

FAQs Banks/Remittance

Question	Answer
How to become an IOLA participating bank?	Visit iola.org/banks
Should IOLA be notified when banks are merging?	Yes. Please notify IOLA with detailed information.
Should IOLA be notified when banks are changing interest rates?	You must notify IOLA before reducing rates if your bank elected Comparable Rates. Not necessary if your bank elected the Safe Harbor Rate.
How can a user be deleted from RUS portal?	Notify IOLA. IOLA will delete user(s) as requested. Users can only add to the system(up to 3 users).
How can banks change status on bank site, e.g. Platinum/Gold/Others?	Status is based on interest rates bank pays. It changes if rate election changes.
How do I request a refund from IOLA?	All request must be in writing. State reasons for refund.
How do I know the current IOLA Safe Harbor Rate?	Safe Harbor Rate is Upper Bound of 60% of Fed Fund Target Rate or 1.00% whichever the higher.
How to amend incorrect RUS report?	Submit a report on RUS by selecting file type "Adjustment File"
How to report closed accounts?	Submit a report on RUS by selecting file type "Closed Accounts File"
How to report new accounts?	Click "N" in column H of Detailed Report tab in your remittance file
What are overdraft & dishonored check rules?	All participating banks must agree to report to the Lawyer's Fund for Client Protection in the event of an overdraft or NSF on an IOLA account.
I registered as a RUS user, but I did not receive the verification email, and I still can not log in.	Your RUS user registration is not complete until you receive and validate the email verification within 24 hours. Please check your junk or spam email folders for the email verification. In the event you fail to confirm the email on time or if the bank's security system blocks the email, please call or email the IOLA Fund (646-865-1541 Banks@iola.org) and request IOLA to delete the incomplete registration. Once deleted, you can re-do the registration.
Our bank needs more than 3 RUS users. Can we add more?	No. Each participating bank may have a maximum of three users. Each user must utilize a separate email address, which may be a bank or department email address. To delete a user or reset a password, submit a request in writing to the IOLA Fund.

<p>I registered as a RUS user but there's an error. How do I correct the information for a RUS user?</p>	<p>Please call or email the IOLA Fund (646-865-1541 Banks@iola.org) to delete the incorrect registration and you may re-register.</p>
<p>What to do if my RUS report get rejected?</p>	<p>This error message usually means that a bank created a new excel document, or incorrectly edited the spreadsheet instead of using the actual template document provided on the IOLA website. The template is formatted so that the data can be extracted and sync with our database. It is recommended that you re-download the Report Template available on the IOLA website (www.IOLA.org/banks) and try again. When you click on "Remittance Report Form" on the website, an excel document will download. Please do not attempt to recreate the Report Template. Rather, use the Report Template directly by entering the bank's data in the first two tabs and save as a document in your system (the report file name should include the bank's name and indicate the period covered by the report, e.g., bank_name_remittanceperiod.xlsx). Then, log into RUS and upload the report.</p>
<p>I used the correct template with the Summary Report and Detail Report. Do we need to upload two files, one for each?</p>	<p>No. The Summary Report and Detail Report are separate tabs but are part of the same one Excel workbook document. When you upload that one Excel workbook, it will include both the Summary Report and Detail Report.</p>
<p>How should a bank fill in the interest rate information on the Summary Report?</p>	<p>When reporting interest rates on the Summary Report (in Row 26): "Date" is the first day of the interest period. "Balance" is the balance at which the bank begins to pay interest. For those banks paying tiered rates, indicate the subsequent balances ("Balance 2," "Balance 3," etc.) at which the bank begins to pay at each tier. "Rate" refers to the single interest rate or, for those banks paying tiered rates, the rate on the first tier. Rates on the additional tiered should be indicated in the fields labeled "Rate 2," "Rate 3," etc.</p>
<p>How do I format the individual account rates in the Detail Report ?</p>	<p>Rates should be formatted as a percentage. For example: One percent is entered as either 1.00% or 0.0100. Do NOT enter 1.00.</p>
<p>If a bank pays tiered rates, what rate should it report in the Detail Report for an account that received different rates over the course of the month due to significant changes in the account balance?</p>	<p>Where the interest rate on an individual account fluctuated throughout the reporting period, report the effective rate for the period. For example: if during a thirty day period the account rate was 1.00% for 15 days, and 0.50% for 15 days, the correct rate to report would be 0.75% for that account.</p>

<p>Can a bank charge service fees?</p>	<p>Service fees are not required on IOLA accounts and, given the IOLA Fund's charitable purpose, many banks waive all service fees. If a bank charges service fees: * Service fees may be only charged against the interest earned on an IOLA account. * Service fee shall not be greater than the fees imposed on comparable account products offered by the bank. * Allowable service fees are limited to: per check charges, per deposit charges, monthly maintenance fees, a fee in lieu of a minimum balance or Federal Deposit Insurance fees, a fee for the preparation and insurance of reports required by the Fund, (if approved in advance by the IOLA Fund). Note: If the service charges on a given IOLA account exceed the interest earned on that account, the difference cannot be recovered from the total interest earned on all IOLA accounts. This is called "Negative Netting" and it is not allowed. Unpaid fees on one account, however, may be carried forward to the next remittance period and deducted from the interest earned on the same account.</p>
<p>What about any other fees?</p>	<p>Any other special service, non-routine activity or event fees are the responsibility of the lawyer or law firm maintaining the IOLA account and may not be deducted from the interest earned on the IOLA account. Such fees may include: * check book printing fees, * wire transfers, * cashier's checks, * certified checks, * stop payment orders, * account reconciliation services, * overdrafts, * Non-Sufficient Funds or returned checks. Upon opening IOLA accounts, lawyers and law firms should be notified that such special or non-routine charges and fees are their responsibility. Arrangements may be made to take such fees from the lawyer's operating account. Alternatively, lawyers may deposit "reasonably sufficient" funds of their own into their IOLA account to cover fees. See 22 NYCRR Part 1200, Rule 1.15(b)(3).</p>