



# Chip Card Lifecycle Policy

Frequently Asked Questions

**Version 1.3**

**Updated: January 2024**

**Classification: Visa Public**

## Card Lifecycle Policy

### 1. What is the overall objective of the policy changes?

There are several objectives:

- Remove the uncertainty of the renewal process, enabling issuers to optimize their card procurement strategies by buying in larger quantities.
- Encourage use of the newest/most secure chip products.
- Provide an absolute sunset date for any given product, after which no cards may remain in the field.

### 2. How does the policy work?

The policy considers a product's entire life cycle, from approval of the chip until expiry of the final card using the product from the field. This total usage period is 12 years in length and begins on the date the card's chip ICCN (EMVCo Integrated Chip Certificate Number) was issued. There is no renewal process, so once a card product is approved issuers have far greater certainty as to how long they will be able to use the product. Vendors may sell and issuers may issue cards based on approved products at any point during the usage period, however, all cards must expire, and surplus stock must be destroyed at or before the end of the usage period. Issuers need to be mindful of the date their card product is scheduled to be removed from the approved products list, and ensure all cards are replaced or cancelled before that date during the standard re-issuance cycle, to avoid the expense of forced re-issuance and wasted stock.

For example, if a card product's usage period ends on 31 December 2034, an issuer may purchase cards and issue them in 2031, however the cards would need to have three-year expiry date to leave the field before 31 December 2034.

An issuer purchasing the same product in 2026 could use an eight-year expiry date, for the first year of use and decrease the expiry length each year or could use a three-year expiry date until the end of 2031.

### 3. When was the current policy implemented?

The policy became effective for products that are issued with a Letter of Approval (LOA) on or after 1 January 2016.

4. Will my LOA be valid if the GlobalPlatform certification is not renewed?

Yes. The LOA will remain valid if the GlobalPlatform Letter of Qualification (LOQ) is not renewed. For derivatives, a valid LOQ may be required depending on the changes introduced in the product.

5. What is the policy for card products issued with an LOA after 1 January 2016, but using a chip with an ICCN issued before 1 January 2016?

Card products issued with a LOA after 1 January 2016 will be approved based on the new policy, regardless of when the ICCN was issued for the chip used in the product. For example, a card product with an LOA issued on 1 February 2016, that uses a chip with an ICCN that was issued on 10 June 2014, will have a usage period ending 9 June 2026, which is 12 years from the date the ICCN was issued. All cards using this product must expire and be cancelled and replaced by this date.

6. Will an approval be invalid if an ICCN is not renewed?

No. A current ICCN is only required on the date the card product is submitted to Visa for testing.

7. What happens if a bug or security flaw is identified after approval?

If Visa determines that the issue is significant, Visa continues to reserve the right to remove products from the approved products list ahead of the scheduled removal date.

Removal from the approved products list will trigger the requirement for immediate replacement/cancellation of cards in the field based on the product concerned, as well the destruction of stock of the product. In this extremely rare situation, Visa would work closely with impacted issuers and vendors.

8. Can a card vendor submit a new card product that uses a chip with an expired ICCN?

No. Visa requires a valid ICCN to accept the product for testing.

## 9. What happens if the EMVCo ICCN validity period changes?

Visa will only accept card products for testing if they use a chip with a current/valid ICCN. EMVCo issues ICCNs for one year and they are renewable annually a maximum of 5 times. If EMVCo shortens or extends the validity period of ICCN's, Visa will continue to require a valid ICCN at the time a card product is submitted for testing.

## 10. What is a card vendor's responsibility to ensure Issuers comply with the policy?

Card vendors are required to be honest and open about the approval timeline or usage period of their products and must not mislead issuers by implying the product can be used for longer than the Visa Rules allow. Vendors must also comply with the terms of their Visa specification and applet licenses and refrain from selling and/or shipping products that are not on the Visa approved products list.

However, it is the Issuer's responsibility to comply with the policy and ensure that cards expire and are replaced before the product is removed from the Visa approved products list.

## 11. How does the policy affect Chip Bulletin 16, i.e. how are specification and applet sunset dates impacted?

Visa chip specifications and applets will continue to be introduced and sunset independently of the card product approval process. Visa will only accept card products for testing if they are based on a specification and/or applet version for which testing is still supported on the date of submission.

## 12. Is there a Chip Bulletin 17-style 'grace period' allowed when a product is no longer on the approved products list?

No. Removal of a product from the Visa approved product list means the product may no longer be sold, shipped, or issued, and existing products in the field must be cancelled or replaced.

13. How is the chip waiver process impacted by the policy?

The waiver process is not impacted by the policy.

14. Can card vendors continue to sell products once the ICCN has expired?

Yes, provided the product is on the Visa approved products list it can be sold, shipped, and issued.

15. Must issuers support decreasing 'card-in-field' or expiry timelines as their card products get older?

No. Issuers may optionally choose to do so, but Visa recommends using a consistent 'card-in-field' duration of 3 to 5 years. Issuers that use a 3 year 'card-in-field' duration must stop using the product 3 years before it is schedule to be removed from the approved products list. Issuers with longer card-in-field durations will need to stop using products earlier. Issuers need to have prepared for and be ready to use a new product by the time they need to stop using their old one.

16. Are Common Payment Application (CPA) based products covered by the policy?

No. CPA based products will remain under the existing (pre-1 January 2016) policy. Issuers may continue to purchase and issue products listed on the EMVCo CPA approved products list and use them with no restriction on the 'card-in-field' duration.

17. Where can I find the Visa Approved Products List?

<https://digitalpartnerservices.visaonline.com/Product/ChipCardProducts>

18. Are there any changes to the labs I can use to get my card product tested?

No.

## 19. Where can I find information about the Card Lifecycle Management Policy?

The following documents address the policy and are located at

<https://digitalpartnerservices.visaonline.com/Document>

- Chip Card Testing and Approval Requirements
- Visa Card Lifecycle Management

In addition, Chip Bulletin #36 – Card Lifecycle Management Policy, and other Chip Bulletins, is published at

<https://technologypartner.visa.com/Library/Bulletins.aspx>.