

# VISA GOVERNMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION PAYMENT PROGRAM



## Program Summary

To support payment volume growth in these merchant categories, the Visa Government and Higher Education Payment Program enables qualified government and higher education merchants to accept Visa cards in all payment channels and assess a variable service fee as a separate transaction. The Visa Government and Higher Education Payment Program is the new name for the Tax Payment Program that has been expanded to include certain government and higher education transactions, as outlined below.

## Eligible Payments

The Visa Government and Higher Education Program is available to merchants in the following merchant category codes (MCC) provided they register with Visa and comply with all program rules:

- Government merchants:
  - MCC 9311-Tax
  - MCC 9222-Fines
  - MCC 9211-Court Costs
  - MCC 9399-Miscellaneous Government Services
- Tuition payments<sup>1</sup> for higher education:
  - MCC 8220-College Tuition
  - MCC 8244-Business
  - MCC 8249-Trade Schools

Visa will review acquirer applications to ensure that only eligible payment transactions are included in the program.

## Program Participation and Registration Requirements

The Visa Government and Higher Education Program is open to educational institutions and public sector merchant categories as listed above in the previous section.

The merchant must accept Visa as a means of payment in all channels where payments are accepted (i.e., face-to-face, mail/telephone, and Internet environments, as applicable).

To participate in the Visa Government and Higher Education Payment Program, a merchant must work through their acquirer to become registered. If a merchant has multiple acquirer relationships, each acquirer must separately register the merchant using the registration form.

Government merchants who are already registered for the Tax Payment Program and only process tax transactions do not need to update their registration. Government merchants who are already registered for the Tax Payment Program and wish to add other government departments to the Government and Higher Education Payment Program will be required to



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<sup>1</sup> The program does not include non-tuition related payments at higher education institutions such as for booster clubs, university hospitals, bookstores, alumni organizations, sports teams, and non-university entities.

update their registration with the additional merchant names. These updates will help to ensure that acquirers and merchants are processing and submitting the transactions appropriately.

## Service Fee Requirements

A service fee is permitted solely for eligible payments in the government and higher education MCCs, and can be applied by either the merchant or the third-party service provider accepting payments on behalf of the merchant in both card absent and card present environments. The service fee must be processed as a separate transaction and may be assessed as a flat or variable amount on Visa Consumer Debit (including prepaid), Visa Consumer Credit and Visa Commercial Card transactions. The service fee must be clearly disclosed to the Visa cardholder in advance of payment and as a fee charged by the merchant or third party.

## Transaction Processing Requirements

The merchant or third-party service provider accepting payments on behalf of the merchant will be assigned a unique Merchant Verification Value (MVV) once the registration form has been submitted to and approved by Visa. MVV/acquirer BIN combination(s) must be included in all Visa Government and Higher Education Payment Program clearing transactions, including the fee transactions. The payment and service fee transactions must be submitted and processed as two separate transactions.

To receive the most favorable interchange rate, all debit/credit/commercial transactions must be CPS-qualified. **Note:** Exempt, card-not-present consumer debit tax payment transactions are still eligible to qualify for the Debit Tax Payment incentive interchange rate provided they are registered for the Government and Higher Education Payment Program. Registered participants are permitted to assess a variable service fee on these transactions.

The merchant may access the Debit Acceptance Tables to determine if the transaction was made with a debit or other type of card. Only valid exempt consumer debit card-not-present transactions may receive the consumer debit tax payment interchange rate.

## For More Information

- For questions regarding the *Visa Government and Higher Education Payment Program Registration Form*, contact your Visa Account Executive or call (888) 847-2242 to speak with a Visa subject matter expert.
- For questions regarding secure e-mail, refer to the instructions and contact information for the Visa Online Secure E-mail Network.
- For questions regarding general Program participation, contact Paul Bazylak at [pbazylak@visa.com](mailto:pbazylak@visa.com) or (770) 423-0044.

