

Zurich Surety Express™ direct bill

Zurich Surety Express™ now offers flexibility in billing options. Agents using Zurich Surety Express to issue their bonds may select either the traditional agency bill, or now may request that the principal (or designated payor) be billed directly. As easy as a single mouse click, the decision on which billing method to use can be made for each individual bond. For more information on how you can put Zurich Surety Express and the direct bill option to work for your agency, read on:

Answers to common questions

Here are answers to questions that may arise as you decide whether to continue to bill bond customers yourself or have us perform that administrative service. Regardless of your choice, responsibility for collection of premium remains your responsibility.

What is direct bill?

When the direct bill option is selected, Zurich's billing services group sends a bill directly to the principal, or someone designated to pay the premium for the principal. The principal pays the entire premium directly to Zurich rather than to you, eliminating administrative work on your end. Zurich remits the agency commission on a monthly basis (see below for details).

Why has this functionality been added?

We added direct bill to Zurich Surety Express in response to numerous requests from agents who handle a large number of commercial surety bonds. Some agents will welcome and utilize the direct bill functionality, while others will not, based on their internal workflows. The choice is yours.

If I choose direct bill, does it apply to every bond I issue?

No. the choice of direct bill or agency bill must be made on a bond-by-bond basis. The default will be agency bill.

What are the standards to qualify for direct bill?

Any commercial bond or contract bond customer is eligible for direct bill when you use Zurich Surety Express.

How do I indicate my choice of option?

Just select the direct bill option or agency bill on the Billing Information screen in Zurich Surety Express. It's a one-click decision.

Is any preregistration required?

No. However, direct bill can only be used for new bonds issued in Zurich Surety Express.

What information is required to set up a direct billing?

Once you choose the direct bill option, a screen will appear asking for information regarding where the bill should be sent. The screen will be prefilled with the name and address of the principal. If the bill should be sent to another party, all you do is key in the name and address of the party who is to receive the bill.

What happens at renewal?

You will have the option to change the billing method from direct bill to agency bill if required. Otherwise, direct bill will continue at renewal.

Who is responsible for nonpayment of collections?

As noted above, direct bill is simply an administrative convenience and does not change the contractual relationship between Zurich and our distributors. Generally, the agent is responsible for collection of all new business premiums under the terms of the contract. Zurich will send past due bills and late notices to the designated billing address and will make every effort to collect; however the ultimate responsibility for the premium remains with our agents.

How will I know that direct bill has been set up for a particular bond?

To confirm that direct bill is in place, look up the WIP number in the Zurich Surety Express system. On the Billing Information screen, the billing method is displayed, along with the address to which the premium bill will be sent. Additionally, the Premium Advice screen looks different if you've chosen direct bill over agency bill.

How do I receive my commission on bonds that are direct billed?

Billing services sends the commission monthly on direct bill bonds. You receive a single check from Zurich for all bonds issued with direct bill during that accounting period - along with a statement reflecting all activity. The direct bill commission check is net of any cancellation commission chargebacks.

What are the billing and collection options at Zurich?

Agency bill

Billing and collection is performed at an agency level for all accounts written. Agents elect to submit an account current or accept a billing statement produced by Zurich's billing services department for items processed in a given month.

Direct bill

Premiums are billed and collected directly by Zurich. Distributors may help customers understand the billing process and help collect the correct down payment on new business applications where down payment is needed.

If you have any questions related to Zurich Surety Express, our dedicated Help Desk can be reached at 800-462-5541 or contact your local Surety account executive. And if you haven't yet been trained on Zurich Surety Express, ask him or her to schedule you soon.

Zurich

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