TIP SHEET: **RATE DETERMINATION**

How Research Service Rates Are Set At UCI

A guide for Faculty and Research Teams | UCI Health and UCI Campus

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When your study requires clinical or campus services, you are not charged the standard patient or insurance rate if the study is federally funded or internally funded by UCI. Instead, a discounted research rate is used. These rates are intended to reflect the actual cost of providing the service and, for federally funded studies, are calculated without profit. How the rate is determined depends on the type of service and how it is billed.

The Two Types of Services Rates

Clinical Services Billed Through Epic (UCI Health Rates)

These are things like lab tests, imaging, infusions, or clinical procedures ordered through UCI Health's electronic health record (Epic) and charged thru the hospital billing system.

Campus or Core Services Not Billed Through Epic (Campus Recharge Rates)

These are services like research core support, research specific equipment, animal facilities, or other campus support services that bill the study directly- not through the hospital billing system.

Comparison Table

	UCI Health Services	Campus Recharge Rates
What are examples of what these rates cover?	Clinical services provided by UCI Health: • Phlebotomy/Lab Results • Imaging • Infusions • Clinical procedures	Campus core facilities & support services: • Lab Equipment use • Animal facilities services • Biostatistics services • Specimen storage
How is the rate set?	The standard charge for a service is multiplied by a set percentage that brings the price down from the "insurance pricing" to something closer to what it actually costs the hospital to provide the service.	Each department or core facility calculates what it truly costs them to run the service (staff, supplies, equipment) and sets a recharge rate to recover exactly those costs with no profit or deficit in their budget.
How often are rate **updated?**	**Annually:** the research discount percentage is recalculated each year based on the new annual UCI Health cost report, typically updated in February each year. Historically, this percentage fluctuates minimally from year to year.	**At least annually:** recharge rates are reviewed and/or approved annually. Review/updates may be requested during the Mid-Year Review cycle as well if costs significantly change (new equipment, staff changes, etc.).

Who approves the rates?	Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) reviews the hospital cost report; UCI Health sets the resulting research discount rate internally.	UCI's Cost Analysis & Rate Review process – after departmental finalization, rates within the complete recharge application must first be reviewed and approved by UCI's central finance administration. The application is then reviewed by Campus Costing Policy and Analysis Office and the Recharge Review Committee and ultimately approved by the Provost's office.
Can the same service have different rates?	Yes - rates can vary based on *where* the service happens (e.g., outpatient clinic vs. inpatient floor vs. non-licensed space), because each location is classified differently for billing.	Yes- different cores or departments may charge different rates for similar services based on their individual costs.
Is profit built in?	No - the goal is to reflect the true institutional cost, not to make money from federally funded studies.	No - recharge rates are designed to *break even*, not generate profit. Overcharging federally funded research is a compliance violation.
Why is the rate lower than what a regular patient pays?	Federal rules require that research sponsors be billed no more than the institution's true cost. The Research discount brings the price down from the full "list price."	Rates are set at cost - not at a markup - so they will typically be lower than what a commercial vendor might charge.
Where to find current rates	For current rates, please refer to the OnCore Chargemaster. If you need assistance navigating the Chargemaster, contact OnCore Support. For any rates that are not listed, please reach out to Research Revenue Integrity.	UCI Accounting — Costing Policy and Analysis Office: **accounting.uci.edu/cost-analysis/official-recharge.php**