



Forest  
Service

Washington  
Office

1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
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Subject: Revised Policy on Use of the Purchase Card for OWCP/APMC

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director, Deputy Chiefs  
and WO Directors

In the past, purchase cardholders have paid for Agency Provided Medical Care (APMC) for employees who are injured at work. On March 18, 2008 Human Capital Management issued a letter under 6100/6180 *Office of Worker's Compensation Programs (OWCP) Case Files and Process at Albuquerque Service Center (ASC), RSA letter* which provided guidelines on the process for work related injuries.

Per the WO letter: *"The ASC/HCM/Workers' Compensation Section (WC) is now the initial point of contact for processing and managing all work related injury/illness claims. This includes all Forest Service employees, whether injured doing project work or on an incident. No other personnel or sub-units in the agency should be providing these services, which include maintaining compensation files, contacting OWCP, authorizing medical care using either the CA-16 or FS-6100-16, or counseling of employees."* For non-Forest Service employees including contractor employees, injuries/illness should be handled by their employer unless there are extenuating circumstances which must be documented.

**Effective the date of the aforementioned HCM letter, the purchase card is not authorized for APMC use.** Use of the purchase card is only authorized for first aid treatment (15.05, 1) following the overall guidance for APMC found in 15.2-2 1-9. In general, this means very limited first aid or a cold or sore throat. Nothing more significant than these items should be paid with a purchase card. The use of the purchase card on incidents should be the exception rather than the norm, since most first aid is administered in the medical tent rather than at a medical facility. Before paying for items with the purchase card, it is the cardholder's responsibility to ensure that the care authorized falls within the guidelines outlined above and the authorities listed below.

APMC is not part of OWCP and payments are not authorized under FECA. APMC authorizations are made using form FS-6100-16 per the IIBMH, February 2008 and must include the Medical Resource Request Number. See IIBMH, Section 15.05 for definition of first aid. APMC can only be used while the employee remains at the site of the incident (IIBMH, 15.2-2). Additional information may be found in the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook (IIBMH): <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/large.html#IIBMH>.

**All payments for medical care are authorized using OWCP Form CA-16 and are paid directly by OWCP, using their authority under the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA), with no involvement from our agency. OWCP claims may not be paid with the purchase card at any time.**



Any invoices or other request for payment for medical expenses incurred prior to the WO HCM letter shall be submitted to ASC/HCM in accordance with their procedure and are not authorized for payment with the purchase card. Employees paying for unauthorized medical expenses may result in a ratification including potential financial liability.

This current process is for the benefit of injured employees, while also providing cost savings to the government. Please review the enclosed WO letter and direct questions pertaining to medical care to ASC/HCM/WC at 877-372-7248.

*/s/ Ronald E. Hooper*  
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