



# Resource Management Agency

County of Ventura

800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009 • 805-654-2494 • <https://vrma.org/>

## Billing Fact Sheet for Planning and Code Compliance

Most of the services provided by the Resource Management Agency require the payment of flat fees or hourly rates which are annually adopted by the Board of Supervisors. These fees are set at a level to recover the costs of providing the service. The information provided here is intended to explain the use of hourly rates and the billing system used to collect them.

### 1. Why are some services charged a fixed fee and others an hourly rate?

For services where the work effort can be accurately estimated, flat fees are established and generally paid in advance of the service being provided, such as the issuance of a zoning clearance or film permit. If the work effort varies greatly and an accurate flat rate cannot be determined, such as in the case of a conditional use permit, hourly rates are developed which provide the basis for generating invoices for work completed.

### 2. Why are project cost estimates unavailable?

Violation cases are generated based on third party complaints. The amount of work required is largely dependent on the level of cooperation of the property owner and/or permittee in abating violations; thus, the costs for violation cases are simply too varied to estimate.

For Planning discretionary land use entitlement projects, an initial deposit is required at the time of permit application. This deposit is intended to cover the costs of the initial steps in processing the application, not the entire cost of processing projects. Discretionary projects are inherently unique. The total time and costs involved to process an application will depend on the complexity of the project itself, as well as the proposed project's potential environmental impacts, the type of environmental document required, and the level of interest generated by the proposal.

### 3. What types of projects receive billing invoices?

- Staff charges for Planning discretionary land use entitlement projects (including, but not limited to, the assigned Case Planner, landscape/biological/archaeological consultant charges, and related charges for Public Works, Fire Department, and Agricultural Commissioner staff);
- Staff charges for Planning Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) administration;
- Staff charges for Planning work related to permit compliance and abatement of violations (including but not limited to related release fees and closing costs); and
- Staff charges for Code Compliance work related to building and zoning violations (including but not limited to related release fees and closing costs).



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### 4. What is the billing period?

The billing period is 30 days and invoices are generated every 30 days for the most recent prior month period. The billing period runs from the first day of the month to the last day of the month.

### 5. What is the late fee?

Planning and Code Compliance charge a late fee on invoices unpaid after 30 days. This late fee is included in the fee schedule adopted annually by the Board of Supervisors. The late fee is 2% compounded monthly. The late fee recovers the cost of delinquent billing preparation including staff time, supplies, and postage.

### 6. What if I disagree with the charges?

If a customer either believes the charges are excessive or inappropriate, he/she may request a review of labor charges/late fees. Requests for review are to be addressed to the Director of Planning or Director of Code Compliance, as applicable. If an error has been made, the Director will authorize a reduction of charges to correct the error.

### 7. What are the options available to customers with outstanding charges?

Customers can: (1) Pay all charges due in full prior to the next billing period to avoid late fees; or (2) Request a Repayment Plan and/or Compliance Agreement that allows repayment of outstanding charges in accordance to an agreed upon schedule of installment payments.

Permit cases and/or violations will not be closed until all fees are paid in full and/or violations abated. In some cases, unpaid fees may delay finalization of the project including but not limited to permit issuance, hearings before the decision-making body, release of the Notice of Non-Compliance related to violations, or close-out of a violation case.

### 8. Who do I contact if I have billing questions?

Billing questions may be directed to RMA Operations staff at 805-654-5009. Requests for Compliance Agreements and/or Repayment Plans and specific questions related to charges may be directed to the assigned Planner and/or Code Compliance Officer.