

The Office of the Child's Representative



CARES Case Management System

Billing Manual

Updated:

July 21, 2017

BILLING OVERVIEW

The CARES system is the OCR billing system. It is also a case management system. Attorneys are required to use the system as a billing system, but can use it for case management at their own discretion. OCR pays all contract attorneys through direct deposit. All attorneys are required to submit proper documentation to OCR for payments and direct deposit. Once payments are made, deposits will take approximately 7-10 days to show up in the user's account. Please do not contact OCR about un-received payments until after this timeframe. Please refer to the OCR website for payment documents.

The CARES system does not require users to prepare a billing statement or formally submit a billing request to the OCR. In order to view activities that you have entered that will be automatically pulled by OCR for billing, please reference your case history or case billing history screens.

A user is responsible for entering his/her time in the CARES system within 30 days of the activity. OCR contract attorneys are responsible for reviewing all time in CARES before it is paid. Normally, OCR pulls bills for every judicial district once per week. Districts are pulled in a specific order each week. (District payment order is listed at the end of this manual). OCR has the ability to review the work completed and dispute entries prior to paying them.

Key Term: Office Supervisor

Users who are designated as "supervisors" in their offices will be able to review the billing screens in the CARES system (Office Billing Details and Office Billing History). These screens provide details for each office on cases, excess fees and billing activities. Each independent contractor is automatically designated a "supervisor" in his/her own office. If you want other users in your office to be designated as supervisors, please contact melaniejannicelli@coloradochildrep.org.

BILLING IN THE CARES SYSTEM

All billing in the CARES system is handled through the "Billing" tab on the top toolbar. Each link under this tab will provide the user with various billing information.

Office Billing Details: The Office Billing details screen allows the office's supervisor(s) to view the status of each of the office's cases. The office must have current open appointments on the cases for those cases to appear on this screen. The supervisor should review this screen to determine if excess fees need to be requested on any cases.

****Please note that on this screen and other screens, "amount billed" refers to all activity entered into CARES, while "amount submitted" refers to activity that OCR has pulled and submitted for payment. These amounts will likely rarely match up.***

Excess Fees in Office Billing Details: Each case will appear in one of three colors on the Office Billing Details Screen, which are all indicators of the Excess Fee status of each case:

- **White Cases:** If a case appears in white, it means that the amount submitted is less than 70% of its given allocation. These cases do not require excess fee requests.
- **Yellow Cases:** If a case appears in yellow, it has met or exceeds 70% of its allocation.
 - ****You must request excess fees when your cases turn yellow to guarantee timely payment on that case! If you wait until the screen is red, you will likely not be paid for some time spent on that case since you need to seek pre-approval for work. It is unlikely requests submitted after case activity has occurred will be processed and accepted within the 30 day billing cycle time frame. To request excess fees, use the request form located on the OCR website at: <https://fs30.formsite.com/COCR/EFRequest/index.html>. The ability to request excess fees is not currently a function of the CARES system. Due to the volume of requests, please allow two weeks for your request to be processed before contacting OCR for a status update. Please refer to the OCR Billing Policies and Procedures for excess fee limits on all case types.***
- **Red Cases:** If a case appears in red, the amount submitted is greater than or equal to the allocation on that case. At this point, billing is essentially “frozen” for this case. Payments to this case will not occur until excess fees have been requested and granted by OCR.

****Important Note for Domestic Relations, Probate and Paternity Cases***

In domestic, probate and paternity cases, the case allocation will default to “\$0.00” when the user enters the case into the system. The case will default to “red”, the non-billable status. It will remain red until OCR receives appropriate orders of appointment and indigence findings. OCR does not pay nunc pro tunc orders. Any work done on a case prior to an accurate order of appointment and indigence findings being received will not be paid. Please refer to the DR/PAT& PR manual supplemental for more detailed information.

Office Billing History: The Office Billing History screen allows supervisors to review all billing details, including individual activity and how much has been billed, paid and disputed by OCR. It also allows the supervisor to determine how much time has been billed by each user in his/her office.

To most effectively use this screen, the supervisor should take advantage of the sort functions. Sorting by specific columns will make the data easier to read/understand.

Key Amounts in the Office Billing History Screen

Four dollar amounts will appear at the top right hand corner of the Office Billing History screen with each sort, specific to the date ranges provided.

- **Total Amount Billed:** This number reflects all billable activity entered into the system on all cases for the specified time frame, regardless of whether or not the activities have been.
- **Total Amount Disputed:** This number reflects the dollar amount of all disputed activities in the system for the specified time frame. Disputed entries will be discussed in more detail later in this manual.

- **Total Amount Paid:** This number reflects the total dollar amount of activities that OCR has pulled and submitted for payment. Please remember that payments take 7-10 days to hit the user's bank account.
- **Total Amount Unpaid:** This number reflects the total dollar amount of activities that have not been paid or disputed.

If a user wants to compare activity in CARES to a deposit of monies received in his/her account, he/she needs to use this Office Billing History screen. The screen can be sorted by all the columns; the most useful column for comparing deposits to activity is either "submission" or "status" Please do not call OCR and ask what activities a deposit is for. We will refer you back to this screen. This screen is printable using the Google Chrome or Internet Explorer browsers.

Case Billing History: There is a third link in the CARES system that provides detailed information on an office's billing. The Case Billing History tab is located on the main case profile page, at the top, next to the "case profile" and "case history" tabs. This screen will show the supervisor the total amount billed, submitted, disputed and paid for that particular case, as well as the amount that remains unpaid and allocation information. This is a great screen to reference for detailed billing information on specific cases; whereas the Office Billing History screen gives detail on all cases together.

DISPUTED ITEMS

OCR reviews all lines of activity submitted in the system before processing payments. If OCR determines there is a problem or a question with an activity, OCR will mark this item as "disputed". Disputed items appear on the Office Billing History screen.

When an item is disputed, it is automatically "frozen". No edits/changes to that item can be made until OCR releases the hold on the item. To find and address disputed items, please follow these steps:

- **Review the Office Billing History screen, sorted by disputed items, weekly.**
- If disputed items appear on the screen, take time to read the note next to the item that will explain what the dispute is about. Review your notes/case file and come up with an answer for the dispute.
- Email Melanie Jannicelli at melaniejannicelli@coloradochildrep.org with the response to your disputed item(s). She will instruct you how to proceed and take the item off hold when the correction has been completed.

****Please note that disputed items MUST be addressed within 30 days from the date of activity in order to get paid for the activity. The activity date appears on the Office Billing History screen. We strongly suggest that you check your disputed items weekly to avoid missing this deadline. Items addressed after the 30 days will not be paid.***

Commonly Disputed Items: Below are some examples of commonly disputed items. Please review these items; avoiding these mistakes will allow for more timely payments.

- **Administration Time:** Several activities in the CARES system have administration time linked to them (e.g. visits, meetings and court time). This administration activity should never be over 12 minutes and rarely over 6 minutes. This category is to be used only for jotting down notes directly

before/after the activity. Any memos/notes or anything else that take longer than 6-12 minutes need to be logged in a different, more specific location. The most common misuse for this administration time is memos and notes, which need to be logged under “General Legal”, using “Write/Review – Visit/Staffing/TDM Memo”. If you bill more than 12 minutes in the administration category, your activity will be disputed.

- **Duplicate Entries:** The save button for each activity is programmed to disable after you click it once, so that you cannot enter a duplicate activity. Still, we ask that you do not double click on the save button. If you attempt to enter the same activity twice, an error will appear at the top of the screen to alert you that the duplicate entry has been automatically disputed and is sitting in a “frozen” status in your case billing history. Should this entry be valid, you will need to contact Melanie to remove the hold so the item can be paid. The OCR may dispute items if they appear to be possible duplicates. As with all disputed items, email Melanie to address these items. Please keep track of all activity entered into CARES to avoid entering the same activity twice, on separate days. OCR cannot edit/delete any of the attorney information in CARES. Do not ask OCR to fix entries for you; you must fix them on your own.
 - **OCR periodically reviews for duplicate entries in activity already paid in CARES.** We will contact you if we find duplicate entries that were overlooked during billing, and after confirmation from the attorney that the entry is duplicate, we will process a credit to OCR against your account in the amount of the duplicated entry.
 - **As part of your OCR contract, the attorney must review all work entered into the CARES system before billing occurs.**
- **Case Number Format:** OCR requires that all case numbers are entered into CARES in the same format. This is vital to reduce the chance of duplicate cases being entered into the system, and so all users can search cases and find them.
 - **The correct format is 10JV123, 09JV002, 10DR1234.** There should always be three digits after the case type indicator, unless the case has more than three numbers. If a case is pulled for payment and the number is in the incorrect format, all items for that case will be disputed until the case number format is corrected. Upon correcting the format, the user must contact Melanie Jannicelli in order to get the items removed from disputed status.

Items can be disputed for any reason. OCR cannot see or read any notes that you put into the system, so please do not enter notes with the assumption that anyone will see them while reviewing your payments. Disputed items are not guaranteed to be paid as quickly as normal payments. Once they are resolved, they will be paid the next time that attorney is paid.

EXPENSES

Expenses, which include copies, postage, filing fees, discovery and transcripts, are billed through the CARES system under the “miscellaneous expenses” section of the left hand billing menu. Expenses are automatically calculated at their set rates – the attorney will enter the requested information and the system will calculate the payment.

DISTRICT PAYMENTS

OCR will pay each district once a week in CARES. The following is the order in which districts are paid. OCR cannot specify which day of the week each district will be paid as this varies depending on holidays, conferences, illness, etc. There may be weeks in which all districts will not be paid. OCR has up until 45 days to make payment once billing has been submitted. Each district is assigned an OCR staff attorney to handle various questions/concerns. Your OCR staff member is listed next to the district below.

17 Adams/Broomfield	Ashley chase
1 Jefferson/Gilpin	Sheri Danz
19 Weld	Linda Weinerman
13 All counties	Sheri Danz
2 Denver	Linda Weinerman
20 Boulder	Ashley Chase
18 All counties	Cara Nord
16 All counties	Cara Nord
15 All counties	Cara Nord
6 All counties	Linda Weinerman
5 All counties	Linda Weinerman
12 All counties	Sheri Danz
8 Larimer/Jackson	Sheri Danz
10 Pueblo	Cara Nord
4 El Paso/Teller	Linda Weinerman
7 All counties	Ashley Chase
11 All counties	Cara Nord
21 Mesa	Ashley Chase
14 All counties	Linda Weinerman
22 Dolores/Montezuma	Linda Weinerman
3 All counties	Sheri Danz
9 All counties	Ashley Chase
Appeals and Supreme Court	Contact district staff member