

MIT TechCASH Virtual Chat with John McDonald, MIT TechCASH**Monday, August 19, 2013****12:30 p.m.–1:30 p.m. (EST)**TechCASH website: <http://studentlife.mit.edu/techcash>**(Q) Is there a card for TechCASH or is it linked to the MIT ID card?**

(A) At MIT we try to put everything on the MIT ID card. So, yes TechCASH is accessed by using the MIT ID card.

(Q) Does TechCASH expire?

(A) No, TechCASH does not expire. The funds in a TechCASH account roll over from semester to semester, and year to year. If an account is not active for 120 days, we will close the account and refund the funds to the student.

(Q) What is the necessity for a TechCASH card if my student has a debit card?

(A) Not all of the campus locations accept credit/debit cards, but they all accept TechCASH. Also, since students use TechCASH for laundry, printing, libraries, etc. it is very convenient just using one piece of plastic (MIT ID card).

(Q) Is the MIT dining plan on the MIT ID card as well?

(A) Yes, if your student has a dining plan, it is on their MIT ID card (meaning they use their MIT Id Card to get into the dining hall).

(Q) Can we open TechCASH account online or do we need to wait until orientation?

(A) TechCASH accounts for incoming freshmen are already active. They just need funding prior to use. By going to techcash.mit.edu, parents may deposit funds via credit card. You will need to know your student's MIT ID number. Also, your student may deposit funds online and have the charge show up on the tuition bill (MITPAY).

(Q) Is there any minimum or maximum amount that can be loaded?

(A) There is a maximum of \$2,000 balance. There's a minimum deposit of \$25 online.

(Q) Do we need TechCASH for printing also? Is printing free except in libraries?

(A) Student's don't need funds in TechCASH to print, but the printing service uses the TechCASH system. This is handy, as the TechCASH online management site allows students to see their TechCASH, printing, meal plan activity all in one place.

(Q) Is there a way for students to make actual cash withdrawals from TechCASH?

(A) No, we don't allow students to get 'cash back'. Students may close their TechCASH account and have their balance refunded, but the money goes back to them the way it was deposited (credit card or student account)

(Q) What happens if a student loses their MIT card? Can their TechCASH be used by someone else?

(A) Students can deactivate their MIT ID card for TechCASH and building access immediately by going to the TechCASH online management web page. Since we use the MIT ID, each merchant that takes TechCASH is responsible to check the photo on the MIT ID to the person presenting the ID card. We have only had 2 instances of misuse like this over the past 10 years. In both cases, no funds were lost.

(Q) So certain amount of printing (n number of copies) is free and if the student passes the limit then printing service charge on student's TechCASH card.

(A) Yes, students get 3,000 pages free per academic year. The original idea when this started last year was to charge students via TechCASH if they print more than their quota (3,000 pages). However, MIT has not enforced this limit and we currently allow students to exceed the quota without charge. This may change in the future, but looks ok for this year.

(Q) Are there vending machines etc.? Maseeh that they can use Tech Cash?

(A) There are many vending machines across campus that accept TechCASH, but none currently in Maseeh.

(Q) I don't understand why a student would need to see their printing if there is no charge for printing?

(A) Good point. I think MIT wants to leave the infrastructure in place if/when we do charge for over-quota printing. We receive communications from students asking for quota refunds for print jobs that did not process properly. So we know the students are paying attention anyway.

(Q) How much do you recommend keeping in tech cash?

(A) Not to be wishy washy, but it depends. If your student is on a meal plan, he/she will need less for food. Otherwise, if a student is paying for meals then a budget of \$20-\$25 per day for food is reasonable. The website allows for recurring deposits if the balance drops below a threshold set by the user. This will help if you are worried about running out of funds.

(Q) Do you have arrangements with any other local business or universities to accept TechCASH?

(A) Yes, we have many local merchants that accept TechCASH. There are restaurants nearby as well as grocery stores, florists, etc. You can see a list of locations that accept TechCASH here: <http://bit.ly/14uITpj>

(Q) Is there any way to transfer money directly from a bank account to tech cash?

(A) There isn't a direct way to transfer funds, but you may want to consider using the financial institutions credit card to make TechCASH deposits. This helps build a student's credit score while in college.

(Q) Can you use TechCASH for Shabbat meals in advance?

(A) Yes and No. The food service folks will actually charge after these meals.

(Q) Are there any plans to expand options on how to deposit funds into TechCASH, such as electronic bank transfers, etc.?

(A) We have been considering ACH (bank transfers) for a while now. This is something that could be implemented later this academic year. No promises though.....

(Q) Is there a fee when adding to TechCASH when it is billed to the Student's Account? Is there a way to add to TechCASH without a fee?

(A) Any deposit made online will incur a 'convenience' fee. This will be a maximum of \$1.50 per deposit. However, students can make a deposit to TechCASH in person at the card office (basement of Student Center) that does not have a fee. These deposits will be charged to their tuition bill. We only accept credit card deposits online.

(Q) Of the various TechCASH Accounts, can the Student TechCASH account be used for all purposes, or do they need a separate account for Student Dining Dollars or something else?

(A) The general TechCASH account can be used everywhere. We have a Dining Dollars account that is only valid at locations/merchants that sell food only. This helps if a family is budgeting funds for meals. Otherwise the TechCASH account works for everything else.

(Q) How do you get and load the TechCASH?

(A) If you visit techcash.mit.edu you will see the different options. Most freshmen will receive their MIT ID at orientation. TechCASH is already active on their ID card, just needs funding for it to work at merchants.

(Q) Can tech-CASH be used in the subway, MBTA?

(A) TechCASH cannot be used on the MBTA. However, the MIT ID contains a 'Charlie' chip that can be activated at all MBTA kiosks. Students will take their MIT ID to a kiosk and load money on the Charlie chip. Although TechCASH and the Charlie chip are both inside the MIT ID, they are not related.

(Q) If a student wants to make a deposit in person to avoid the fee, what form of payment will be accepted? Can a check be written, and if so, who should it be made out to?

(A) When a student makes a deposit in person they don't need any payment with them. It works as quickly as the student handing the staff their MIT ID and stating 'Please add \$XXX TechCASH'. We process the deposit and your next bill from MIT will have this charge on it. We make it easy.....

(Q) I found a reference to Student Link, which seems like the Debt Card link. I couldn't find any more information about it. What are the fees? Does it automatically replenish? What are the minimums? Seems like a lot of your information is behind the MIT Cert, and not available to us parents.

(A) Yes, it's pretty ironic that parents end up with the bills but we consider the student our 'customer'. Once your student goes to the TechCASH management site, if they are nice they can provide you with 'Guest Access' to the TechCASH pages. In the meantime, we have basic information at studentlife.mit.edu/techcash that is not protected.

(Q) What are the TechCASH office hours?

(A) The TechCASH Office is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. It's located in the basement of the Student Center (W20) right next to MIT Card Office (where students get their IDs).

(Q) Just confused abouthow student load money on the Charlie chip?

(A) Each MBTA station has a self-service kiosk (computer) that dispenses tickets. These machines will also take cash and credit cards to load money on the Charlie Chip. So, if a student loads \$50 on their Charlie chip they can use the 'T' for up to \$50 of rides. Each time they board a bus, trolley or subway station there are readers to process the Charlie cards (chips).

(Q) When a student makes a deposit onto their TechCASH, can they do it by check, or can it only be put on the student's tuition account?

(A) The student can drop off a check at the Student Financial Services office in building 11, if needed. However, we don't accept any payment type (cash, credit card, check) in our office.

(Q) Does the TechCASH account track purchases so that there is a record of how the money is being spent?

(A) Yes, we keep up to 6 months of activity online. Parents would need to have 'Guest Access' granted to them by their student to see the purchasing activity.

(Q) I am confused about the deposits. Are there only two ways to make deposits: 1) via credit card with a fee, and 2) as part of the tuition bill? Is there no method of depositing with a check?

(A) Yes. If a student makes a TechCASH deposit via their tuition bill, they can drop off a check in building 11 at any time. We add the funds to their TechCASH account immediately, and the check can follow up later.

(Q) I just tried Guest Login, and was able to login. However, none of the links work. I tried "Make a Deposit", and I get the error message "Secure Connection Failed"

(A) If your student gave you guest access, you would receive an email with your logon information. Otherwise, if you log in via your students MIT certificate it should work fine. If you have issues, please send me an email after this session and I'll check it out for you.

(Q) If we put money in TechCASH before he arrives on campus can he start accessing his TechCASH funds immediately once he gets his MIT id?

(A) Yes, it will work immediately.

(Q) When the student deposits online, is it that this transaction then appears on the mitpay account and the parents can then use a credit card to pay for the TechCASH deposit?

(A) MITPAY does not accept credit cards for payments. Here's a link to the Student Financial Services site with some information on paying your student's bill: <http://bit.ly/16X561T>

(Q) Does Charlie chip / card valid for all public transportation around MIT

(A) Yes. We are fortunate to have great public transportation here. Going to and from Boston is very easy. MIT also has plenty of on-campus shuttle services (free).

(Q) Can we check online... the amount of money left on Charlie chip?

(A) Yes, but this is through the MBTA (public transportation). The MBTA allows people to register their Charlie card/chip using their website. The Charlie chip number is located on the back of the MIT ID.

(Q) On a guest account, is there a way to change the password?

(A) Yes, it will allow you to change the password.

(Q) I am at my computer at work, and I don't have her MIT certificate on that computer. One would think that Guest Access can be used from any computer, not one with an MIT certificate.

(A) Yes, guest access is available on any computer. You will only need the user name and password that is provided by the system when a student grants this privilege. I'd be happy to help offline if you have further issues.

(Q) How can a financial institution, Bank of America, make a tech-CASH deposit?

(A) Can't do it directly, sorry. Would need to use their debit/credit card or use their bill pay.

(Q) How do you change the password on the guest account? I can't find a link that works.

(A) I can't access my pages right now, but will post to the transcripts after we are done. Or send me your email and I'll get back to you.

(Q) If my daughter loses her MIT card, is there a way to put a hold on using TechCASH until her replacement card is obtained?

(A) Yes, the card can be deactivated at any time by visiting the TechCASH website. If she finds the card later, she can reactivate the card in the same manner.