Access to NCHS Linked Data Files

Due to confidentiality requirements, certain NCHS Linked files are only accessible through the NCHS Research Data Center (RDC). The NCHS-RDC is a research facility located at the NCHS headquarters in Hyattsville, MD, which offers supervised access to restricted use data files by providing either on-site programming resources or remote access to programming services. Researchers meeting certain qualifications are allowed access, under strict supervision, to restricted statistical micro data files. To gain access to the RDC researchers must submit a proposal for review and approval.

RDC approved researchers can use one of three access methods: (1) On-site access using local computing resources located in the NCHS Research Data Center in Hyattsville, Maryland to accommodate visiting researchers; (2) a remote program submission system through which researchers can submit programs electronically to be executed in the RDC with the output returned to them by e-mail; or (3) RDC staff assisted on-site programming services for off-site RDC approved researchers. In all three methods, confidential data files remain in the RDC where access to unit records is restricted, and output is inspected before it leaves the RDC. Detailed information regarding the research capabilities and restrictions associated with each RDC access method can be found at http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/r&d/rdc.htm.

Each of the access methods outlined above has an associated cost which includes equipment and space rental, staff overhead, and setup. The staff overhead and setup include the time and resources necessary for monitoring progress, setting up equipment and data files, disclosure limitation review, and file management. On-site RDC reservations can be scheduled in increments ranging from a consecutive 2-day minimum to a consecutive 10-day maximum. Extensions can be negotiated with RDC staff subject to scheduling requirements. Scheduling on-site time at the RDC is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Approximate RDC costs are provided in the table below. The actual costs will be finalized during the RDC proposal review:

Estimated RDC Fees for Linked SSA/CMS Data Access	
Guest Researcher (on site)…	Minimum $500 fee per day for analytic file creation and $200 per day on-site user fee (2-day minimum).
Remote Access……	Minimum $500 fee per day for analytic file creation and $500 per month remote access fee. An additional $500 per day is charged as needed for additional file creation and special handling, such as merging of additional data or creating custom file formats.
RDC staff assisted research…..	**TBD**

Estimated RDC Fees for Linked Mortality Data Access	
Guest Researcher (on site)…	Minimum $250 fee per day for analytic file creation and $200 per day on-site user fee (2-day minimum).
Remote Access……….	Minimum $250 fee per day for analytic file creation and $250 per month remote access fee. (50% reduction)
RDC staff assisted research….	**TBD**

Special Note: It is necessary for researchers to visit the RDC website at http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/r&d/rdc.htm for more detailed information about the application requirements.