

**STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE STATE COMPTROLLER
H. CARL McCALL
STATE COMPTROLLER**

Electronic Payments Questions and Answers

1. Q: What are the benefits of participating in Electronic Payments?

A: It's Easy - Receiving your payments electronically (Electronic Payments) eliminates check handling and manual deposits. The money is credited directly to your account, ready for you to use. There are no additional steps for handling the payment (like mail rooms, the post office, etc.) where checks can be misdirected or lost.

It's Fast - With Electronic Payments, State payments go directly from the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) to your account.

It's Secure - Electronic Payments uses the Automated Clearinghouse (ACH) network — the same system your bank uses to handle transactions with other banks. When electronic payments are credited to your bank account, the funds become immediately available for payments or investments.

Timely Notification - If you use the e-mail notification option to assist in your daily cash management, you'll know **in advance** when the payment will be made.

2. Q: Why must my financial institution sign the authorization form and send it directly to OSC?

A: OSC uses the Electronic Payments Authorization Form to make sure the payments due to you are handled accurately. Verification by bank personnel is an internal control to ensure that the bank account information is correct. For example, there are instances where the bank's ACH routing number is different from the Federal wire routing number. Banks also verify whether the designated account is a savings or checking account, as required by ACH regulations.

3. Q: The guidelines indicate that I can only have one bank account. What if I need to have certain payments credited to another bank account?

A: Arrangements should be made with your financial institution to transfer funds from the bank account you designate for Electronic Payments to other accounts as necessary.

4. Q: What is a pre-note?

A: A pre-note is a zero-dollar test transaction initiated electronically to your bank account when your account information is initially set up by OSC. A pre-note confirms that OSC has entered your account information correctly.

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5. Q: If I elect to participate in this program, will I receive all of my State payments electronically?

A: All State payments made from OSC's Central Accounting System will be made electronically to the bank account you designate.

6. Q: What notification will I receive that an electronic payment has been made?

A: You can choose either e-mail notification from OSC or notification from your bank.

E-mail notification will give you two-day advance notice of an electronic payment into your account. This feature can assist you in your cash management process.

The e-mail notification contains a link to OSC's secure web site. After you enter your Payee ID (FEIN, SSN or Municipal Code), you will see a detailed remittance advice. As shown below, the advice contains useful information: date, amount, voucher reference and a telephone number for contacting the State agency that originated the payment.

Office of the New York State Comptroller	H. Carl McCall, State Comptroller				
Trace#00000100 dated 03/16/2000					
Agency Code/Name: 11000 STATE EDUCATION DEPT 518-474-8608					
<u>Reference/Invoice No.</u>	<u>Ref/Inv Date</u>	<u>Invoice Amt</u>	<u>Payment Amt</u>	<u>Batch No.</u>	<u>Voucher No.</u>
11111	02/25/2000	34.01	34.01	014600	1258869
22222	02/25/2000	49.00	49.00	015020	5558996
33333	02/24/2000	47.04	47.04	014600	6667878
44444	02/25/2000	17.48	17.48	015020	1588973
Agency Code/Name: 23000 MOTOR VEHICLES 518-474-0902					
<u>Reference/Invoice No.</u>	<u>Ref/Inv Date</u>	<u>Invoice Amt</u>	<u>Payment Amt</u>	<u>Batch No.</u>	<u>Voucher No.</u>
AB101	01/18/2000	1215.11	1215.11	939440	9919628
AB102	03/02/2000	199.84	199.84	940210	9920006
	Total ACH Deposit		1562.48		
Reference Invoice Number and Reference Invoice Date are entered by staff in the individual State agencies. This information may contain keying errors.					
To comment, please phone (518)473-1170 or <u>e-mail</u> us.					
<u>[Information On Other Payments]</u>					

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If you choose e-mail notification, all payments for that day, from one or more State agencies, will be combined into one electronic payment. Each component of the payment will be described on the e-mailed remittance advice.

If you choose notification from your bank, the credit advice from the bank will include the payment reference information from the original voucher. Arrangements should be made with your financial institution to notify you of all Electronic Payments credits to your account.

7. Q: If I choose e-mail, can I be notified at more than one e-mail address?

A: Electronic Payments can send e-mail notification to only one e-mail address. We recommend a business rather than a personal address. You can, of course, forward the notification to other staff in your office as needed.

8. Q: What if I decide to change my e-mail address?

A: You must send a message, including your Payee Name and Payee ID (FEIN, SSN, or Municipal Code) from your new e-mail address to the e-mail address shown in the Electronic Payments Guidelines.

9. Q: Can I access remittance information other than through the e-mail link?

A: Yes. You can view Electronic Payments (and check) information at OSC's secure web site <https://www2.osc.state.ny.us/pay>

You will need to enter your Payee ID (FEIN, SSN, or Municipal Code) and Electronic Payments trace (or a check) number. A trace number will be available from your e-mailed remittance advice, and also from payment reference information provided to you by your bank.

10. Q: What if I cannot identify the payment from the remittance information?

A: Call the originating agency at the telephone number shown on the e-mailed remittance advice.

11. Q: What if I decide to change my bank account?

A: You must submit another Electronic Payments Authorization Form as soon as possible to OSC through your financial institution, at the address shown in the Electronic Payments Guidelines.

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12. Q: Am I required to participate in this program?

A: No. Although the State Comptroller is encouraging participation, Electronic Payments is a voluntary program. OSC believes that the advantages of Electronic Payments (eliminating check handling and delays, plus strengthened internal controls) are enough to make the program successful. If you do not participate in Electronic Payments, checks will be printed and mailed as they are now, and payment notification will remain unchanged.

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Inquiries relating to OSC's Electronic Payments program should be directed to:

NYS Office of the State Comptroller
Bureau of Accounting Operations
Warrant & Payment Control Unit
A.E. Smith State Office Building - 4th Floor
Albany, NY 12236

Telephone: (518) 474-4032

e-mail: epunit@osc.state.ny.us

This information is also available at www.osc.state.ny.us.