



Staff Pet Treatment and Charging Guidelines- IVC

April 2019 Version

Objectives

- To define “Employee”
- To define the discount structure
- To provide guidance on treatment of employee pets
- To outline the charging protocol for employee pets
- To confirm the financial management of employee insured animals

Process

Definition of "Employee ":- an “Employee” for the purposes of this document is a person currently employed by an Independent Vetcare (IVC) practice on a full time or part time permanent contract (Inc. Zero Hours contracts).

- Excluded from this benefit: all locums, consultants, agency workers, friends and family of IVC staff and ex-members of staff.
- Discounts will be requested at the time of examination or before and agreed by the practice leadership team (unless in an emergency). Discounts or reimbursements which are not claimed at the time of payment cannot be claimed or reimbursed retrospectively. If you are claiming this discount at a practice where you do not normally work, please provide proof of your employment to the receptionist at the time of payment.
- Employees should not apply discount to their own invoiced professional fees.
- Payment is required at the time of treatment for any work which is not part of an insurance claim.

Definition of "Employee pet":- any animal which is permanently owned by the staff member and lives with them

- Excluded from this benefit: any animal being looked after on a temporary basis (e.g. where owner is on holiday) or a foster pet
- Wildlife presented by staff will be treated in line with the RCVS and BVA recommendations
- Employee discount is for up to a maximum of 3 pets per employee

Definition of the “Discount Structure ”

- At 1st Opinion sites a 50% discount applied to all standard professional veterinary fees not in addition to other offers.
- Where an employee pet needs to be seen at one of our referral centres, the level of discount apportioned will be determined locally by the referral practice. As a minimum benefit this discount will be 20%. Discount can only be applied if the case is seen by an IVC employed referral clinician.
- In the event of a referral, an employee **must** identify themselves to the practice as being an employee of IVC and have the discount agreed, prior to treatment being received (unless in an emergency whereby the default discount will automatically be 20%)
- Drugs at wholesaler list price (+VAT) where drug stocked routinely
- Pet food at wholesaler list price (+VAT) where stocked routinely
- Any charges which have no mark-up e.g. external lab fees and cremation fees (including extras) are not liable for any discount.
- Employees whose pets are members of the Staff Pet Health Club will receive discounts and benefits as detailed in the PHC staff plan document.
- Please note these discounts cannot be provided in those cases where pets are treated in practices outside of the group (e.g. referral centres not in IVC)
- Wherever possible, discounted fee procedures should be carried out at a time to suit the smooth running of the practice and such that it does not prevent the practice providing treatment for external clients. This advice obviously does not apply to emergency procedures.
- Discounts or reimbursements which are not claimed at the time of payment cannot be claimed or reimbursed retrospectively.
- A manager or appointed person will discount the invoice as per the request and add discount applied to the clinical record Employees should not process their own discount this is detailed above.
- As an IVC employee, if your pet is insured and you make a claim which is approved by the insurer, then we will reimburse the cost of the excess fee incurred up to certain limits.

These limits are currently defined as up to £250 per pet per condition per calendar year provided this reimbursement would not amount to more than 50% of the value of the total invoice (after employee discount is applied).

If you are claiming this discount at a practice where you do not normally work, please provide proof of your employment to the receptionist at the time of payment. In the case of insured pets, when your pet is treated at a different surgery, the reimbursement of the excess will still be credited to your account and should be approved by the Practice Manager.

IVC employee pets receiving OOH Emergency Treatment (please see addendum for treatment provided at Vets Now)

- Employee of IVC to be registered as a client,
- All work to be charged as normal except:
 - No insurance admin fee should be charged for employee pets
 - Treatment and procedures will be discounted as per the discount structure listed above.
 - **All Employees will be charged identically regardless of insurance status - in insured cases the discount will be applied prior to submitting the claim.**

Treatment

- Employees must be treated using exactly the same client care and moral, professional and ethical obligations as any other client
- This includes **not** making assumptions about clinical knowledge
- All Employees as clients should receive a risk/benefit discussion of all proposed interventions and diagnostics and a full discussion of prognosis
- All Employees must sign a full estimate of costs, following charging guidelines for staff pets (see below) and **must sign a consent form** for all procedures
- Consent forms must be signed by the owner of the pet, even if they are the operating surgeon
- Full medical records must be completed, including General Anaesthetic monitoring, in line with IVC company policies

Employee's involvement in treatment/care of their pets

- Employees should be aware that emotional involvement with a patient carries additional risk of errors which are avoidable. These should be discussed with the pet owner.
- The nature and extent of any involvement of the pet owner should be discussed and mutually agreed by the team as soon as practicable.
- Involvement of the pet owner in treatment/care will not denote a reduction of fees.

Patient Checks for Ordering Prescription Medication

- Employee's pets requiring a prescription medical for routine health care (e.g. flea and worming treatment) or for treatment of chronic disease should have their animals examined in accordance with the practice policy. In order to comply with prescribing law and IVC company policy prescription medication may only be ordered for a specified named pet after it has been examined by a Veterinary Surgeon and the examination has been recorded on the clinical record
- Examinations for prescription purposes **must** be recorded on the clinical record **by the prescribing Veterinary Surgeon** and a note advising the prescription of the specified product must be included
- Dispensed medicines should be checked by two qualified persons before dispensing

- Prescriptions for medications provided by external Veterinary Surgeons must be provided every time the product is ordered or must include the maximum number of repeat prescriptions. The number of repeats must be recorded on the patient record

If you are wishing to claim the costs back from your insurance company, then the item needs to be sold on to your client account and an invoice generated, a 50% discount will need to be requested prior to the claim being submitted

Note: All employees are encouraged to insure their pets, to allow all necessary work-up and treatment to be carried out whilst relieving staff of financial concerns.

Discount is available through certain insurance companies for IVC employees.

Responsibility

All Employees are responsible for ensuring this policy is followed, including the pet owner (employee) themselves.

Vets Now Addendum

IVC employee pets receiving OOH Emergency Treatment at any Vets Now OOH sites

This is applicable only if your practice is a Host site or Partner Practice of Vets Now

- *All Host Practice and Partner Practice employees receive 20% discount on Treatment and Procedures*
- *The OOH fee and consult fee will not be charged.*

All IVC Employees using Vets Now Referral centres

- *Where an employee pet needs to be seen at one of our Vets Now referral centres, this discount will be 20%. Discount can only be applied if the case is seen by a Vets Now employed referral clinician.*

Employees who work at Vets Now sites ONLY receiving discount at IVC 1st opinion and Referral centres

*Employees who only work at Vets Now sites will receive discounts as set out in **Discount Structure** with the following alteration*

- *At 1st Opinion sites a **20%** discount applied to all standard professional veterinary fees not in addition to other offers.*

This applies irrespective of whether insurance cover is in place.