

## **ePay ACH FAQs**

**February 2, 2010**

### **What happens when I choose to pay using ACH instead of credit cards?**

When you choose ACH, you authorize a debit to your checking or savings account by an ACH transaction. The Automated Clearing House (ACH) is a funds transfer system governed by the Rules of the National Automated Clearing House Association (NACHA) which provides for the interbank clearing of electronic entries for participating financial institutions.

### **How is ACH different from other payment methods?**

ACH transactions are transmitted electronically between financial institutions through data transmission. ACH provides faster processing than paper checks by eliminating physical handling. ACH provides more economical processing than credit cards, which may carry convenience fees and finance charges.

### **How does ACH work?**

By entering the required banking information, you authorize the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' financial institution (in this case, Comerica) to debit your checking or savings account for the amount you specify, for a single occurrence. This is the Commonwealth's preferred method of payment.

### **Why should I use ACH?**

Convenience. No check to write, no stamps to buy, and no credit card debt. You will receive a confirmation number and e-mail acknowledgment of your payment request immediately. The system is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from your home or office.

### **Can I use either a personal or business account for an ACH transaction?**

Yes. Check with your financial institution to ensure that the account does not have debit blocking, which prevents electronic debits.

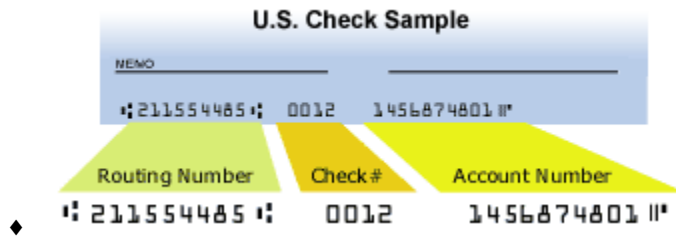
### **What information do I need to provide for an ACH transaction?**

You provide your name, indication of personal or business account type, bank routing number, account number, and payment amount.

### **Where can I find my bank routing number?**

Your bank routing number and bank account number can be found on the bottom of your check. Bank routing numbers are always 9 digits long. Account numbers may be up to 17 digits long – there is no specific number of characters for a bank account number. These numbers may appear in different order on your check. Some financial institutions list the routing number first on the check, while other financial institutions list the account number first. We do not need your check number.

Here is an example of where you can find this information on your checks:



**Do I need to notify my bank that I am paying by ACH?**

You may also need to check with your financial institution to make sure that the account is “ACH enabled” or that “debit blocking is removed” so that the transaction can be processed.

**How do I know the ACH transaction was successfully processed?**

After submitting your payment request, you will see a confirmation screen indicating that your request for payment was accepted. Print and retain this important information until the transaction is processed and settled. In addition, the confirmation number and acknowledgment will be sent to you via email. Finally, the ACH transaction will appear on your bank statement.

**How will the ACH transaction appear on my bank statement?**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts department name will appear on your bank statement with the amount of the transaction. It may take up to three (3) business days for the ACH transaction to post to your account.

**Whom can I contact for questions or follow-up?**

Please contact Commonwealth of Massachusetts department you are paying during normal business hours. The Commonwealth’s business days are Monday through Friday. Holidays and emergencies are not included. Contact information is provided on your statement, invoice, or renewal, or on this web site. Additionally, contact information is provided to you in the confirmation email you will receive after your transaction is completed.

**Is there any risk of an unauthorized access to my private financial banking information?**

The Commonwealth is committed to protecting your personal data. The Commonwealth’s electronic payment application is hosted by EDS/HP. The EDS\*Pay web site is continually monitored for intrusion. Information regarding the transaction is stored in a secure environment behind multiple firewalls and through a dedicated circuit. The consumer’s bank account number is encrypted when stored using AES 256-bit encryption. EDS/HP also utilizes a secure transmission protocol (VeriSign’s Secure Sockets Layer (SSL)) with 128 byte encryption. SSL is a commonly used protocol for managing the security of an interactive web session on the internet. If the web page has an address that begins with https:// rather than http://, then the page is protected by SSL.

**What happens if there are insufficient funds in my checking account?**

If there are insufficient funds in your account, this item will be processed the same way as a bounced check -- the Commonwealth will initiate collections proceedings to recover these funds

from you, in addition to any insufficient funds penalties. You will be prohibited from using ACH for subsequent payments and must choose another payment method. Your financial institution will notify you and likely charge a returned check fee.

**How are ACH credits handled? What if I entered the wrong amount?**

Contact the Commonwealth of Massachusetts department you are paying to request a reversal or refund. You will be asked for information from your confirmation number to reference the transaction, so be sure to keep this important information.

**What can I do to protect my personal and banking information?**

As a consumer, you can take the common sense approach to protecting your information:

- ◆ Do not share personal or online account information such as user names and passwords with others.
- ◆ Do not put sensitive information in emails. Emails are not secure.
- ◆ Shred documents with personal information such as preapproved credit card offers, bank receipts, etc.
- ◆ Maintain and regularly update virus protection and anti-spyware programs on your computer.
- ◆ Do not respond to suspicious emails, especially if they request personal information or ask you to validate your account information.
- ◆ Periodically monitor your credit reports to ensure accuracy.

**Sources:**

<http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov>

<http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/167b-18.htm>

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/ucc/4A/overview.html>

<http://www.federalreserve.gov/pubs/consumerhdbk/electronic.htm>

<http://www.ffiec.gov>

<http://www.neach.org>

<http://www.nacha.org>

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/consumers/about-identity-theft.html>

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/credit/cre07.shtm>

<http://www.fdic.gov/bank/individual/online/safe.html>

<http://www.achrulesonline.org/index.aspx>

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