Billing FAQs

General Questions

- Where can I find a current list of CCM per diem and special service rates?
- When should I expect to see animal charges hit our budget statement/ledgers?
- Other than the PI, can CCM send the monthly e-bills to other people; e.g., Business Administrator, Research Administrator, lab manager, etc.?
- When and how do I change the chart string/account# that CCM uses to charge for per diem, animal orders and special services?
- I cannot open the attachment on your email and therefore cannot view my bill. What format is the bill in?
- Who do I contact with questions on my bill?

Per Diem

- I have mice and rats in my study. Do you charge per diem per animal or per cage?
- How are the “number of care days” that appears on my bill calculated?
- Why are there different “cost centers” and different per diem rates on my bills for mice?
- What is the difference between the “Satellite with PI care” and “Satellite with CCM care” per diem rates?
- My animals are in a satellite facility. What do I need to do to get clean cages and get my dirty cages picked up?
- When I add up the number of care days on the census graphs included on the bills, they do not equal the number of care days in the Per Diem section of the bill. Why is this?
- Why did I get billed for “holding protocol charges” and why can’t I use my grant funds to pay for those charges?
- In May, I realized that CCM charged per diem from December to April to the wrong protocol/grant. I may have ordered some animals under the wrong protocol and/or forgot to transfer the animals to the correct protocol. Is there anything I can do to retroactively transfer those charges to the correct grant/protocol?

Animal Orders

- Why does the Animal Orders section of my bill show a “Surcharge”, a “Delivery” charge and sometimes “Other Vendor Charges”?
- Can you explain why I only ordered 3 rabbits yet was charged a $600 delivery fee on my bill?
**Special Services**

- What does the quarantine fee cover and when am I charged for it?
- Why is there a “separation” charge in the Special Services section of my bill?
- I saw a charge for 1 hour of “Admin Fee - Error Rsrch, Lab Special Req”. What is this and why am I being charged this fee?
- I need CCM to place water bottles on my primate cages on weekends. How much do you charge for this?
- I normally input water data entries in DVMax; however, on weekends and holidays, I don’t have staff to do it. Can I ask CCM to do this for me and if so, how much will you charge?
- Do you charge for me to order veterinary drugs and supplies through CCM or should I order these on my own?
- What does the surgery suite rental include? Do I need to bring my own surgical instruments or will CCM provide them?
- What is the surgery billing fee and when am I charged for it?
- On the day of surgery, I need help moving my animals from the lab or animal facility to the surgery suite. Can CCM help me with this?
- I need to move some of my animals in Evanston to Chicago. Can CCM do this and how much will it cost?
- What is the export fee and why do I see multiple charges on my bill for the same export shipment?

**Where can I find a current list of CCM per diem and special service rates?**

A complete list of current housing types/cost centers, per diem rates and special service rates are available on the main page of this web site. Please note that all CCM rates and fees are determined, set and approved through the Provost and the Office for Research and reviewed by the Committee on Animal Resources prior to implementation.

**When should we expect to see animal charges hit our budget statement /ledgers?**

Your animal charges should hit your ledgers within 5-7 working days after you receive the electronic copy of the monthly protocol bill. You should receive the e-copy of your bill on the 3rd week of the month following the billing month. For example, you can expect to receive your May 2014 bills via email the week of June 20th.

**Other than the PI, can CCM send the monthly e-bills to other people; e.g., Business Administrator, Research Administrator, lab manager, etc.?**

We are required to send the protocol bills directly to the PI; however, at the PI’s email request, we can also send the e-bills to anyone with a Northwestern ID and email address. The individual requesting to be copied on the e-bills can also send the request via email to Lot Bercasio (l-bercasio@northwestern.edu), making sure to cc: the PI on the email request. This will serve as CCM’s documentation that the PI is aware of and approves the request.
When and how do I change the chart string/account# that CCM uses to charge for per diem, animal orders and special services?

Please send an email to Nino Campos (n-campos@northwestern.edu) with a cc: to Lot Bercasio (l-bercasio@northwestern.edu) and Ian Ponsetto (i-ponsetto@northwestern.edu) making sure to include the protocol number, PI name, new/correct chart string# and effective date of the account change. The account# you provide will be cross-checked and validated in the NUPortal & InfoEd before it is accepted and entered in CCM’s animal tracking system. Please contact your Office of Sponsored Research (OSR) Grant Officer and ask for account codes 73450 (Animal Purchase) & 75310 (Animal Care) to be opened in NUFinancials. If at any point you need to change the account# to charge, please send another email following the steps above. Please note that we can only charge one account per protocol; i.e., you cannot use one account for animal care and another for animal orders, etc.

I cannot open the attachment on your email and therefore cannot view my bill. What format is the bill in?

We have not changed the format of our bills; we continue to send them via email as pdf files. If you cannot view the bill, please try the following:
- From the email you received, right-click on the attachment.
- Save the file to your desktop.
- From your desktop, right-click on the file, choose “Open with”, “Choose Program” and then “Adobe Acrobat”.
You should then be able to see your bill. If not, please contact your IT Support.

Who do I contact with questions on my bill?

For billing questions and discrepancies, please contact:
Lot Bercasio, 847-467-0762, l-bercasio@northwestern.edu or
Ian Ponsetto, 312-503-0888, i-ponsetto@northwestern.edu

I have mice and rats in my study. Do you charge per diem per animal or per cage?

Our per diem rate is per cage, not per animal. Please note that the number of mice and rats allowed per standard cage is based on weight as follows:

Mice:  
- 5/cage if < 25 g
- 4/cage if > 25 g

Rats:  
- 5/cage if < 200 g
- 4/cage if < 300 g
- 3/cage if < 400 g
- 2/cage if < 500 g
- 1/cage if > 500 g
There are requirements to the number of pups a mouse cage or rat cage can have. Please refer to HUS-006-SOP, Managing Overcrowded Mouse Cages, found in the Standard Operating Procedures section of this web site.

At the appropriate weaning time, the mice/rats are separated from the cage and from there begin incurring their own per diem charges.

How are the “number of care days” that appears on my bill calculated?

The number of care days on your bill is calculated by taking the number of animal cages you had on the protocol during the billing month and multiplying that by the number of days in the month that the cage was “active” in the facility. For example, if you were charged 30 care days in September, it could mean one of the following:
   a) You had 1 cage during the entire 30 days in September; or
   b) You had 30 cages for only 1 day each in September; or
   c) You had different numbers of cages at various times during September that totaled 30 care days; e.g., 5 cages for 3 days each + 1 cage for 5 days + another 1 cage for 10 days.

Why are there different “cost centers” and different per diem rates on my bills for mice?

Different housing types carry different per diem rates. For example, if a mouse cage is housed in a containment room, the “Mouse, Containment” rate is charged. If a mouse cage contains diabetic mice which require additional husbandry upkeep such as more frequent cage changes, the per diem rate charged to that cage is “Mouse, Diabetic.” For current rates, please refer to the complete list of Per Diem and Special Charges rates available on the home page of this web site.

What is the difference between the “Satellite - PI Care” and “Decentralized with CCM Care” per diem rates?

With the “Satellite - PI Care” rate, CCM provides caging, feed and bedding. The PI/lab is responsible for keeping the rooms clean, changing the cages/bedding, performing daily checks, and monitoring general room conditions such as maintaining proper temperature and humidity.

With the “Decentralized with CCM Care” rate, CCM provides both husbandry supplies and service. In short, CCM provides husbandry care for the animals as if they were in the vivarium.

My animals are in a satellite facility. What do I need to do to get clean cages and get my dirty cages picked up?

You can either drop off the dirty cages and pick up clean ones from the CCM vivarium at no cost or arrange for CCM to do the pick-up and delivery of the cages for a fee (referred to as Satellite Delivery/Pick-Up fee in the Per Diem and Special Charges sheet on our web site). Please send an email to either of our Chicago husbandry supervisors, Gio Pompilio (g-pompilio@northwestern.edu) or Lloyd Taylor (l-taylor@northwestern.edu), or Evanston
husbandry supervisor, Romulo Trovela (r-trovela@northwestern.edu), or the appropriate group leader to make arrangements.

**When I add up the number of care days on the census graphs included on the bills, they do not equal the number of care days in the Per Diem section of the bill. Why is this?**

The “Daily Cage Count Snapshot” graph on your bill shows the number of active cages in a given housing type (cost center) for a specific room location under a protocol. The graph is included on your bill to help you "trend" your care days; i.e., help you see day-to-day movement of your animals. It is very important to note that the numbers on the graph(s) are accurate only for a specific point in time during the day (i.e., 11pm) and may not equal the actual number of care days that appears on the per diem section of your bill. If you cage card count changed during the course of the day, the actual per diem charge on your bill may not match exactly the cage count shown on the graph.

For example, let’s say you had 8 mouse cages as of 9am on Aug. 1. You took 2 cages out at 12noon and turned the cage cards over to CCM Census for deactivation. Census deactivated the cards at 4pm. Our system will therefore show 6 cages at 11pm. While the graph included on your bill will show 6 cages for Aug. 1st, you are actually charged 8 cages for that day. Note that you are charged 1 care day for any portion of the day that a cage is in the facility; therefore, although you turned in the 2 cage cards for deactivation at 12 noon, you are still charged 1 care day each for both cages. You'll find this same explanation as well on the last page of your bill after the graphs.

**Why did I get billed for “holding protocol charges” and why can’t I use my grant funds to pay for those charges?**

When you receive a bill for holding protocol charges, it means you had animals in an inactive or expired protocol with no renewal protocol or other current protocol to which they could have been transferred. As the animals await transfer to a valid protocol, they are kept in CCM’s “holding protocol.” During this period, no research can be performed on the animals; only standard care, breeding and separation, can occur. Using grant funds to pay for these charges would be a violation of regulatory funding requirements. We can only charge a non-grant account; i.e., a departmental account, gift account or endowment account.

**In May, I realized that CCM charged per diem from December to April to the wrong protocol/grant. I may have ordered some animals under the wrong protocol and/or forgot to transfer the animals to the correct protocol. Is there anything I can do to retroactively transfer those charges to the correct grant/protocol?**

The per diem charges for those animals were charged to the “incorrect” protocol because per diem was incurred while the animals were under that protocol. If you want to move those past charges to the correct protocol/grant, there are a few steps you need to follow. First, you need to certify and document to IACUC in writing (email is acceptable) your request to move the animals retroactively. Be sure to explain the reason for the move and to include any procedures
performed on the animals during this time (if applicable). This is to assure IACUC that any procedures done on the animals from December through April are also approved under the correct protocol and that the protocol and the grant were in effect in December. If, after reviewing your request, IACUC finds no issues, you need to create and submit a correction journal to move the charges from the incorrect grant to the correct one. CCM will review and give Accounting Services for Research and Sponsored Programs (ASRSP) approval for your journal. Because some of the charges were incurred and posted more than 90 days ago, you will also need to submit a “90-day exemption letter” with your journal.

**Why does the Animal Orders section of my bill show a “Surcharge,” a “Delivery” charge, and sometimes “Other Vendor Charges?”**

We only charge a one-time procurement administrative fee on all new animal orders. This is called “Surcharge” or “Procurement Fee” on the protocol bill. For “standing” animal orders, this fee is added to the first delivery only. Subsequent deliveries on a standing order are never charged the procurement fee. The “delivery” charge is what the animal vendor charges for shipping & handling of the animals. “Other vendor charges” include other surcharges such as those associated with weekend breeding and time pregnant mice, or special packing supplies such as special padding, special delivery boxing, etc. If you’d like to see the vendor invoice for a specific animal order, please contact the CCM Business Office.

**Can you explain why I only ordered 3 rabbits yet was charged a $600 delivery fee on my bill?**

Our rabbit vendor charges one delivery fee whether it is delivering a single rabbit to a PI or several rabbits to multiple PIs. If the vendor is only making one delivery to one PI, the PI gets charged the entire delivery fee. If the vendor is delivering to multiple PIs, the vendor divides the fee evenly among the different PIs. It is advantageous for the PI to coordinate with other researchers when ordering large animals. Whenever possible, when CCM receives rabbit orders from different PIs, CCM consolidates delivery dates to distribute the shipping/delivery fee.

When submitting future rabbit orders, kindly use the Special Instructions field of the Animal Procurement form to include information such as the following:

“If other PIs are ordering rabbits for delivery within 1 week (or whatever time period you’d like to specify) of my requested delivery date, please adjust my delivery date to coincide with at least one other PI order.

If no other orders will be placed within this time period, please proceed with my order.”

Including these special instructions on your orders will help eliminate the guesswork on our end regarding whether or not to proceed with placing your order. For assistance on your animal orders, please contact the CCM Procurement Specialist, Hollye Fletcher ([h-fletcher@northwestern.edu](mailto:h-fletcher@northwestern.edu)) at 312-503-1833.

**What does the quarantine fee cover and when am I charged for it?**
You are charged a one-time quarantine fee after your imported animals are released from quarantine. The fee covers cost of the sentinel mice, 6-8 weeks of per diem on the sentinel mice, standard pinworm and mite treatments on imported mice, cost to ship the sentinel mice out for testing, actual testing costs, and the veterinary, AHT and administrative time it took to complete the quarantine process.

**Why is there a “separation” charge in the Special Services section of my bill?**

There is a maximum of five (5) adult mice per cage. Once pups reach their weaning age, at which point they are considered adult mice, and the cage contains more than 5 adult mice, CCM will leave an “overcrowded cage” notice on the appropriate cage card holder to let you know the mice need to be separated. To avoid overcrowding and ensure regulatory compliance, CCM will perform the separation on the third day after the notice is given and will charge you for the separation service. Please note that at the same time, per diem charges will begin accruing on the new cage(s) created as a result. For more details, please refer to HUS-006-SOP, Managing Overcrowded Mouse Cages, in the SOP section of our web site.

**I saw a charge for 1 hour of “Admin Fee - Error Rsrch, Lab Special Req.” What is this and why am I being charged this fee?**

This is an admin fee for “error research and resolution and lab special requests.” As long as your lab follows proper procedures when requesting animal transfers, placing animal orders, turning over cage cards for deactivation, etc., you will not see this charge on your bill. After repeated violations of proper procedures by multiple labs, this service fee was implemented to compensate for the administrative time CCM staff spends researching and correcting census/billing/import-related issues resulting from lab errors. In the past, we used to provide this administrative service as a courtesy; however, our limited staff resources and the number of labs that consistently disregarded following procedures necessitated this change. The Provost and Office for Research authorized us to impose the new fee after we provided several specific examples and documentation on the actual amount of time it takes our staff to research and resolve such issues.

We consider it routine administrative work for us to advise PIs and their staff of proper procedures and to coach them when mistakes occur. However, in cases where email exchanges and personal conversations have occurred between CCM staff and lab members regarding proper procedures, the new service fee is imposed when repeated violations occur.

It is CCM’s goal to provide quality service to the research community we serve; however, we also rely on researchers and their staff to partner with us to keep operations running smoothly and efficiently.

**I need CCM to place water bottles on my primate cages on weekends. How much do you charge for this?**
We charge 15 minutes of Animal Care Technician (ACT) time for every 10 water bottles placed. Weekend water bottle placement is a charge of an ACT hourly rate at time-and-a half.

**I normally input water data entries in DVMax; however, on weekends and holidays, I don’t have staff to do it. Can I ask CCM to do this for me and if so, how much will you charge?**

Depending on Animal Health Technician (AHT) staff availability, CCM can do this for you. Please note that CCM charges for AHT, Animal Care Technician (ACT) and veterinary time per hour billable in 15-minute increments. For a complete list of per diem and special service rates, please refer to our Per Diem and Service Rate sheet.

**Do you charge for me to order veterinary drugs and supplies through CCM or should I order these on my own?**

For items and drugs that do not require a veterinary license to purchase, we suggest you order and stock these on your own. The on-site VWR stores in both Chicago and Evanston campuses carry a wide range of lab supplies in-house. For more info, visit the VWR web site at [http://www.northwestern.edu/uservices/labs/supplies/aboutvwr/](http://www.northwestern.edu/uservices/labs/supplies/aboutvwr/).

You can also order veterinary or lab supplies from us; however, we do charge an order fee indicated as “Surcharge” in the Special Services section of your bill. There are different surcharge rates for items that we carry in stock, items that we have to special order, and orders that are urgent; i.e., needed the same day.

**What does the surgery suite rental include? Do I need to bring my own surgical instruments or will CCM provide them?**

The surgery suite rental includes use of the suite and the anesthesia machine. You can bring your own surgical supplies and instruments or rent a “surgical pack” from CCM which includes general surgical instruments. Additional supplies are charged “at cost”. Surgery set up and clean-up are billed separately at the current AHT billing rate. After the procedure, please make sure to dispose of any surgical supplies, especially sharps and medical waste, in the appropriate receptacles in the suite.

Please note that if you reserve a surgery suite and do not use it without giving CCM prior notice, you will be charged a cancellation fee. Current cancellation fee rates and all other surgery-related charges are listed in our Per Diem and Special Charges sheet.

**What is the surgery billing fee and when am I charged for it?**

You are charged the surgery billing fee for each use of the surgery suite whether you perform one surgery on one animal or separate surgery on multiple animals.
On the day of surgery, I need help moving my animals from the lab or animal facility to the surgery suite. Can CCM help me with this?

Yes, we have a Surgical Transport fee charged roundtrip per trip, regardless of the number of animals transported. For example, if it takes one roundtrip to take 4 rabbits from the lab to the surgery suite and back, we only charge one transport fee. However, if it takes two separate trips to transport say, 2 NHPs, we charge two transport fees. The current rate for surgical transport is included in our Per Diem and Service Charges rate sheet.

I need to move some of my animals in Evanston to Chicago. Can CCM do this and how much will it cost?

CCM makes deliveries to and from both campuses, generally on Thursdays. Transportation of animals on Thursday is free of charge. If you need to transport animals on a different day, you will be charged the animal van special transportation fee (please refer to the Per Diem and Special Charges sheet). To arrange an animal transfer between campuses, please submit an online Animal Transfer Request form found at https://www.risapp.northwestern.edu/AnimalTransfer/. Once your request is approved, CCM will arrange the transport for you.

What is the export fee and why do I see multiple charges on my bill for the same export shipment?

The Export Fee on the Special Services section of your bill is the fee for administrative and AHT time spent to process your export. You will also see a separate charge for the actual shipping costs of your export in the Special Services section. Similar to animal vendor delivery charges for animal orders, we simply pass on to you whatever the vendor charges us to ship your export.