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Introduction

The transaction approval process (TAP) lets your organization use Access Online to approve and audit transactions using your existing internal approval hierarchy and procedures. By using the TAP function, you no longer have to create and submit paper approvals for your transactions. You can easily process your transactions for approval and view the approval history. The TAP function mirrors your organization’s internal auditing procedures.

Two basic users use the TAP function:

- **Cardholders**—As a cardholder, you use TAP to approve and forward transactions to an approval manager.

- **Approval managers**—Your assigned approval manager uses TAP to review, final approve, and forward (if needed) your transactions to another approval manager.

The system lets only one user modify a transaction at a given point in time. In other words, the same transaction will never be in the work queue of more than one user. This feature reduces the chance of fraud and ensures that only one person can modify a transaction at a time.

Approval managers and cardholders can perform the same basic procedures:

- **Approve transactions**—Cardholders and approval managers can approve transactions and forward them to an approval manager for additional approval. Cardholders approve and forward only their own transactions, while approval managers approve and forward transactions from cardholders and other approval managers.

- **Pull back transactions**—Cardholders and approval managers can pull back transactions that an approval manager has not approved, rejected, or modified (e.g. reallocated) yet. Both cardholders and approval managers can pull back transactions they previously approved as long as the pending approval managers have not yet approved, rejected or modified the transactions (e.g., reallocated, added comments, changed user line items).

- **Manage rejected transactions**—Both cardholders and approval managers can manage transactions that approval managers reject back to them.

In addition, approval managers can:

- **Reject transactions**—Approval managers can reject transactions and send them back to cardholders, previous approval managers, or to other approval managers. The rejecting approval manager must specify a rejection reason so that the cardholder or approval manager receiving the rejected transaction knows how to manage the rejected transaction.

The flow chart on the following page provides an overview of the entire process.
TAP Overview Flow Chart

1. Transaction posts.

2. Cardholder Chris Doe completes transaction management tasks (e.g., reviews, reallocates).

3. Cardholder Chris Doe approves and forwards the transaction to Jane Smith, his approval manager.

4. Approval manager Jane Smith reviews the forwarded transaction.

5. Approval manager Jane Smith approves and forwards the transaction to another approval manager, John Jones.

6. Approval manager Jane Smith final-approves the transaction.

7. Approval manager Jane Smith rejects the transaction back to cardholder Chris Doe.

8. Cardholder Chris Doe manages the rejected transaction.

9. An approval manager can pull back until the pending approval manager approves, rejects, or modifies the transaction.

The chain of approval managers varies by organization. An approval manager may reject, approve and forward, or final approve.

Cardholders can pull back a transaction until the pending approval manager approves, rejects or modifies the transaction.
Cardholder Transaction Approval Process

As a cardholder, you can:

- View a list of your transactions, filtered by approval status (e.g., pending, pulled back) and other parameters
- Approve and forward a transaction to an approval manager
- Pull back a transaction as long as your approval manager (also called the pending approver) has not approved, rejected, or modified the transaction (e.g., reallocated, added comments, changed user line items)
- Manage a rejected transaction if your approval manager sends the transaction back to you
- View the approval history to see the current approval status of the transaction, along with each user who approved a transaction, the date and time of each approval, and whether or not each user modified the transaction’s allocation, comments, or line items.

These procedures are described in detail on the following pages.

View-Only Access

You may only be able to view transaction approval screens without being able to perform any approval tasks. Your organization may have given you view-only access so that you can see the transactions and their approval status in the system, without being able to make any changes to the information. For example, if you are an internal auditor in your organization, you might have such view-only access. The screens and tasks will display as shown in this user guide, but the action buttons for performing tasks will not be active. In this way, your program manager can give you the access to the information you need, while maintaining control over who can modify the information in the system, leading to greater overall program control.
View Transactions

As cardholder, the first step in using the TAP function is to access a list of your transactions, as you do for other transaction management functions.

To view transactions:

1. Select the Transaction Management high-level task. The Transaction Management screen displays.
2. Click the **Transaction List** link. The *Transaction Management: Card Account Summary with Transaction List* screen displays.

**Tip!** If you have access to only one account you will go directly to the *Transaction Management: Transaction List* screen after selecting the **Cardholder Transaction Management** link. If you have multiple accounts, you will need to select which account you want to work with.
3. Filter your transactions by any of the following criteria:
   a. Select a cycle date from the Billing Cycle End Date drop-down list.
   b. To filter by transaction amount, select a qualifier (e.g., <=, >=, Exact, or All) from the Transaction Amount drop-down list and type an amount in the Transaction Amount $ field.
   c. To filter by purchase ID, enter a purchase ID in the Purchase ID field.
   d. To filter the list by status, select an approval status, pull-back eligibility status, match status, reallocation status, and/or reviewed status.
4. Select the number of transactions to display from the Display drop-down list.
5. Click the Search button. The transactions that match your filtering criteria display.
Learn More: From this screen, you can perform transaction management tasks described in the Access Online: Transaction Management user guide. After you have completed any necessary transaction management tasks (e.g., reallocated the transaction), you are ready to approve the transaction. If you are a cardholder, follow the procedures on the following pages to manage your transaction approvals.
Learn More: Your screen may also have additional icons displayed to indicate the availability of level II and level III data and/or to indicate if the transaction has been extracted. Note the II icons and the E icons in the sample screen below. If a transaction does not have a II or III icon, then only basic, level I data is available. For detailed information, refer to the Access Online: Transaction Management user guide.

These icons indicate the type additional detail available and if the transaction has been extracted.

For detailed information on marking transactions for extract (if you are responsible for that task), refer to the Access Online: Marking Transactions for Extract user guide.
Tip! If your organization is using the client system validation (CSV) function, on the list of transactions, you can see the validation status icon for each transaction. You can also sort by validation status. CSV provides a real-time validation of accounting codes and flags each transaction with one of the icons shown below.

Validation Status Icons Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Icon</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>🚫</td>
<td>Not Validated</td>
<td>The accounting code has not been validated, so the validation status (valid or invalid) is not known.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>The accounting code is valid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✖️</td>
<td>Invalid</td>
<td>The accounting code is invalid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Approve a Transaction

As a cardholder, you can approve a transaction from the list of transactions on the Transaction Management: Card Account Summary with Transaction List screen. You can also approve a group of transactions together, as long as you are forwarding them to the same approval manager.

To approve a transaction from the transaction list:

1. Select a check box for a transaction with a Pending or Pulled Back status.

Tip! You can select multiple transactions, but be sure they are all going to the same place. Also, you can select the Check All Shown link if you want to approve all the displayed transactions and they are all going to the same approval manager.

2. Click the Approve button. The Transaction Management: Approve Transaction(s) screen displays.
3. Click the **Select Approver** link. The **Approve Transaction(s): Search and Select an Approver** screen displays.

**Tip!** If you are selecting an approval manager for the first time, you will need to search and select an approval manager. As you select approval managers, the system builds a drop-down list for you. After the system creates this list, you can simply select an approval manager name from it. You can also manually specify a default approval manager.

4. To search for an approval manager:
   a. Type search criteria in the **Last Name** field and/or the **First Name** field.
   b. Click the **Search** button. A list of approval managers who match your search criteria displays.
   –Or–
   c. Leave the **Last Name** and **First Name** fields blank and click **Search** to display a complete list of all possible approval managers.
5. Select the radio button for the approval manager you want to forward your approved transaction to.

6. If desired, select the Set selection as your default approver check box to make the selected person your default approval manager.

7. Click the Select Approver button. The Transaction Management: Approve Transaction(s) screen displays with your selected approval manager in the Approver’s Name field.
Tip! If you had selected multiple transactions, they will all go to the listed approval manager. Also, if you selected a group of transactions, but decide at this point to send to different approval managers, click the Cancel button to return to the transaction list and revise your selections.

8. Click the Approve button. The system forwards the approved transaction(s) to the specified approval manager and includes your transaction in the e-mail summary of transactions that goes to the approval manager. You return to the Transaction Management: Card Account Summary with Transaction List screen, on which a confirmation message displays. The transaction’s status changes to Approved.

Tip! You cannot approve a transaction without selecting an approval manager. If you try to, the system displays an error message. Simply select an approval manager and then click Approve.
9. Repeat steps 1 – 8 for all remaining transactions you wish to approve and forward.
Learn More: Also, if your organization uses CSV, then you can only approve and forward transactions based on the parameters your Program Administrator set up. For example, you may not be able to approve transactions with an Invalid accounting code status or a Not Validated accounting code status. Some Program Administrators set up their programs to allow approving Not Validated and/or Invalid accounting codes to enable their cardholders to continue processing transactions. However, your program may be set up to not allow approving transactions with Invalid and/or Not Validated accounting codes. In that case, when you attempt to save the approval, an error message displays.

If your Program Administrator does not allow you to approve transactions with a Not Validated and/or Invalid accounting code, then an error message displays when you try to approve the transaction.

Note the Not Validated icons.
Pull Back a Transaction

You can pull back a transaction before the approval manager you forwarded the transaction to has approved, rejected, or modified (e.g., reallocated) the transaction. After an approval manager takes action on a transaction, the transaction belongs to the current approval manager and you can no longer pull back the transaction.

To pull back a transaction:

1. Select the **Eligible for Pullback** option from the **Pull Back Eligibility** drop-down list.

2. Click the **Search** button. Transactions that you can pull back display at the bottom of the screen.
3. From the list of transactions, select a check box for a transaction with an Approved status.

4. Click the Pull Back button. A confirmation message displays and the status changes to Pulled Back.

If you had filtered to show only transactions eligible for pullback, then the transaction no longer displays. If you search for the transaction, the transaction will display a Pulled Back approval status.

Learn More: You can now modify the transaction (e.g., reallocate, add line item information) as described in the Access Online: Transaction Management user guide. After you modify the transaction, repeat the steps in Approve a Transaction on page 11 to approve and forward the transaction again.
Manage a Rejected Transaction

Your approval manager may reject a transaction that you forwarded. When your approval manager rejects a transaction, Access Online requires your approval manager to provide a reason and/or comments, so that you know how to modify the transaction. After you modify the transaction, you can re-approve and forward the transaction. Depending on your organization’s internal procedures, you may send the transaction back to whomever rejected the transaction you, or you may send the transaction back up the chain, beginning with your approval manager.

For example, you send a transaction to your approval manager, Richard Anderson, and he approves the transaction and sends it to Kate Jones, who rejects the transaction back to you, the cardholder, to reallocate. After you reallocate the transaction, you might need to send it to Richard again for approval or you might send the transaction back directly to Kate for final approval. Whether you send to Richard or Kate depends entirely on how your organization handles your internal transaction approval procedures. If you are uncertain which approval manager to resend a rejected transaction to, check with your Program Administrator.
To manage a rejected transaction:

1. Select **Rejected** from the Approval Status drop-down list.
2. Click the **Search** button.
3. Clicked the **Rejected** link for the transaction you want to work with. The *Transaction Management: Transaction Detail* screen displays.

4. Review the codes (e.g., 1, 2, 3), modifications (e.g., A, C, U) and comments for the transaction using the on-screen keys.

5. Click the **Back to Transaction List** link. You return to the *Transaction Management: Card Account Summary with Transaction List* screen.

6. Follow the instructions from the approval manager (e.g., reallocate the transaction to the sales department). Refer to the *Access Online: Transaction Management* user guide if you need assistance with transaction management tasks.

7. Follow the steps in *Approve a Transaction* on page 11 to re-approve and forward the modified transaction.
View Approval History

If you want to see the history of a transaction, you can view the approval history for a specific transaction on the Approval History tab. The Approval History tab provides an audit trail, including the name of each approval manager and which action each approval manager took related to the transaction.

To view approval history:

1. Select the link in the Approval Status column for the transaction you want to view the approving history of. The Transaction Management: Transaction Detail screen displays with the Approval History tab open.
2. Review the approval action information.

3. Click the **Back to Transaction List** link. You return to the **Transaction Management: Card Account Summary with Transaction List** screen.

**Learn More:** Your approval manager has the responsibility for the final approvals.