

American Express OptBlue

Introducing OptBlue





One Statement, One Deposit, One Contact for Support

American Express plans to replace their existing OnePoint program with a new and exciting processing model – OptBlue, American Express’ new card acceptance program targeting small businesses. At the end of June 2014, all newly boarded merchants will be eligible to participate in OptBlue. This program is available for both North and Omaha platforms.

What’s the Difference?

With OptBlue, the acquirer owns the relationship with the merchant. This means sales, settlement and fees billed for American Express transactions will now be similar to the traditional Visa®, MasterCard®, and Discover® acquirer/processor model.

Below is an overview of the changes you’ll find with the new card acceptance program, OptBlue:

	 <i>External Sales Agent, Sales Only</i>		 ONEPOINT <i>Sales, Settlement, Servicing</i>		 OptBlue <i>Sales, Settlement, Servicing, Merchant Discount Rate</i>	
Key Acceptance Activities	ESA	AMEX	OnePoint Agent	AMEX		AMEX
Merchant Acquisition	✓		✓		✓	
Merchant Discount Rate		✓		✓	✓	
Card Acceptance Agreement		✓		✓	✓	
Settlement of Funds		✓	✓		✓	
Account Servicing		✓	✓		✓	
Disputes		✓	✓		✓	
Network Infrastructure		✓		✓		✓
Marketing		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Eligible Merchants

- Merchants with under \$1,000,000 in annual American Express charge volume
- Merchants transacting in USD and located within the United States (excludes Puerto Rico, USVI or any other US territory or possession)
- Existing American Express PSP relationships may be eligible if they meet American Express requirements

**Merchants over \$1MM in annual Amex charge volume will be moved to a direct relationship with American Express.*

Exclusions

- > *Merchants may not be within any of the prohibited or excluded merchant categories (the prohibited industries and excluded MCC codes per the OptBlue Operating Regulations)*
- > *Excludes franchises outlined in Appendix K of the OptBlue Operating Regulations (Franchise Exclusion List) which can only be signed under the ESA Program*

Real Improvements

OptBlue by Amex intends to improve American Express card acceptance among small merchants throughout the United States. They aim to accomplish this by:

- Simplifying how acquirers and small merchants do business with American Express
- Motivating sales representatives to sell American Express with real numbers
- Improving acquirer engagement by offering OptBlue
- Growing new charge volume on the American Express network OptBlue's Added

OptBlue's Added Benefits

OptBlue offers merchants a quick and simple way to begin accepting American Express cards. This includes:

- Faster merchant setup
- Improved reconciliation
- Consolidated statements
- One deposit for all card brands
- One customer service contact for all of a merchant's needs



Merchant Support

In the OptBlue program, CardConnect is required to serve as the primary point of contact for program merchants for purposes of sales, customer service and relationship management. American Express requires CardConnect to be responsible for servicing OptBlue merchants in the same manner it does for other American Express payment products.

This includes:

- Administering statements in connection with OptBlue merchant accounts
- Responding to any questions or concerns merchants may have in connection OptBlue.
- Explaining financial transactions on OptBlue merchant statements and reconciling as needed.
- Incorporating changes to an OptBlue merchant account as needed.

Conversion of Existing OnePoint Merchants

While it has yet to be determined, American Express does plan to convert all existing merchants currently enrolled in OnePoint to OptBlue. As part of this transition, merchants will be notified of the terms of the new processing arrangement and any changes to their current rate when they convert. As for currently enrolled ESA merchants, conversion to the OptBlue program has yet to be discussed.

Watch out for updates from CardConnect as we get closer to various phases of OptBlue implementation.