Off-the-Top FAQ

Last Modified on 09/04/2026 11:18 am EDT

Off-the-top deductions reduce the gross before Pipeline works out anyone's share, which is exactly why they behave differently from every other fee in the module. Answers to the common questions about turning them on, percentage bases, and what they do to splits.

What does “off the top” actually mean?

Subtracted from the gross before the split. Pipeline works down from gross commission: referral commission first, then the franchise fee, then any off-the-top deductions. What remains is the **Distributable Commission**, and that's the number *Step 2* divides.

Why don't I see the off-the-top option?

It's turned off for that location. A master admin checks **Allow off-the-top deductions** in the location's *Commission & CDA Settings*. The dropdown then appears in *Step 1* for transactions in that office.

What can an off-the-top percentage be calculated on?

Gross Commission or Sale Price. The later figures don't exist yet at that point in the form. A deduction whose basis is something else can still come off the top — enter it as a dollar amount.

Can an off-the-top deduction be paid to an agent?

Yes. Off the top, the payee can be the brokerage, an in-house agent or user, or an outside person or company. It's the one place the brokerage itself can be the recipient of a deduction.

Can I see off-the-top deductions by agent?

No — they're transaction-level. Reports total them as *Total Off-the-top Deductions* for the transaction or the side. To track what an individual agent contributed, use an agent fee instead.

Should a referral go in as an off-the-top deduction?

No — use the Referral Commission field. Enter the referral in *Step 1* and the referrer's payment details in the *Referral Commissions* step. A referral entered through the off-the-top dropdown calculates incorrectly on the CDA and doesn't report as referral commission.

Why did my percentage splits come out wrong?

Because the percentage applies to what's left after the deduction. A percentage in *Step 2* runs against the distributable commission, which the off-the-top deduction already reduced. If your split is meant to be a percentage of the gross, work the figure out and enter dollar amounts.

How should a co-broke paid to an outside office be entered?

As an off-the-top deduction paid to that office. The *Co-op Brokerage* fields add an informational payable line for the closer without reducing your commission or your reports. Use both and the co-broke appears twice — so leave the co-op fields blank when it's accounted for off the top.

Learn More

Take an amount out of the gross commission before Pipeline calculates anyone's split, so the figure the brokerage and its agents divide is already net of it.

See Off-the-Top

Still Have Questions?

Didn't find your answer above? Email us at help@paperlesspipeline.com and we'll help.