



## United States Department of Agriculture

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Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crops Program, Specialty Crops Inspection Division

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### **SPECIALTY CROPS INSPECTION (SCI) DIVISION AUDIT BILLING PROCEDURES**

This policy document outlines the SCI Division's audit billing procedures for audits performed by SCI Division auditors. These procedures/instructions are primarily for federal auditors and reviewers, and do not apply to billing for audits conducted by Fed/State offices except in the following situations:

- The State has made arrangements for SCI Division to perform billing for their audit activities, or
- State personnel are performing audits for programs that require billing by SCI Division (e.g., GroupGAP, Potato Sustainability, etc.).

Contact your immediate supervisor for any information not addressed in this manual.

These procedures/instructions supersede all previously-issued instructions for audit billing, including emails and bulletins.

This document contains links to various internal and external sources of information. For personnel without internet or intranet access, please contact your immediate supervisor to obtain hard copies of documents as needed.

#### **Audit Services Branch**

The SCI Audit Services Branch (ASB) is based at Headquarters, Washington, DC. All questions about these instructions should be sent to:

Phone: 202-720-5021

Email: [SCAudits@ams.usda.gov](mailto:SCAudits@ams.usda.gov)

Fax: 866-230-9168

## BEFORE AND DURING THE AUDIT

The responsibility for audit billing begins when you receive the request for the audit. The process is outlined below for establishing and maintaining the auditee's account, and for establishing a plan for billing.

Responsibility for this part of the process is assigned to the auditor, or the auditor's office, depending on your office's procedures.

### Step 1 – Determine the Region

There are three audit billing offices that establish accounts and process billing and each is responsible for a specific geographic area. The billing office that you will contact for any of the following procedures will be determined by the location where the audit activity occurs. You **must** first determine the auditee's site address, and then refer to the chart provided in [Appendix II - Regional Assignments for Audit Activity](#) to determine the appropriate region and office that will be your point of contact.

### Step 2 – Establish or Update Billing Account

The applicant is the business entity responsible for paying for the audit service. In some cases, this is the same as the auditee; in other cases, the applicant is different than the auditee (i.e., Pro\*Act, Potato Sustainability, GroupGAP, etc.).

If the applicant is requesting audit service for the first time, you will need to create a new billing account for them with SCI Division. This account is only for audit services. If they have an existing account for grading, inspection or related services, it cannot be used to bill for audit services. Please refer to the Applicant List for the appropriate region, found on the Audit Services SharePoint site [here \(intranet link\)](#), to see if an account has been established. If an audit services account has not been established, you **must**:

1. Complete an [SC-430, SCI Division Vendor Form](#), and collect the information from the applicant via email or phone. This form provides basic information about the applicant's business including a Tax ID or Social Security number (it is mandatory that we have this in order to establish their account). The information that you put in this form should be for the applicant's accounts receivable or business office, and may be different than the contact information that you have for the audit.

If the applicant is indicated as a previously delinquent account on the periodic distributions from SCI, or the [delinquent list maintained on SharePoint \(intranet link\)](#), mark the SC-430 showing "COD" for the payment option.

APPLICANT WILL BE A:
<input type="checkbox"/> BILLING <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COD

The information that you enter into the SC-430 is considered Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and should be handled according to AMS policies and procedures (See [AMS Directive 3130.11](#)).

Note: At this time, the SC-430 form has not been approved for direct information collection. Do not distribute this form to applicants.

2. Email the completed SC-430 SCI Division Vendor Form to the billing office (see [Step 1 – Determine the Region](#)). The billing staff will assign an account number to the applicant and should provide this information back to you, so that you can include it on your billing worksheet. The applicant will now have an established account in the Billing and Inspection Information System (BIIS).
3. If the applicant has an established account in the BIIS system, you should check the [Applicant List for the appropriate region \(intranet link\)](#), to see if the information on file is still current. If changes need to be made to their account, you will use the SC-430 to document these changes, submitting the form to the billing office for input into the billing system.

### Step 3 - Establish Plan for Collecting the Audit Charges

Once the billing account has been established, the next step is to determine how the audit fee is to be collected. The options are to have the National Finance Center (NFC) bill the applicant for services or to require the applicant to pay in advance of the service delivery. You **must** communicate the billing options to the applicant, prior to delivery of any audit services.

1. The Division's preferred payment method is through "Pay.Gov" (see [Payment Options](#)). The default billing method is for the applicant to be billed by NFC after delivery of the audit service.
2. An applicant **will be required** to pay in advance if, at time of service, the applicant has an existing account with SCI Division, but it is in a delinquent status. A [list of delinquent accounts \(intranet link\)](#) is maintained on the ASB SharePoint site under Audit Billing, and will be communicated to all audit offices. See [Advance Payment for Service](#), below.

### Step 4 - Advance Payment for Service

If advance payment is required:

1. Estimate the cost for the audit service and present it to the applicant prior to the audit. Additional guidance on this will be provided in the SCI Division Auditor Manual (*in development*).
2. Communicate to the auditee that they must make payment based on the audit cost estimate. Their options for payment are outlined below, under [Payment Options](#).
3. Before performing the audit and/or releasing the audit report and certificate, confirm with ASB via an email to [SCAudits@ams.usda.gov](mailto:SCAudits@ams.usda.gov) or the appropriate program manager that payment has been received.
4. After the audit has been performed, complete the Audit Services Billing Worksheet, following the instructions in [After the Audit](#).

## **AFTER THE AUDIT**

Responsibility for this part of the process is assigned to the auditor, unless otherwise indicated.

### **Initiate the Bill**

Upon completion of audit services (and prior to the audit, if appropriate – see Before and During the Audit, [Step 4 - Advance Payment for Service](#)), tabulate all of the expenses associated with the audit using the Audit Services Billing Worksheet (see [Appendix I](#)), and send the completed billing worksheet with the audit report for review, following the procedures established for the specific audit service.

The Audit Reviewer will review the billing worksheet, contact you if any changes are needed, and return the approved billing worksheet to you with the final audit report. This copy is for your files; the ASB office is responsible for submitting the approved billing worksheet to the billing office for processing so the applicant can be billed. The billing office will generate a billing report statement providing a detailed description of the charges (Explanation of Services & Itemized Charges) and send it to the applicant. NFC will send the applicant the official bill.

Please note that, if the auditee was billed in advance for the audit service, their account credit will be used to pay the resulting bill.

**PAYMENT OPTIONS**

1. Pay.gov: Credit card or electronic payments can be made on the [www.pay.gov](http://www.pay.gov) website. Please contact the audit billing office for the current instructions for use of this website for payments.

Please note that this is the preferred method of payment for any service provided by SCI Division. The next two choices should be used only if Pay.Gov is not accessible to the applicant.

2. Automatic credit card (MasterCard, Visa, or American Express) or electronic payment: Arrangements can be made for payments to be processed by the audit billing office, upon issuance of the bill. You will need to provide a copy of the SC-387 Alternative Payment Application to the applicant. The applicant is required to complete the Alternate Payment Application and submit it directly to the office indicated at the bottom of the worksheet, prior to delivery of the audit service.

Copies of SC-387's for each audit billing office are available from the office assignment contact, and on the ASB SharePoint site in the [Audit Billing library \(intranet link\)](#). Due to privacy/security reasons, you should not offer to receive or handle the Alternate Payment worksheet.


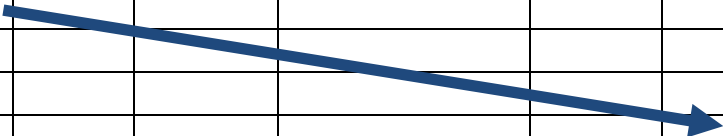
3. Check payment: The auditee may contact the audit billing office and make arrangements to send a check for payment of the bill.

**APPENDIX I - AUDIT SERVICES BILLING WORKSHEET**

[Electronic working copy of the Audit Services Billing Worksheet.](#)

Audit Services Billing Worksheet	
<b><u>Auditee Information</u></b>	
BIIS Account Number:	Step 1 (see instructions, below)
Applicant Name:	Step 2
Applicant/Billing Street Address:	Step 3
Applicant/Billing City, State, Zip:	Step 4
Audited Site Name:	Step 5
Audited Site Street Address:	Step 6
Audited Site City, State, Zip:	Step 7
Payment Method:	Step 8
<b><u>Audit Information</u></b>	
Audit Type:	Step 9
Bill Date:	Step 10
Audit Scope/Description/ID:	Step 11

Billable						
Category	Auditor 1	Auditor 2	Auditor 3	Coordinator/ Reviewer	Other	Total for Billing
Name	Step 12	➔				
Audit Time**	Step 13	➔				0.00
Preparatory Time**	Step 14	➔				0.00
Paperwork Time**	Step 15	➔				0.00
Administrative Time**	Step 16	➔				0.00
Travel Time**	Step 17	➔				0.00
Other Time**	Step 18	➔				0.00

<b>Audit Services Billing Worksheet</b>						
<b>Total Hours</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Other Expenses</b>	Step 19					\$0.00
<b>Total Travel Expense</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
<i>**All time stated in hours, with partial hours rounded to the quarter hour.</i>						
Remarks:	Step 21					
<b><u>Travel Expense</u></b>	<b>Airfare</b>	<b>Car Rental/ Fuel</b>	<b>Mileage</b>	<b>Mailing</b>	<b>Lodging/ Per Diem</b>	<b>Misc.</b>
Auditor 1	Step 20					
Auditor 2						
Auditor 3						
Other						
<b>Total</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Remarks:	Step 21					
Coordinator/Reviewer Approval: <i>(indicated by signature)</i>	Step 22				Review Time (hrs.):	Step 23

**Audit Services Billing Worksheet Completion Instructions:**

1. BIIS Account Number – This is the Applicant's BIIS account number. You can obtain this from the administrative support staff at the regional billing office.
2. Applicant Name – Business name that should match with the BIIS account name.
3. Applicant/Billing Street Address – Business location or mailing address.
4. Applicant/Billing City, State, Zip – Self-explanatory.
5. Audited Site Name – Name that matches with the auditee's name on the audit report.
6. Audited Site Address – Self-explanatory.
7. Audited Site City, State, Zip – Self-explanatory.

8. Payment method – If known, select the method that your customer plans to use to pay their bill – either Pay.Gov, automatic credit card/electronic payment, or check. See [Payment Options](#), above.
9. Audit Type – Select the audit service that was used to complete the audit. The choices are:
  - a. Central BIQMS Audit
  - b. Domestic Origin Verification Audit
  - c. Export Certification Audit
  - d. Identity Preservation Audit
  - e. Northeast BIQMS Audit
  - f. Northwest BIQMS Audit
  - g. Qualified Through Verification Audit
  - h. Plant Systems Audit
  - i. Southeast BIQMS Audit
  - j. Sustainability Audit
  - k. Training (This is used for any training provided directly by ASB)
  - l. Unprocessed FV Pilot Audit (System audits performed at the direction of Commodity Procurement)
  - m. USAID Audit
  - n. USDA GAP & GHP Audit (Includes non-BIQMS performed USDA GAP&GHP, Harmonized GAP, MGAP, TGAP, or GroupGAP audits.)
  - o. West BIQMS Audit
10. Billing Date – Leave this blank.
11. Audit Scope/Description/ID – Anything entered here will be placed in the Remarks area of the Explanation of Services. Please describe the audit activity so that the applicant will understand what the bill is for, including the Audit Type, the auditor's name, and the date range for the audit activity.
12. Name – The person's name that filled this role.
13. Audit Time – The number of hours for the on-site audit activity, including fractions of an hour to the nearest 15 minutes (this applies to all time entries). For example, if you worked 2 hours and 20 minutes, this would be 2.25 hours. If you worked 2 hours and 40 minutes, this would be 2.75 hours.
14. Preparatory Time – The number of hours for the pre-audit activity. This would include time spent to develop the audit plan, and to review any food safety plan information provided by the auditee before the audit site visit.
15. Paperwork Time – The number of hours for the post-audit activity. This would include the time that it takes you to draft the audit report.



Note: It should typically take no longer than 2 hours to finalize a GAP audit report, and up to 4 hours to complete a more complicated system audit report. Additional guidance on this will be provided in the SCI Division Auditor Manual (*in development*).

16. Administrative Time – The number of hours to review the audit report, to issue and mail the audit certification, and to perform billing and document retention activities. This may be a set number of hours, depending on the audit service that was provided.
17. Travel Time – The number of hours for travel associated with the on-site audit activity, including time for driving and air travel.
18. Other Time – This where you would put any other charges that are based on time. This would include the GroupGAP application and annual renewal fees, and time spent on follow-up activities.
19. Other Expenses – This is where you can list a charge for a non-time related expense, such as fees for an audit upload or duplicate certificate, a set administrative charge (not based on time), etc.
20. Travel Expenses – Please complete the fields so that it reflects travel costs that need to be charged to the applicant.
  - a. For domestic audits, bill an applicant for airfare associated with the audit trip, unless an exception has been allowed by the ASB Chief or Assistant Chief.
  - b. For non-domestic audits, bill an applicant for all travel costs associated with the audit trip, unless an exception has been allowed by the Audit Services Branch Chief or Assistant Chief.
  - c. Include a copy of the travel voucher, ticket receipt, or approved authorization with the billing worksheet submittal.
21. Remarks – Add any details needed to explain what has been entered in the section immediately above this block.
22. Coordinator/Reviewer Approval – This is where the Audit Reviewer will indicate acceptance of the billing worksheet with their signature.
23. Review Time (hrs.) – This is where the Audit Reviewer will indicate the actual time spent for reviewing and approving the audit report (*for internal tracking purposes*).

**APPENDIX II - REGIONAL ASSIGNMENTS FOR AUDIT ACTIVITY**

Please use the following guide to determine the appropriate Region associated with your audit activity. This will help to determine the FMMI code to use for billing, your T&A, and travel expenses, as well as the audit billing office that will handle your billing.

<b>Region – SCI Division Audit Billing Office Assignment</b>	<b>States; U.S. Territory or Country</b>
<p><u>Central</u>                      Audit Services Branch – HQ                      Billing Contact: Tanya Wilks  <a href="mailto:SCReimbursement@ams.usda.gov">SCReimbursement@ams.usda.gov</a>                      Phone: 202-720-5021                      Fax: 866-230-9168</p>	<p>Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin; Canada</p>
<p><u>Eastern</u>                      Winter Haven, Florida                      Billing Contact: Austin Powell or Ruth Tirado  <a href="mailto:Austin.Powell@ams.usda.gov">Austin.Powell@ams.usda.gov</a>  <a href="mailto:Ruth.Tirado@ams.usda.gov">Ruth.Tirado@ams.usda.gov</a>                      Phone: 863-294-7416                      Fax: 863-294-4219</p>	<p>Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia; Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands</p>
<p><u>Western</u>                      Fresno, California                      Billing Contact: Jacqueline Beck  <a href="mailto:Jacqueline.Beck@ams.usda.gov">Jacqueline.Beck@ams.usda.gov</a>                      Phone: 559-487-5210                      Fax: 559-485-5914</p>	<p>Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming; American Samoa</p>

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