



An educated choice

VISA DEBIT CARD FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is an authorization?

A: When you use your debit card for a purchase and do not enter a Personal Identification Number (PIN), the merchant will transmit your card number and purchase amount to the credit union for an approval or an “authorization.” This authorization generally confirms that an account is open and the purchase amount is available. The purchase amount transmitted for authorization may vary however by merchant type. Most merchants will request an authorization for the exact purchase amount and others may transmit an estimate that may be more or less than the actual purchase amount. Once the purchase is authorized a hold is placed on the funds in your account until the actual purchase is received by the credit union and deducted from your account. Typically this hold drops off within two to three business days.

Q: How can I view the holds placed on my share draft account?

A: Log into your online banking account, select your share draft account, then click on the Pending Items tab to view the holds placed on your account from the merchant authorizations.

Q: What if I see an error when I view the holds on my account?

A: If you see an error when you view the holds placed on your account from the merchant please contact the merchant. We do not place these holds on your account.

Q: Why is the amount on hold different from my actual purchase amount?

A: The amount of the hold placed on your account may vary from the final purchase amount in situations where the amount of the transaction is estimated or a tip may be involved.
Example: At a restaurant, an authorization is requested prior to a tip being added. The final purchase amount may include the tip. Some restaurants may estimate a tip amount in the original authorization dollar amount; thus your purchase and hold amount may vary slightly.
Example: At the gas pump, an initial authorization is requested prior to knowing the final amount of your purchase. Most pay-at-the-pump gas purchases are initially authorized for \$1 to \$125, no matter the final purchase amount.
Example: At a hotel, an authorization in an amount equal to the estimated amount of the entire stay, plus incidentals may be made. This can also be true of cruise lines and car rental agencies.

Q: What is the difference between a non-PIN and PIN-based transaction?

A: PIN-based transactions require you to enter your four-digit PIN (Personal Identification Number) into the merchant keypad at the point of sale. Non-PIN transactions generally require your signature. A signature may not be required for non-PIN transactions, such as Internet purchases, mail order purchases and pay-at-the-pump gas purchases.

Q: When will the actual purchase amount replace the amount on hold?

A: It may take several business days for the actual purchase amount to replace the hold amount on your account. Generally, the final purchase is deducted from your account within two business days.

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Q: How does a “pay-at-the-gas-pump” transaction work?

A: When you use your card at the gas pump, the station generally requests an authorization to confirm that your account is open and active. Most authorization amounts for pay-at-the-pump gas purchases are set at \$1 to \$125. When the transaction is authorized a hold is then placed on your account until the actual purchase amount posts to your account. The actual purchase amount can take 2 hours to 2 days to replace the amount on hold.

Q: How are restaurant purchases authorized?

A: Restaurants may add an estimated tip to the bill total when requesting an authorization. Because of this practice, your final purchase amount may vary from the authorized amount.

Q: How do hotels determine how much to authorize?

A: Hotels are allowed to request an authorization for an amount based on your length of stay, all applicable taxes, plus any additional expected dollar amount(s). Cruise lines and car rental agencies also follow this practice. We suggest using your Visa credit card for hotel reservations and car rentals instead of your debit card as the hold placed on your account will reduce the amount available in your account.

Q: Can I change my pin (personal identification number)?

A: Yes, you will need to call us for the reference number associated with your debit card number. You will then have to call 800-503-9249 and follow the prompts to change your PIN. We can also order a pin for you which will take approximately 7-10 business days to receive and it will be a generic, computer-generated number.

Q: What are my daily limits?

A: Your ATM withdrawal limit, or pinned transaction limit is \$500.00, and your purchase or non-pinned transaction limit is \$1,000.00 per business day.

Q: Can I change my daily limits?

A: Yes you can request a temporary change to your limits if you anticipate making a large purchase. We need this in writing. Please notify us at least 24 hours in advance by contacting a Member Service Representative.

Q: Where can I use my debit card?

A: You can use your debit card wherever you see the Visa logo.

Q: What if my card is lost or stolen?

A: Contact Tobacco Valley Teachers Federal Credit Union immediately at 860-253-4780, 800-749-8305, or our fraud monitoring service for a lost or stolen card at 888-241-2510.

Q: How long does it take to receive my debit card?

A: It takes approximately 7-10 business days from the time we order a card until you will receive it.

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Q: I received a letter from Tobacco Valley Teachers Federal Credit Union that said my card was compromised. What does this mean?

A: Periodically Visa notifies us of card numbers that may have been compromised. Unfortunately when this happens, we will block the cards immediately as a safety measure. We will issue a new Visa Debit Card number and PIN. We regret this inconvenience but assure you that the security measures in place are for your benefit. This is just one of the many ways your credit union works for you and insures the safety of all your accounts with us. If you have any questions, please call us at 860-253-4780 or 800-749-8305.

Q: How can I avoid having my card compromised?

A: Criminals use all kinds of techniques to steal your information. We suggest that you never give out your personal information and avoid making purchases online. Most compromises result from third party merchant processors failing to safeguard cardholder information. You have little, if any, control when this happens.

Q: I signed up for a free trial offer online with my debit card and now my account is being debited for a charge I didn't authorize. Why?

A: Exercise caution when providing your card number for any offer particularly online offers. Please read the terms and conditions of the offer carefully. The trial offer may only be good for 30 days and somewhere the fine print may authorize the company to fee you a monthly charge if you haven't cancelled their service before a stated deadline. You must contact that company to dispute the charge.

Q: I received a call from a person calling on behalf of Tobacco Valley Teachers Federal Credit Union asking me if I made a specific purchase with my debit card. Why?

A Tobacco Valley Teachers Federal Credit Union employs a fraud monitoring service to combat debit card fraud. If a debit card transaction is out of your normal spending habits you may receive a call asking you if you made the purchase. If we cannot reach you, a temporary block may be placed on your account until we can verify with you the transactions in question.

Q: I am traveling. Why do I have to notify Tobacco Valley Teachers Federal Credit Union?

A: If you plan on using your debit card while traveling please notify us. We do not allow any foreign transactions. We may, however, be able to allow transactions in the countries you are traveling to. Our fraud monitoring service may inadvertently place a block on your debit card if you are making purchases which are out of your ordinary spending habits or geographic location.

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Q: Why can't I use my debit card in some countries?

A: Some countries may be sanctioned by the United States government and we are unable to permit transactions from those countries.

Q: If I use my debit card in a store, which button should I press "credit" or "debit"?

A: If you select the "credit" button, you may need to sign the receipt if the transaction is over \$50.00. The funds for a "credit" purchase will not come out of your account immediately. It often takes two business days for the transaction to clear your account. If you select the "debit" button, you will need to enter your PIN when prompted and the funds will be deducted from your account immediately. We suggest that you use your PIN only when requesting cash back, otherwise use credit. Regardless of the option you choose the funds will be deducted from your share draft account.

Q: How can I avoid the transactions fees?

A: When you are making a purchase at a merchant ask for cash back or use a CO-OP network ATM machine.

Q: What is an ISA fee?

A: When you use your VISA debit card at a merchant that settles in currency other than US dollars, the charge will be converted into the US dollar amount. VISA USA charges a 0.8% International Service Assessment (ISA Fee) on all international transactions, regardless of whether there is a currency conversion. If there is a currency conversion, the ISA is 1.0%. In either case, this ISA fee is passed on to you. An International Transaction is a transaction where the country of the merchant is outside of the United States.

Q: I can't get to the ATM machine to withdraw cash but I need money. Can I give my card and PIN to a family member to get it for me?

A: No, if you give your debit card and disclose your personal identification number to anyone you have willingly compromised the security of your card. Your account agreement with the Tobacco Valley Teachers Federal Credit Union authorizes only you, the approved account holder for debit card privileges. Providing your card or disclosing your PIN to others is a violation of your agreement with the credit union. Your privileges may be revoked if we become aware that this has occurred. If you have any additional questions please contact a Member Service Representative at 860-253-4780 or 800-749-8305.

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