

ALTO MasterCard® prepaid card

Frequently asked Questions

Who can have an ALTO card?

We provide two ALTO cards;

Corporate Card

For employees or volunteers of organisations with a Unity Trust bank account. This card is ideal for any expenditure employees may have in the course of business.

Consumer Card

For customers/members of organisations, such as credit unions. This card is ideal to provide to credit union members and can be used to disburse loan funds, benefits or any other type of funding. It provides members with financial inclusion through access to shopping both in stores and on-line.

What are the benefits of an ALTO card?

There are many benefits of having an ALTO card: *Convenience* – it can enable your organisation to carry out day to day activities without the need of having to manage a petty cash or encashment facility. Web and phone bookings can be made easily and securely.

Expense management – it can reduce back office administration by tracking expenses through detailed transactional spend, available on-line.

Security – prepaid cards are a safe alternative to cash – they can be ‘stopped’ if lost or stolen.

Money management – As this is a prepaid card, not a credit card, the cardholder can only spend up to the amount of the balance you have loaded onto the card and you control how much each employee has loaded onto their individual card.

Where can the ALTO card be used?

You can use your ALTO card wherever MasterCard® cards are accepted, including: shops, cash machines, over the Internet, mail order and by phone – at home and abroad.

What makes the ALTO card safe?

Because you must enter your PIN to use the prepaid card and because your card uses chip and PIN technology, it's a safe way to carry money instead of cash. If the card is lost or stolen, a ‘stop’ can be placed on the card and a replacement sent to the card holder.

How long does the card last for?

Each card will be valid for 36 months.

What are the fees and costs for having and using the ALTO card?

Please refer to the separate summary box for specific fees.

Can the ALTO card be used abroad?

Yes, the ALTO card can be used anywhere in the world that accepts MasterCard cards although, for security, the cardholder needs to notify us at least 7 days in advance, telling us which countries they intend to visit. This will help us reduce the possibility of any of purchases or cash withdrawals being refused. There are additional charges for using your prepaid card abroad – see the separate summary box for full details.

What happens if there are insufficient funds on a card to pay for a purchase?

To keep track of your spending every time the card is used, the balance is checked electronically before payment is made. In some circumstances, such as where there are insufficient funds on the card, in most circumstances the transactions will be declined.

What happens if a card gets lost or is stolen?

If a card is lost or stolen, it must be reported as soon as it is discovered. The card will be stopped and the money ‘frozen’ so no one else can use the card. The cardholder can report the card lost either by calling us on 0845 350 0011 or by texting CARD STOP STOLEN or CARD STOP LOST to 60777 from their registered mobile to block their card. They can also text from outside the UK to +44 7786 200 690. Remember, the card should be treated as if it is cash and you should be aware that, before the card is reported lost or stolen, some or all of the value on the card may be lost, in the same way as if a purse or wallet is lost.

Please note that where you dispute a transaction and it is subsequently found that that card has been stolen, you will not be charged the £12 administration fee, outlined in the summary box.

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How do I load money on to a card?

Whenever you move money across to your prepaid account, we will need your signed authority. You can either send us authority each time you wish to “top up” a card, or if you hold the required level of authority, you can hold funds on your prepaid card account which you can use to distribute directly to your cardholders at your own convenience via the internet.

Is there a limit to how much money can be put on a card?

Yes. For safety and security, we limit the amount that can be loaded on to any one card at a time. Please see the separate summary box for further details.

Can I have one card for use by several people?

No, the cards are designed for individual use only and are personalised with the name of the individual cardholder. A PIN is allocated to the specific cardholder and must **not** be shared, as this could lead to potential fraud. An application should be completed for each individual applicant being issued with a card.

Can I see a history of how a card has been used?

Yes, via the ALTO card website at www.altocard.co.uk, free of charge, if you hold the correct level of authority. The cardholder can also check their balance at any time using this service, or by texting CARD BAL to 60777 from their registered mobile phone.

What is the minimum age for having a prepaid card?

The prepaid card is available to anyone who is a UK resident and is 18 years of age and over.

How many cards can be requested?

There are no limits on the number of ALTO cards you can request from your organisation but there is a charge for each card issued.

Is the prepaid card intended to replace the encashment facility?

Not at the moment, although the card can be used as a convenient alternative to the encashment facility as the card can be used instead, wherever the MasterCard Acceptance Mark is displayed. We think you will benefit so much from the use of this card, you will prefer using it to your encashment facility.

How do I apply?

Please complete and return the relevant application form on our website or please call our customer services department 0845 155 9876 for a form to be sent to you.