card Administrator](#) prior to making this purchase.

- Once authorized, the purchase card holder can proceed with the procurement of services.
- If the requesting department does not have an employee issued Virginia Tech Purchase card, Procurement suggests they consider applying for one to use for this purpose. If this is not a viable option for the department, then the department will be required to discuss this with the Procurement Director to determine an alternate plan.
- These procedures represent the preferred method for acquiring the procurement of these services which provides sufficient documentation of approved services for audit purposes.
- These procedures only apply to the procurement of prepaid services of Mechanical Turk and TurkPrime. Departments and researchers are responsible for all other applicable requirements through Research (including Institutional Review Board), Office of Sponsored Programs, or other university departments.