Store Automated Invoice Approval Process FAQs

Q1 If I use the Approve or Reject link in the approval email, do I still need to reply to the email?

A No, you do not need to reply to the email if you use one of the links. Any comments added to the rejection will be automatically sent to AP.

Q2 After I send my Approval or Rejection email, I am prompted to close the window or close the tab. Does this mean my email failed?

A Your Approval or Rejection email did not fail. It is okay to close the window or tab.

Q3 What should I do if I receive a Run Time Error?

A Contact the Help Desk.

Q4 If I'm approving an invoice with a PO, do I still need to perform a Goods Receipt?

A Yes, you still need to perform a Goods Receipt in addition to using the Approve link in the email. Performing the Goods Receipt is a key step in keeping your inventory accurate! Be sure to check your stock before approving or rejecting as well.

Q5 How does the Store Manager handle the approval requests if they are out or on vacation?

A **If Non-PO invoice approval request:**
Store Manager approval requests for **over $300.01** will automatically escalate to the Regional Office Manager if there is no Store Manager response to the 24-hour reminder email.

Store Manager approval requests **under $300.00** will be sent back to Account Payable (AP) if there is no response to the 24-hour reminder email. AP will manually escalate to Regional Office Manager for approval.

NOTE: The same concept applies to Regional Office Managers as they will automatically be escalated to VPs. If VPs are out of the office, all requests will be forwarded back to AP for manual processing following the 24-hour reminder email.

If PO invoice approval request:
PO invoices are only sent to the Store Manager for approval when there is a discrepancy. If there is no response to the 24-hour reminder email, these will be sent back to AP to evaluate the possibility of escalating to Inventory Accounting to resolve the discrepancy.

Q6 What about handling the approval requests for the Store Manager, Office Manager, or VP who is out on a leave of absence?

A If a required approver goes out on a leave of absence, Accounts Payable (AP) is notified and will determine the appropriate approver for a specified time period.

Q7 Why can't the emails be generated to a group email or back-up email to make sure the invoice approvals are processed?

A In order to maintain what's needed to route approvals automatically, AP had to obtain the "owner" of each location and Cost Center from Workday. Workday only has the email of the owner and does not have the ability to maintain or house group emails for all of the various locations.

Q8   Can the Store Manager or Office Manager set up an email rule to route the emails from their inbox to a different email address where back-ups can help to process?

A   No, the email cannot be sent to an alternate inbox. The email address of the designated approver has to be the email address approving the invoice or the approval will not update for AP.

Q9   What is the 'Best Practice' for managing these approval requests?

A   The recommended **Best Practice** for the Store Managers would be to process all approvals as a part of their *"Start of Day Process"* or *"End of Day Check Out Process"* (e.g. at the end of the day, all approvals have to be processed to avoid reminders and escalation). The same concept could apply to the Regional Office Managers & VPs to process as their Start of Day or End of Day process.

Q10   Will DTD Managers receive invoices to approve the same way as the Store Managers?

A   Yes. The invoice would then escalate to Dennis Gaumnitz for all DTD locations.

Q11   Many of the Non-PO invoices for supplies, services, repairs, etc., are normally handled and approved by the Maintenance Manager (MM). Does this mean that they can no longer approve these invoices since they are the ones who generally manage these vendors/expenses?

A   Correct. The Maintenance Manager will no longer be approving the invoice if it is for the store. The Store Manager/ Office Manager may need to reach out to the Maintenance Manager for input or clarification. **If needed, the email can be forwarded for review only,** but the Store Manager/Regional Office Manager/VP **must** be the person to submit the Approve or Reject action from their own email address or it will not update correctly. **Do not reject the invoice simply because you did not initiate the order for supplies, services or repairs.**

Q12   Who is making sure that the managers are handling the approvals like they are supposed to? Especially in larger regions where it sounds like they are going to have a lot more invoices to manage.

A   AP will have reporting tools that will give visibility into this. Once a stabilization period has passed, AP will generate reports that will be used to identify areas of concern, see who is experiencing challenges, and identify any training opportunities that arise that will improve the process for all involved.

Q13   If a Store Manager needs to process a goods receipt, do they click on the GR Creation link or log on the scanner and receive that way?

A   Typically, when the store gets the product in, using the scanners is preferred. However, by the time the store receives these email approval requests, the store has probably already put the product in the backroom. AP is providing the GR Creation link for ease, that way the Store Manager can access Desktop MIM from this link in the email.

Important Reminder – If the store is creating the PO correctly and receiving their product promptly, AP will be able to process the invoice automatically and won't have to email for approval unless there is a discrepancy.

Q14   If an approval request is sent on a Friday, does the manager have until Monday to respond (since it's technically not within 24 hours, but over the weekend)?

A   Yes, the calendar being used does not count Saturdays or Sundays as business days. If the approval is sent on a Friday, the store has until Monday to respond to the initial email. They will receive a reminder email on Monday and have until Tuesday to respond to the reminder.

NOTE: The timing is 24 hours precisely (not a business day). For example, if an email is sent at 1:05 pm on Tuesday, the approver has until 1:05 pm on Wednesday to submit. At 1:06 pm, an automatic reminder email will be sent and the approver now has until 1:06 pm on Thursday before the requests get sent back or escalated.

Q15 If a region does not have an Office Manager, who will the approval requests go to?

A   A region without a current Office Manager will be coordinated through AP until the position is filled.

Q16 There was an amount threshold in place where AP would automatically pay invoices under a certain amount. Is this not the case any longer?

A   Correct! This process has been eliminated with this implementation and **ALL** invoices now require an approval for payment. However, the system is flexible and could be subject to change, if circumstances require.

Q17 Will internal audits still be performed on invoices?

A   No. Due to ALL invoices requiring approval for payment, this process is no longer necessary.

Q18 Has the clothing invoices changed?

A   Yes, with this implementation, these invoice approval requests will be sent to each Store Manager for approval.

Q19 What can the Stores and Regional Offices do to minimize the amount of invoice approval requests received, since it sounds like there is going to be a lot more work required on the managers who can no longer get additional support from their staff?

A   AP does understand the impact and increase to workflows for both Stores and Regions. The recommended **Best Practice** for the Store Managers would be to process all approvals as a part of their *"Start of Day Process"* or *"End of Day Check Out Process"* (e.g. at the end of the day, all approvals have to be processed to avoid reminders and escalation). The same concept could apply to the Regional Office Managers & VP's to process as their Start of Day or End of Day process.

Q20 If a Store receives product and performs the goods receipt right away but still receives an email from AP, is that because there is an issue or discrepancy?

A   Yes. It is probably because of an additional discrepancy. Follow the instructions in the email to process.

Q21 Would there be a way to utilize this for purchases from one time vendors, such as a wheel from a dealership, in order to cut down time and communication waiting for the Regional Office to make payment for goods needed quickly? Or would they still need to be handled the same way with a credit card payment through the Regional Office?

A   There will be no change to this process. It remains the same.

Q22 Is the process going to be the same if EXECUSTAR double keys a transaction? Should we still contact the Help Desk?

A   Yes.

Q23 Is there going to be any reporting for AVPs to find out what managers are not on top of processing these approval requests?

A   Yes. The automated solution AP is using will provide visibility into that area. AP will have visibility into Stores and Regions regarding timely approvals and how they are using the tools AP is supplying them to support their inventory accuracy. AP will be requesting the Regional Office Managers, AVPs, and VPs to help support these initiatives within their region.

Q24 **The first thing Stores have to do is make sure the creation of POs is accurate. What are some of the common mistakes in creating POs? And, is there a "Flag" to let the manager know what to take a closer look at?**

A   The most common mistakes stores make when creating a PO is using the wrong vendor and/or the wrong article numbers being used on the PO. Unfortunately, there is no indicator or flag to indicate what the error is. The expectation is that if managers see something that doesn't look right to them, they select **'Reject'** and add a reason why so AP can take the appropriate action.

Q25 **A shipping code can't be put on a PO, but can this information be put on a comment line and get the approvals taken care of on the backend?**

A   Yes, this can be managed on the backend as long as the store uses the comments on the PO. Many stores are doing that now and it's very beneficial to the process for AP.

Q26 **If Store Managers are currently adding the shipping costs to the product costs and making it a bulk item, is that okay?**

A   The recommended **Best Practice** would be to put the shipping costs in the PO comment line and enter the cost of the product on the PO, so it doesn't potentially trigger a discrepancy which would result in an email approval request.

Q27 **Is there an estimation of what the inventory variance may affect?**

A   The intent is: With the ease of performing a goods receipt through the email notification link, it will make it easier for the store to perform the goods receipt, resulting in inventory being adjusted in a timely manner, because it is an automated workflow, rather than waiting for a physical inventory.

Q28 **Are the Store Managers going to get emails on every PO that requires approval, or just items keyed in wrong, and those that need a price approval?**

A   Store Managers will only receive an email for a PO invoice approval request if there's a discrepancy.

For Non-PO approvals, Store Managers will receive an email for every invoice charged to their site. With the exception of Telephone, Utilities, Rent, Preapproved Freight Programs and all expenses generated through the Construction department.

Q29 **If the product is still in transit, does the Store Manager approve? If not, how long until EXECUSTAR keys it in, such as Dill?**

A   If a Store Manager receives an approval request from AP for a goods receipt for product that has not arrived, the Store Manager would '**Reject**' it and add a note in the Notes field that you have not received the product yet. AP will handle accordingly with the vendor. At the time you do receive the product, AP will expect that the goods receipt is done and that will fulfill the discrepancy.

Q30 **Would this new process also include installers or any work being done to network systems? For example, WiFi installations or new hardware. If it does, when and how would the store make AP aware of the cost in order to approve?**

A   The Store Manager should acknowledge that those services were completed by selecting 'Approve'. Whenever possible, please include optional text in your approval where there is an opportunity to ask questions or add information, such as "Services acknowledged, costs unknown."

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Q31 Do backordered products work like the shipping costs, where a Store Manager needs to add information to the comment line?

A   AP should not get an invoice until the product ships. If for some reason they do and the Store Manager receives an invoice approval request, the Store Manager should '**Reject**' and add comments that the product has not been received. The store has approximately 8 days after the order date before they'll get an approval email for missing goods receipts. Any comments or information added to the notes field is always helpful to AP.

Q32 When reviewing the email, do we have someone specific we can talk to if we have questions?

A   You can reply to the approval request email **ONLY** if you have questions pertaining to actions being requested.

Q33 Who do we contact for help or more information?

A   Call or email the Help Desk. They will address or escalate to the appropriate party.