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Visa Reduces and Clarifies Requirements for Supermarket Incentive Program

Supermarket Incentive Program and Requirements

The Supermarket Incentive Program was introduced in 1991 to promote Visa card acceptance in the supermarket industry segment. Since its inception, the program has been instrumental in increasing card usage in supermarkets. The requirements for the program help ensure that only supermarkets, merchants dedicated to providing a complete line of food merchandise, receive the benefits of the program.

There are four essential elements required for participating in the optional Supermarket Incentive Program: 1) a merchant must satisfy the Visa definition of a supermarket, 2) the acquirer must submit Merchant Category Code (MCC) 5411 in the authorization request and clearing message records, 3) the merchant must accept Visa cards in all lanes that accept checks, and 4) the acquirer must validate that the merchant is and remains qualified.

Changes to Supermarket Incentive Program

Because Visa has gained nearly full acceptance of Visa cards in supermarkets, **Visa will no longer require acquirers to submit the Supermarket Incentive Program Certification** Form to Visa for merchants participating in the program.

Visa is also modifying the penalties related to the incorrect classification of an ineligible merchant in the supermarket category. A merchant outlet identified as failing to meet the qualification requirements may result in a penalty of \$5,000 fine per month, per merchant outlet, until the qualification requirements are met. These fines may escalate if identified issues are not corrected. Fines are also subject to change.

Please contact your Relationship Manager if you have any questions regarding this announcement.