



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: PHYSICIAN TIME REPORTING

POLICY NO: 610.01

PURPOSE: To establish a monitoring mechanism and to delineate accountability for the accurate recording of time worked and time off on physicians' timecards and time records.

SCOPE: This policy and any applicable procedures apply to physicians, whose conduct, in the performance of work for the Department of Health Services (DHS), is under its direct control, whether or not they are paid by the County.

POLICY: All physicians must accurately record time spent performing services for DHS patients, clients or Physician Post-Graduates. Physicians must not spend time on personal business during the time scheduled to work performing County services. Time not worked for the County must not be reflected on timecards.

Time worked by physicians must be closely monitored to ensure accurate and appropriate time reporting.

The Facility CEO and the Public Health Director of Operations are ultimately responsible for compliance with provisions of this policy and applicable procedures within their areas of responsibility.

PROCEDURE:

WORK SCHEDULES

Physician supervisors are accountable for ensuring physicians use and adhere to work schedules. Changes to work schedules shall be annotated and initialed on the schedule by the supervisor or designee. The physician's supervisor or designee shall maintain original copies of the schedules with annotations for a period of 5 years for audit purposes.

APPROVED BY:

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SUPERSEDES: September 23, 2005

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TIMECARDS AND TIMECARD RECONCILIATION

COUNTY PHYSICIAN PROVISIONS:

Timecards must be fully completed in ink, front and back and must reflect only time that is actually spent performing work for the County. Time not worked for the County must not be reflected on timecards. The physician shall sign the timecard and submit it within the time period specified by his/her supervisor.

EXCEPTION: Timecards may reflect non-County time, code "080" if required by facility management.

If the supervisor is unavailable to sign the physician's timecard, the supervisor's supervisor or the person authorized to act in the absence of the supervisor shall sign the timecard. A lateral or subordinate employee may not sign in lieu of the supervisor, if not authorized to act in the absence of the supervisor.

Unit timekeepers are responsible for reconciling physician timecards to schedule sheets prior to submission to the supervisor for approval. Any discrepancies shall be reported to the supervisor and reconciled by the supervisor with the physician.

Timecards signed by the supervisor are not to be returned to the physician.

CONTRACT PHYSICIAN PROVISIONS:

Time records (including timecards, time sheets and/or logs) must be fully completed in ink, and must reflect only time that is actually spent performing work for the County. Time not worked for the County must not be reflected on time records. The physician shall sign the time record and submit it with the invoice within the time period specified by his/her supervisor and/or per contract.

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The Facility CEO and/or appropriate Medical Director, and Public Health Director of Operations shall ensure that each facility/unit, under his/her purview, utilizing contract physicians reconcile time records and schedule sheets.

If the supervisor is unavailable to sign the physician's time record and invoice the supervisor's supervisor or the person authorized to act in the absence of the supervisor shall sign the time record and invoice. A lateral or subordinate employee may not sign in lieu of the supervisor, if not authorized to act in the absence of the supervisor.

Time records and invoices signed by the supervisor are not to be returned to the physician.

The invoice must be reconciled with the time record and schedule. Approved invoices shall be signed and approved by the Facility Medical Director or designee and forwarded to the facility/program finance unit with a copy of the time record or with a copy of the schedule sheets and time record that were submitted to the contract agency, when applicable. The Public Health Director of Operations, or designee, shall approve and sign physician invoices pertaining to Public Health operations.

EXEMPTION: Physicians who are covered under a Medical Service Operation Agreement (MSOA) and participate in the "IDX" reporting and monitoring system are exempt from these provisions.

The Facility Medical Director or designee must verify that contract physicians under his/her purview are complying with the service, billing, and administrative requirements of the contracts. The Public Health Director of Operations or designee shall verify contract physician services and other requirements above for Public Health.

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OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

DHS Human Resources, as part of the incoming requirements for physicians, shall require each County physician to declare any outside employment activities. If outside employment is disclosed, a copy of the form must be placed in the employee's area personnel file.

Each County physician is required to complete an outside employment declaration, in accordance with DHS Policy 740, "Outside Employment/Incompatible Activity, Conflict of Interest, State of California Conflict of Interest Code, Dual Compensation", at the time of incoming processing, annually, and at any time when he/she intends to engage in outside employment.

Persons employed in postgraduate physician classifications are limited to a maximum of 96 hours of non-conflicting outside employment in any one calendar month.

MONITORING PHYSICIAN TIME REPORTING

The Facility CEO, Public Health Director of Operations or designee must designate staff to review a judgmentally selected sample (reasonable number) of all physician timecards and time records and reconcile with schedules, under his/her purview, on a quarterly basis, and generate a report, to ensure compliance with this policy. The report must be sent to DHS Human Resources Operations Division for review.

DHS Contracts and Grants Division shall contact DHS Human Resources with the name of all prospective contract physicians at least 4 working days **before the contract is approved** to validate whether the prospective candidate has been employed with the County within the previous 12 months.

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DHS Human Resources must ensure that physicians who were previously employed by the County are not allowed to contract with the County within 12 months of leaving County service, except as provided by County Code Section 2.180.010. DHS Human Resources will provide notification to Contracts and Grants Division within 48 hours of any physicians who have been County employees within the prior 12-month period. Determination of eligibility to contract with a person who has been a County employee within the previous 12-month period will be handled on a case-by-case basis and may require Board of Supervisors approval.

Timecards and supporting timekeeping records are legal documents. Falsification, tampering with and/or failure to properly complete these documents shall be cause for disciplinary action which could include discharge from County service or release from contract. In addition, where circumstances warrant, the physician may be required to make restitution for overpayments resulting from falsification of time records and will also be subject to criminal prosecution.

All cases of non-compliance with this policy shall be referred to DHS Human Resources for corrective action.

CROSS

REFERENCE: DHS Policy 740, Outside Employment/Incompatible Activity, Conflict of Interest, State of California Conflict of Interest Disclosure Code, and Dual Compensation

AUTHORITY: Los Angeles County Code Sections 2.180.010, 5.44.120

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