

Vbill User Manual

For Service of Process

(05/24/2012)



Introduction

Vbill is a World Wide Web (Web) based billing system, developed by the Committee for Public Counsel Services, for Massachusetts State/CPCS Vendors who provide non-legal services to indigent persons.

System Requirements/Information

To use Vbill you must have access to a computer (PC or MAC) with an Internet Service Provider and a Web browser. The web address for the Vbill web site is: https://www.cpcsvendorbill.com.

The Vbill system was designed to take advantage of modern Web technologies. So that Vbill will run efficiently, CPCS recommends that you use either Internet Explorer 6.x or greater or Firefox 2.x or greater. The use of other web browsers or an older version of the recommended browsers may cause unanticipated errors in the Vbill system.

The Vbill system requires that cookies and JavaScript be enabled in your browser in order to function properly (in most browsers cookies and JavaScript are enabled by default). Cookies can be enabled specifically for the Vbill web site by including https://www.cpcsvendorbill.com as a Safe Site. Please consult online help in your browser for more assistance with enabling cookies and JavaScript.

Vbill is a secure application; however, the pages that you visit within Vbill remain in the browser's memory until you close the web browser window. To avoid navigation errors and to maintain the security of your billing information you should make sure to logout of Vbill and close (or exit) the browser window after using Vbill.

Vbill is a menu driven system. While logged into Vbill, please limit or avoid the use of your browser's back or forward buttons. Using the back or forward buttons can cause unanticipated errors in the Vbill system.

The Vbill system is optimized for a screen resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels. It is advisable to adjust your monitor's settings to this resolution before logging into Vbill. You may change the resolution to the original settings after logging out of Vbill. Please consult your computer's online help or your monitor's Owner's Manual for assistance.

You will often receive information from CPCS by email. We use a general use email address: donotreply@publiccounsel.net. In order to receive an email from this address, please make sure to add this email address as a safe user or safe sender in the program that you use to receive emails. If you have a Spam filter installed on your computer you will need to turn off your Spam filter for this email address. Please do not correspond with CPCS using this email address as your email will go unread.

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1.0 Vbill Security and Registration

1.2 CPCS Vbill Access Agreement

Every State Vendor who submits vouchers through the Vbill system must first complete a Vbill Access Agreement form and mail it to CPCS.

- 1. CPCS will enter your Vbill Access Agreement form into our billing system.
- 2. You will receive an email to the address noted on the form. The email will include a verification link and a temporary password, which will allow you to access the Vbill web site.
- 3. Click once on the link in the email. Your web browser will go to the web site indicated by the link and your email address will be verified in our system.
- 4. Go to the Vbill Login page, https://www.cpcsvendorbill.com.

1.3 Registration

To register your Vbill account and set up your PassKey, do the following:

- 1. Enter your Login ID* and click the Login button. *Your Login ID is the email address that you provided on the Vbill Access Agreement form.
- 2. In the CPCS Vbill Password field, enter the temporary password exactly as it appears in the email that you received and click the Login button.
- 3. Select a PassKey image and click the Complete Selection button.
 - a. Enter a word or phrase to describe the selected PassKey image.
 - b. Select three different challenge questions and provide a unique answer for each.
 - c. Click the Submit button.
 - d. Review your PassKey information, make any changes, and click the Done button. (You should print this page and store it in a safe place for future reference.)
- 4. Vbill will display the Vendor Information page. You will need to enter a new password that you can easily remember.
 - a. Enter the temporary password from the email in the Enter old email field.
 - b. Enter your new password in the Enter new password field. A password must be at least 8 characters long and contain at least one number (1, 2, 3, etc), one of the following special characters (!@#\$%&*_-), and one upper and one lower case letter.
 - c. Re-enter your new password in the Confirm new password field and click the Update button.
 - d. Vbill will display the Vendor Information page. Go to <u>page 16</u> of this manual for further information regarding the Vendor Information page.
 - e. You are now logged into Vbill. Continue reading this manual for further instructions.

1.4 Login Procedure

After you have completed your Vbill account setup and registration you will need only to do the following each time you log into Vbill.

- 1. Go to the Vbill web site, https://www.cpcsvendorbill.com.
- 2. Enter your Login ID and click the Login button.
- 3. Vbill will ask you one of the security PassKey questions that you selected during your initial login.
- 4. Enter your answer to the displayed security question.
 - a. Your answer must match exactly to the answer that you provided for this question during your account setup and registration. If you answer the question incorrectly more than three consecutive times Vbill will lock your account. If your account is locked you must contact the Vbill Security helpline at 617-988-8426 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (with the exception of holidays) for assistance and further instructions.
 - i. If you access Vbill from the same computer then you may register it. If you register the computer the security question will not appear in the future when you login using this PC (in the future you will automatically proceed to step 5). To register the computer click on "This is a personal computer. Register it."
 - ii. If you are accessing Vbill from a public computer then it is recommended that you not register the computer. You will be asked one of the security questions every time that you log onto Vbill from an unregistered public computer.
- 5. Click the Submit button.
- 6. Vbill will display the PassKey image and the description that you provided during setup and registration. If you recognize the image and its description then continue. Otherwise, contact the Vbill Security helpline at 617-988-8426 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (with the exception of holidays) for assistance and further instructions.
- 7. Enter your password.
 - a. If you enter your password incorrectly more than three consecutive times your account will be locked. Contact the Vbill Security helpline at 617-988-8426 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (with the exception of holidays) for assistance and further instructions.
 - b. If you do not remember your password, click on "Forget password?"
 - i. Enter your Massachusetts State Vendor Code.
 - 1. If you do not remember your Vendor Code then close the browser window and contact the Vbill Security helpline at 617-988-8426 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (with the exception of holidays) for assistance and further instructions.
 - 2. If you enter an incorrect Vendor Code more than three consecutive times your account will be locked. Contact the Vbill Security helpline at 617-988-8426 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (with the exception of holidays) for assistance and further instructions.
 - ii. Vbill will ask you one of the security PassKey questions that you selected during your initial login.
 - 1. Enter your answer to the security question.
 - 2. Your answer must match exactly to the answer that you provided for this question during your initial login. If you answer the question incorrectly more than three consecutive times Vbill will lock your account.
 - iii. Vbill will allow you to enter a new password.
- **8.** Click the Login button.

2.0 Navigating Vbill

Vbill is a menu driven system. At the top of each page are navigation buttons that you may click on to navigate to the various pages within Vbill, as well as a button to log out of Vbill.

Invoice List – Clicking this button will display the Invoice List page. The Invoice List page displays all of the invoices that you are preparing and also have submitted to CPCS. Go to <u>page 7</u> for further information on the Invoice List page.

Input Invoices – Clicking this button will display the Vbill Invoice page. This page is where you enter and submit a new invoice for services provided, mileage, and incurred out-of-pocket expenses. Go to <u>page 9</u> for further information on the Vbill Invoice page.

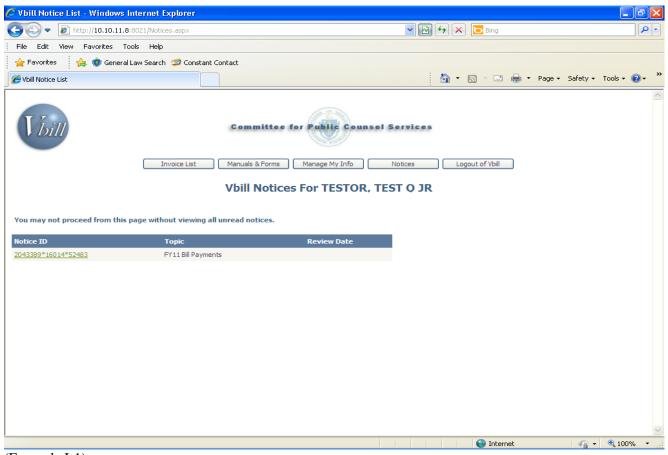
Manuals & Forms – This page will allow you to download this manual and forms relevant to the Vbill and Massachusetts State Vendor system.

Manage My Info – Clicking this button will display the Vendor Information page. You may modify some of your contact information, Employee, and Vbill security settings on this page. Go to <u>page 16</u> for further information on the Vendor Information page.

Notices – Clicking this button will display the Vbill Notices page. Go to <u>page 6</u> for further information on the Vbill Notices page.

Logout of Vbill – Click this button to log out of Vbill. The Vbill Login page will be displayed.

3.0 Vbill Notices Page

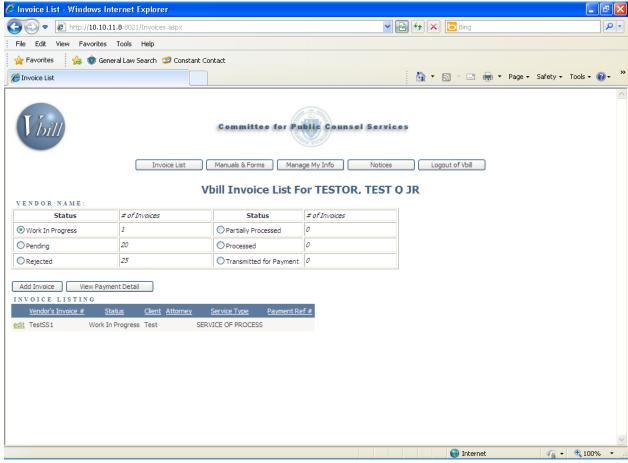


(Example I-1)

The primary method of communication between CPCS and State Vendors will be by Vbill Notice. You will receive information regarding submitted vouchers, changes in policies, and State budget information. When there are time constraints you will also receive an email as well. Vbill will require you to review each new notice before entering and submitting invoices.

- 3.1) The Vbill Notices page contains a list of reviewed and un-reviewed (new) notices. The list displays:
 - 1. The Notice ID The Notice ID is created by CPCS to identify a notice in our system. Notices that refer to a specific invoice will have a Notice ID beginning with the confirmation number of the invoice followed by a sequential number.
 - 2. The Topic of the notice
 - 3. The Review Date the Review Date is blank for un-reviewed notices.
 - 4. A Delete button will only be visible after you have reviewed the notice.
- 3.2) The menu buttons will not be useable until you have reviewed all new notices. A new notice will not have a date in the Review Date column. To review any notice:
 - 1. Click on the ID in the Notice ID column as depicted above. Vbill will display the notice.
 - 2. Read the notice. You may want to print it for your records.
 - 3. When you have completed reading the notice, click the Close Form button at the bottom of the notice. Clicking the Close Form button records the date that you reviewed the displayed notice. **Important** If you do not click the Close Form button, Vbill will not record that the displayed notice was reviewed. This will cause you to be restricted from entering and submitting invoices.
 - 4. Repeat steps 1 through 3 for each new notice.
- 3.3) After you review a new notice you may choose to delete it from your Vbill Notices list. To delete a notice click on the Delete button directly to the right of the notice you want to delete. Notices with a Review Date older than 30 days are automatically removed from your list by the Vbill system.

4.0 Vbill Invoice List Page



(Example II-1)

The Invoice List page displays all of the invoices that you are preparing and have submitted. Vbill separates your invoices into six Status categories. When Vbill displays the Invoice List page invoices with a status of Work In Progress are listed by default. To list invoices in any of the other status categories just click on the radio button to the left of the category name.

- **4.1) Work In Progress** When you add/enter a new invoice it is categorized with the status of Work In Progress. To modify or submit any invoice in the Work In Progress category click on "edit" to the left of the invoice. An invoice will remain with a status of Work In Progress until you either submit or delete it.
- **4.2) Pending** Upon the successful submission an invoice Vbill will change the status of the invoice to Pending. As depicted in example II-2 below, Vbill will list each Pending invoice, its current status, any instructions, and invoice information to identify the invoice. An invoice will maintain a status of Pending until the attorney who hired you has certified the invoice and it is then processed and approved for payment by CPCS. To display a pending invoice, click on "view" to the left of the confirmation number. A pending invoice is not editable, go to page 14 for further instructions.

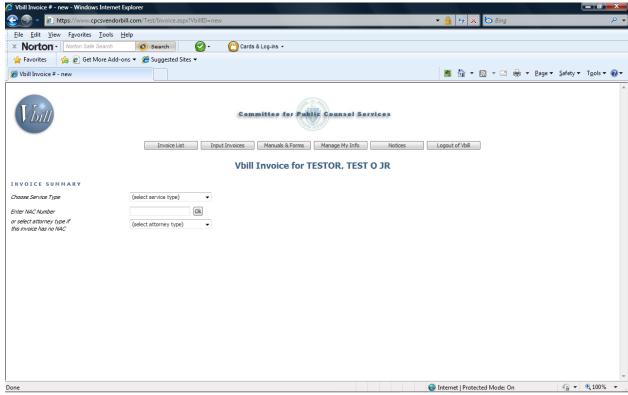
Pending Status Descriptions:

Awaiting CPCS Approval - An invoice will maintain a status of Awaiting CPCS Approval until CPCS processes and approves the invoice for payment.

If after 30 days from the date the attorney who hired you has certified your invoice and the status remains as Awaiting CPCS Approval, you may send an email to vendorbills@publiccounsel.net requesting a status of the processing and payment of your invoice. Please note Awaiting CPCS Approval in the subject line of your email and include the confirmation number of your invoice in the body on your email.

- **4.3**) **Rejected** An invoice rejected by CPCS will be categorized with a Rejected status. To display a rejected invoice, click on "view" to the left of the invoice. A rejected invoice is not editable.
- **4.4) Partially Processed** Not Applicable for Service of Process
- **4.5**) **Processed** An invoice is categorized with a status of Processed by CPCS after has been reviewed and approved for payment by CPCS. To display a processed invoice, click on "view" to the left of the invoice. A processed invoice is not editable.
- **4.6) Transmitted for Payment** An invoice is categorized with a status of Transmitted for Payment after CPCS transmits the invoice to the State Comptroller for payment. To display an invoice that was transmitted for payment, click on "view" to the left of the invoice. Paid invoices are listed for only thirty (30) calendar days after they are transmitted for payment and then are removed from the Vbill system. An invoice that was transmitted for payment is not editable.
- **TIP** To add a new invoice, you may click on the Add Invoice button located beneath the Invoice List Status Selection box. Vbill will display the Vbill Invoice page. Go to <u>page 9</u> for additional instructions. *Note*: You may also click on the Input Invoices menu button to add a new invoice.

5.0 Vbill Invoice Page



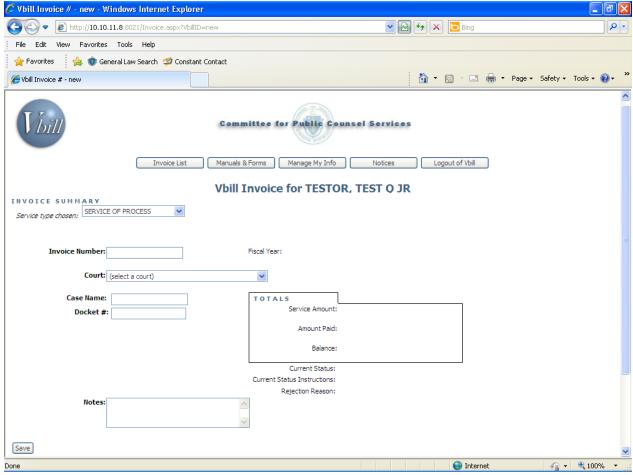
(Example III-1)

The Vbill Invoice page is where you will add, enter, and submit an invoice for services rendered, allowed case related mileage, and incurred case related out-of-pocket expenses.

5.1) Add/Enter an invoice:

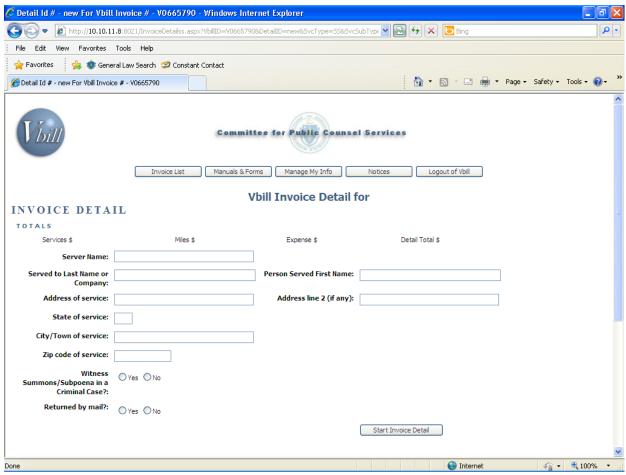
5.1A) Invoice Summary Page

- 1) Choose a service type for the invoice. Vbill allows only one type of service to be billed per invoice. If your firm/agency provides only one type of service for CPCS cases, it will be displayed by default in the Service Type Field.
 - Multiple Types of Service <u>cannot</u> be combined under one Type of Service. If your firm/agency provides
 more than one type of service for a single CPCS case, such as Private Investigation and Service of
 Process, a separate invoice for each Type of Service with a unique invoice number must be entered and
 submitted. An invoice will be rejected by CPCS if multiple types of service are combined under one Type
 of Service.
 - Select Service of Process



(Example III-2)

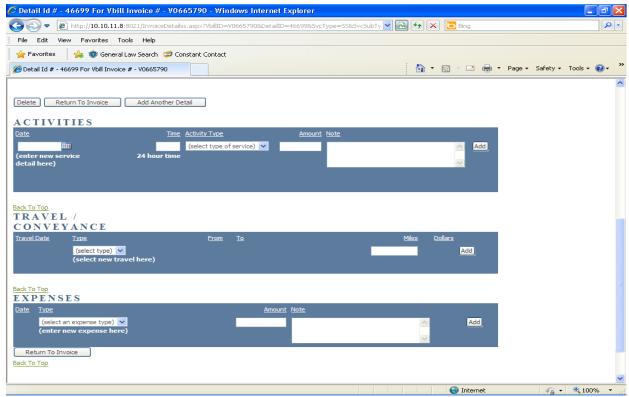
- 2) Enter the invoice number. The invoice number is whatever your agency's accounting system uses to uniquely identify an invoice. Vbill will reject an invoice number if your agency has used it on a previously entered/submitted invoice. Important The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that the invoice number be unique to a specific invoice. You cannot use the same invoice number for invoices submitted to two different State Agencies. Also, the client name, or part thereof cannot be used to make up the invoice number. CPCS will be forced to reject any invoice that does not comply with these invoice number restrictions.
- 3) Select the court where the case is being tried from the Court drop down list.
- 4) Enter the client's name. Please use the following format: Last, First, MI.
- 5) Enter the complete docket number of the case for which service was provided for this invoice.
- 6) Enter Notes (optional). If you need to provide general information or an explanation regarding the invoice for CPCS you may enter it here.
- 7) Click the Save button located beneath the Notes field.
- 8) Vbill will display the Enter Invoice Detail button. Click this button to continue entering the invoice. Vbill will display the Invoice Detail page (see example III-3).



(Example III-3)

5.1B) Invoice Detail Page

- 1. Enter the name of the person performing the Service of Process, Last, First, MI.
- 2. Enter the Last name of the person being served. If a company was served enter the name of the company.
- 3. Enter the First name of the person being served.
- 4. Enter the Address of the service.
 - a. If additional address information is required enter it in the Address line 2 field.
- 5. Enter the State Abbreviation.
- 6. If the service was made in Massachusetts (MA) select the City/Town from the drop down list. If the service was made in any other state then you must enter the complete name of the City/Town.
- 7. Enter the Zip code of the service.
- 8. If the service was for a Witness Summons/Subpoena in a Criminal case click Yes, otherwise click No.
- 9. If the service was Returned by mail click Yes, otherwise click No.
- 10. Click the Start Invoice Detail Button and scroll down.
- 11. Vbill will display the data entry panels (see example III-4). In this portion of the Vbill Invoice Detail page you will enter the Activity performed, Travel/Conveyance, and other out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the person performing the Service of Process for this case and being billed on this invoice.



(Example III-4)

5.1C) Activities

In the Activities panel, enter the service provided by the person performing the Service of Process on this invoice.

- 1) Enter the date of service
- 2) Enter the Time of day (using a 24 hour clock, i.e. 11:00 for 11 a.m., 16:00 for 4 p.m.) that the activity took place.
- 3) Select an Activity Type (billing category) from the drop down list. *The Activity Types are subject to change.*
- 4) Enter the exact amount charged for the selected activity.
- 5) If you believe additional information is necessary to explain the selected activity, you may enter it in the Notes field.
- 6) Click the Add button.

5.1D) Travel/Conveyance

In the Travel/Conveyance panel, enter the mileage information if reimbursement for mileage is desired. You may only seek reimbursement for mileage on those dates where the server has also provided a service (activity) on the same invoice detail.

- 1) The date of service from the previously added Activity will be displayed.
- 2) Select Conveyance. (In order to enter mileage for Travel Vbill requires that mileage for Conveyance be entered first).
- 3) The Vbill system will display the City/Town in the From and To fields based on information previously entered on the current invoice.
- 4) Enter the total miles traveled for this trip in the Miles field.
- 5) Click the Add button.
- 6) Repeat steps 1 through 5 for each date if mileage reimbursement for Travel is desired.

5.1E) Expenses

In the Expenses panel, if reimbursement for expenses is desired, enter case related out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the person performing the Service of Process on this invoice.

- 1) The date of service from the previously added Activity will be displayed.
- 2) Select a Type of expense from the drop down list. The expense types are subject to change.
- 3) Enter the exact amount for this expense. (Do not include the dollar sign "\$".)
- 4) If you believe additional information is necessary to explain the selected expense, you may enter it in the Notes field.
- 5) Click the Add button.
- 6) Repeat steps 1 through 5 for each expense incurred by the server.

5.1F) Add Another Detail

If another or the same server at your firm performed an additional Service of Process to be billed on this invoice click the "Add another Detail" button at the top of the screen and repeat the steps in each panel for the new service.

5.1F) Entry Complete

When you have completed entering all billing information into an invoice you may click the Return to Invoice button. Vbill will display the Invoice Summary page for this invoice. Or you may click any of the menu buttons at the top of the page and return to this invoice at a later time.

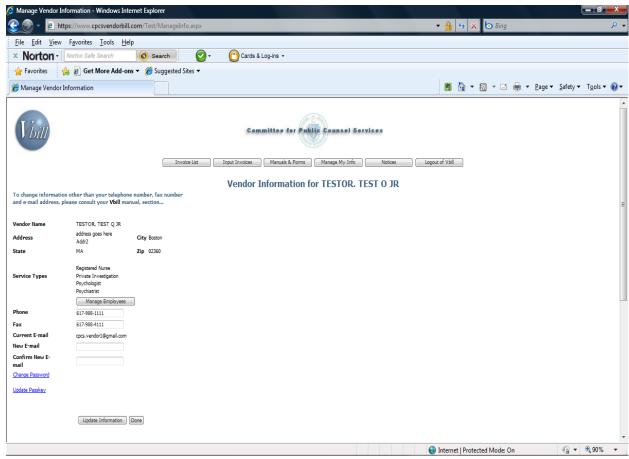
5.2) Submitting an Invoice

- 1) When you are ready to submit your invoice, the Invoice Summary page for the invoice to be submitted must be displayed on your screen. If not then select it from the Work In Progress section of the Invoice List page.
- 2) Click on the Review and Submit button. The Vbill Review page will be displayed.
- 3) Review the invoice for accuracy.
 - i) If the invoice is inaccurate click the Cancel button at the bottom of the page to return to the Invoice Summary Page. Make the necessary modifications to the invoice and return to Step 1).
 - ii) If the invoice is accurate then click the Submit button at the bottom of the page. Vbill will display the Vbill Certification. Click the OK button to continue. Or click the Cancel button to return to the Vbill Review page.
- 4) Vbill will display the V-Bill Final Invoice Summary page.
- 5) Print this for your records. No billing documents need to be mailed to CPCS unless specifically requested in writing.
- 6) If after 30 days from the date of submission your invoice is still listed as pending with a status of Awaiting CPCS Approval please send and email to vendorbills@publiccounsel.net. Enter "Awaiting CPCS Approval" and the Vbill ID in the subject line of the email.

6.0) Manuals and Forms

This page will allow you to download the manual and forms relevant to the Vbill and State Vendor systems.	

7.0) Vendor Information Page



(Example V-1)

On the Vendor Information page you may modify your telephone and fax numbers, email address, change your password, and change your PassKey.

7.1) Change Telephone and Fax Numbers

To change either your telephone or fax numbers or both:

- 1. Highlight and delete the existing Phone/Fax number.
- 2. Enter the new Phone/Fax number.
- 3. Click the Update Information button.

7.2) Change Email Address

To change your email address:

- 1. Enter your new email address in the New E-Mail field.
- 2. Enter the new email address again in the Confirm New E-Mail field.
- 3. Click the Update Information button.
- 4. You will be sent an email to this address to confirm it. Click once on the link in the email to confirm the email address.
- 5. The new email address will now be your new Vbill Login ID and will be in effect the next time that you log into Vbill.

7.3) Change Password

To change your Vbill Password do the following:

- 1. Click on the Change Password link.
- 2. Enter your current Vbill password in the Enter old password field.
- 3. Enter your new Password in the Enter new password field.
- 4. Enter the new password again in the Confirm new password field.
- 5. Click the Update button.
- 6. Click the Update Information button. The new password will be in effect the next time that you log into Vbill.

7.4) Change PassKey

To change any of the PassKey elements do the following:

- 1. Click on the Update PassKey link.
- 2. Vbill will display the Vbill PassKey Information page.
- 3. Click on the appropriate link of the PassKey element that you want to change.
- 4. When you have completed changing all of the PassKey elements click the Done button on the Vbill PassKey Information page.

7.5) Changes Complete

When you have completed all of the allowed modifications to your Vendor Information click the Done button on the Vendor Information page. Vbill will display the Invoice List page.

7.6) Change Other Vendor Information

- 1. If your name or the name of your firm, address, or other tax related information (Social Security Number, FEIN, etc.) has changed, you cannot modify this within Vbill. Please do the following:
 - a. Click on the Manuals & Forms menu button.
 - b. Click on the W-9 link to download and print the W-9 form.
 - c. Complete the W-9 form.
 - d. Attach the W-9 form to a letter (preferably on your office letter head) authorizing CPCS to modify your State Vendor information.
 - e. Mail the documents to: Committee for Public Counsel Services, 44 Bromfield Street, Boston, MA 02108, Attention: Vendor Maintenance Clerk.
- 2. If the listed Service Types (services that your firm provides on CPCS cases) are incorrect or incomplete please send an email to vendorbills@publiccounsel.net and enter "Service Types" in the Subject line of your email.

8.0) Glossary of Terms

CPCS - Committee for Public Counsel Services

Web Browser (or Browser) – Computer software used to search for information on the World Wide Web (Internet). Some examples of web browsers are Internet Explorer, America Online, Fire Fox, etc.

Cookies – The main purpose of cookies is to identify users and possibly prepare customized Web pages for them. When you enter a Web site using cookies, you may be asked to fill out a form providing such information as your name and interests. This information is packaged into a cookie and sent to your Web browser which stores it for later use. The next time you go to the same Web site, your browser will send the cookie to the Web server. The server can use this information to present you with custom Web pages. So, for example, instead of seeing just a generic welcome page you might see a welcome page with your name on it.

Java Script – A popular programming language that is widely used in Web browsers and other Web tools.

9.0) Appendix

9.1) Summary for Entering a Vbill for Service of Process

- 1. In the address bar of your web browser enter the Vbill web address, https://www.cpcsvendorbill.com and click Go or OK.
- 2. Log into Vbill as previously instructed.
- 3. The Vbill Notices page will be displayed if there are notices listed in your Vbill account.
 - a. If there are no notices listed in your account then the Invoice List page will be displayed instead.
- 4. Read any un-read notices. Go to <u>page 6</u> for more information on the Vbill Notices page.
- 5. Click on the Input Invoices menu button. The Vbill Invoice page will be displayed. Go to <u>page 9</u> for more information on the Vbill Invoice page.
- 6. Select the type of service "Service of Process" from the service type drop down box.
- 7. Fill in all of the empty fields (all fields are required). The Vbill Invoice Detail page will be displayed. Go to <u>page 11</u> for more information on the Vbill Invoice Detail page.
- 8. Click the Start Invoice Detail button.
- 9. Vbill will display the data entry panels to enter the activity performed, travel and conveyance, and out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the server for the invoice being billed.
- 10. Enter in the appropriate section, by date of service, the activity performed, travel and conveyance, and out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the server for the invoice being billed.
- 11. If more than one Service of Process was served on the case being billed then click the "Add Another Detail" button. Vbill with clear the page. Complete steps 7 through 10 for each additional Service of Process for the case being billed.
- 12. When you have completed entering the activity performed, travel and conveyance, and out-of-pocket expenses incurred for each server who provided services for the invoice being billed click on the "Return To Invoice" button. Vbill will display the Vbill Invoice page with the summary information for the invoice being billed.
- 13. The data entry portion is complete. Please continue to the next section of this manual.

9.2) Summary for Submitting a Vbill for Service of Process

- 1. When you have completed the entry of an invoice then you are ready to preview and submit your invoice.
 - a. If the invoice that you want to submit is not displayed then click on the Invoice List Menu button.
 - b. Vbill will display the invoices in your work-in-progress file. Locate the invoice that you want to submit and click on **edit** in the left column to display the invoice.
- 2. On the Vbill Invoice page click the Review & Submit button. You may need to scroll down to locate this button, depending on your monitor's settings.
- 3. Vbill will display the Vbill Review Form page with the complete invoice that you are about to submit.
 - a. Review the invoice. If there are errors or omissions in the invoice scroll to the bottom of the page and click the Cancel button.
 - i. Modify this invoice as necessary then return to step 1.
 - b. If there are no errors or omissions then you may scroll down to the bottom of this page and click on the Submit button.
- 4. Vbill will display the Invoice Certification box.
 - a. Click OK to continue the submission.
 - b. Click Cancel to return to the Vbill Review Form page.
- 5. Please print for your records the V-bill Final Invoice Summary form.