

COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Coding Frequently Asked Questions

Purpose

Provide answers to frequently asked questions related to the proper use of *COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes* (“reimbursement codes”) for eligible COVID-19-related expense reimbursement from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). The reimbursement codes are used in addition to the regular timekeeping codes for overtime (OT), leave, and other timekeeping activities. Find more information and guidance [here](#).

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Business reasons to track COVID-19-related activities

1. What is the overall purpose of the COVID-19 timesheet reimbursement codes?

The intent is to provide NYC Health + Hospitals employees with standardized codes that group the eligible time spent on COVID-19-related activities into categories that align to FEMA guidelines for reimbursement. Using consistent reimbursement codes and routinely tracking and recording the time spent on COVID-19-related activities enables NYC Health + Hospitals to seek reimbursement of staffing expenses in accordance with FEMA guidance.

2. Why is it important for all NYC Health + Hospitals employees to track and record time spent on COVID-19-related activities?

FEMA will provide COVID-19 disaster assistance to entities that qualify for financial assistance.

While we are mindful that you may already be doing more as a direct result of COVID-19, in order to comply with FEMA guidelines, we are required to track and report on COVID-19-related expenses and activities that financially impact our health system. Accurately recording all COVID-19-related activities and expenses will provide the documentation needed for reimbursement by FEMA, which is required for the financial sustainability of our health care system.

3. Where on the timesheet do we enter the new COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes?

The COVID-19 reimbursement codes are added to the Reimbursement Code column on the timesheet. This code is separate from the regular timekeeping codes. For most staff, the reimbursement code will be a 3-digit code. However, there will be some cases where it will be a 4-

digit code. Click [here](#) for further guidance on the use of COVID-19 Reimbursement Codes as posted on Employee Self Service.

4. What are NYC Health + Hospitals staff members being asked to track?

The focus is on tracking COVID-19-related activities using reimbursement codes which align with FEMA-eligible reimbursement categories. Given the scale of our operations, and to avoid an extra work stream for employees to track their COVID-19 work after the fact, your timesheet will serve as the primary source of the documentation that is required to seek reimbursement for COVID-19-related expenses through FEMA.

COVID-19-related activities include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency preparedness, such as assisting with COVID calls, temporary setup, COVID-19-related training and preparing emergency plans
- Meetings and administrative activities such as responding to inquiries, emails and communications
- COVID-19-related staff meetings and huddles that include COVID-19-related plans and activities
- Reassignments and redeployment
- Recruiting employees to cover COVID-19-related activities and staff shortages
- Overtime related to non-COVID-19 activities, but resulting from COVID-19-related staff shortage
- Courier, transfers and general transportation

Simply put, when you think about your role, what additional work activities are you engaged in today that are directly or indirectly connected to COVID-19?

5. What is the effective start date for tracking and reporting of COVID-19-related activities?

Immediate. NYC Health + Hospitals wants to capture all of your COVID-19 activities and began providing the expanded COVID-19 reimbursement coding instructions at the end of March.

If you have not started using COVID-19 reimbursement codes, please include reimbursement codes for all outstanding timesheets not yet submitted to Payroll. Currently, it is not necessary to make retroactive timesheet changes to timesheets already submitted to Payroll.

6. How do I use my timesheet to distinguish between “performing work” and any illness, absence or leave that may arise out of COVID-19 as it relates to the use of COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes?

In general, the *COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes* apply when you are performing work that is directly or indirectly related to COVID-19. This applies regardless of your title, duties, location or whether or not the work is performed during your regularly scheduled hours, during a shift change, overtime, sessional or added work cycles.

Absence under Infection Control Timekeeping Code 17, as a result of COVID-19 infection, should also be recorded with the appropriate reimbursement code. Leave due to COVID-19-related closure of schools and daycare facilities should also be accompanied by an appropriate reimbursement code.

Timesheets, Codes & Recording Time

7. Do I need to track COVID-19-related activities on a daily basis?

Yes. For a complete accounting of COVID work and full FEMA reimbursement, you are required to track COVID-19-related activities on a daily basis.

8. What does the COVID Effort Code (“effort code”) 1, 2 or 3 refer to?

The COVID-19 reimbursement code is separate from the regular codes used for timekeeping. Most staff will use a 3-digit code; however, in some cases a 4-digit code may be used.

Within the “reimbursement code structure” -- consisting of either a 3- or 4-digit code -- the “COVID Effort Code” is the third digit, and the corresponding activity performed is coded as 1, 2, or 3.

Click [here](#) to view the full reimbursement code structure depicting the placement of the following:

1st Digit: Facility Code (location where the work is performed)

2nd Digit: COVID-related work

3rd Digit: COVID effort code 1, 2, 3

4th Digit: Location Code, only if applicable.

9. Does this new guidance apply to the use of the current timesheet and the *digital Emergency Timesheet*?

Yes. Employees whose paychecks are generated by NYC Health + Hospitals must use the timesheet reimbursement codes on the current paper timesheet and/or the *digital Emergency Timesheet*.

10. Will COVID-19-related activities require any additional internal documentation?

Not at this time. We believe the COVID-19 Reimbursement coding on the timesheets should be sufficient for FEMA purposes.

11. Is additional internal documentation needed in regards to staff reassignments?

Not at this time. If properly and completely coded, the new coding accounts for work location at the facility level as well as new COVID alternate sites, for example, RIMC and tents.

12. Do I need to go back and correct previously submitted timesheets?

No. There is no need to make retroactive timesheet changes at this time.

13. If I am reassigned to another facility, what facility code (first digit of the reimbursement code) should I use?

The facility code (first digit of the reimbursement code) should always reflect where the work is performed. For example: If you are a Central Office employee currently working at Bellevue, then your facility code should reflect Bellevue. This includes staff assisting other facilities remotely. Another example: If staff from Metropolitan are working remotely for Elmhurst, the facility code should reflect Elmhurst for the duration of that time.

There is an exception: If staff is assigned to work at one of the new temporary or alternate locations (YMCA/Hotels, Roosevelt Island Medical Center, NCB COVID Beds, Billy Jean King Tennis Center, Offsite Tents, Javits, USNS Comfort, and Brooklyn Cruise Terminal) the first digit of the reimbursement code should be 9 and the last digit the location code of the temporary location in the 4th position.

14. What code should be used to track COVID-19-related overtime (OT) activities?

If the work completed is COVID-19-related, the OT hours worked and the task(s) performed should be tracked and reported using the appropriate timekeeping codes for overtime. Additionally, please be sure to reflect the appropriate effort code in the reimbursement code based on the type of work and reason for OT. Click [here](#) for further information on the *COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Code Guidance*.

15. Are Emergency Medical Tents erected onsite at a facility included?

Yes. Use location code “T” for tents – for both on-site and off-site tents. Please be sure to reflect the appropriate facility identifier as the first digit, and then use location code “T” as the fourth digit. For work performed at an on-site tent, the facility identifier should represent the facility where the tent is located. For work performed at a standalone off-site tent, the facility identifier code should be “9” for “other”.

16. Is there an end date for Emergency Preparedness?

No end date has been established at this time. We will advise you in the future when we are nearing an end date for the tracking of COVID-19-related activities and expenses. All NYC Health + Hospitals staff are required to track and report COVID-19-related activities on their weekly timesheet until further notice.

17. Should telecommuting specifically related or unrelated to COVID-19 be captured?

Telecommuting has a specific timekeeping code, which is 52. The *COVID-19 Reimbursement Code* should only be used for telecommuting work that is COVID-19-related.

18. Would OT for Environmental Services (EVS) and Food and Nutrition be considered as a general COVID-19 effort (code 2) or a non-COVID activity (code 3)?

This depends on the reason for the work. If a staff member is working overtime due to an increase in the frequency of cleaning that is required to prevent the spread of COVID-19, that would be coded as a general COVID-19-related matter or effort code 2. However, if a staff member is working overtime to deliver meals in maternity because the person who normally delivers those meals is on leave due to COVID-19, that would be OT for a non-COVID-19 activity resulting from a COVID-19 related staff shortage, or effort code 3.

19. What should I do if I am unsure if my work activities are related to COVID-19?

- Review the [COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes Guidance](#) that is available through Employee Self Service.
- Speak directly with your assigned supervisor if you have questions about COVID-19-related activities.

If you have further questions or need further assistance, please refer to the contact information listed below:

- For help with confidential or personal matter related to COVID-19, please call the Payroll Shared Services (PRSS) Call Center at (646) 694-7777.
- If you need assistance with your timesheet or coding, please send an email to payrollinquiries@nychhc.org.
- For assistance related to a COVID-19-related illness or leave, please call Human Resources Shared Services (HRSS) at 646-458-5634.

If you manage others and have additional questions that you are not able to answer, reach out via the PRSS contact info listed above.

Suspected and/or confirmed COVID-19-related illnesses or leave

20. Do the COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes also apply to employees who believe they maybe or who have tested positive for COVID-19?

Yes. The COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes also apply to employees who believe they may have COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19. This leave or absence is related to Infection Control (timekeeping code 17) and should be coded as reimbursement effort code 2. Staff who are on leave related to Infection Control (timekeeping code 17) should also use reimbursement effort code 2. For example, if you work for Central Office, your reimbursement code will be AC2.

21. If a NYC Health + Hospitals employee is on leave or absent for any reason that is “related to” or “as a result of” COVID-19, should it be tracked with a COVID-19 reimbursement code?

Yes. If a staff member is on leave for Infection Control or due to a childcare issue related to the closure of a child’s school and/or daycare, he/she will use effort code 2 along with the usual timekeeping code for leave. For example, if you work at Lincoln and you’re out due to a child care issue or school closure due to COVID-19, you should use timekeeping code 02 (Annual Leave) or 49 (Unscheduled Annual Leave), as well as reimbursement code JC2.

Coding Activities & Other Scenarios

22. Should consultants, contractors, and temporary workers (non-NYC Health + Hospitals staff) track COVID-19-related activities?

No. Temporary staff who are contracted by NYC Health + Hospitals through a third-party vendor do not need to track their time for COVID-19-related activities. The information will be tracked through OTPS (Other Than Personnel Services) COVID-19 Departments as they are not on the NYC Health + Hospitals payroll system.

23. Should full-time, part-time and hourly staff track COVID-19-related activities?

Yes. All activities that are COVID-19-related and performed by staff on NYC Health + Hospitals payroll should be tracked and reported using the *COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes*, regardless of full-time, part-time or hourly status.

24. Should full-time, part-time and hourly NYC Health + Hospital employees, who are assigned to a “converted unit/section” that is dedicated to COVID-19 use the COVID-19-related reimbursement code to track their time?

Yes. If the nature of the work is COVID-19-related, the *COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes* should be recorded by the employee on the timesheet regardless of an employee’s assigned work location.

25. Are we limiting the number of hours that can be allocated as COVID-19-related activities?

No. There is no limit. However, we ask that you be mindful of tracking and appropriately recording the time you spend on COVID-19-related activities.

For some staff who are routinely supporting COVID-19-related activities, a significant number of hours in a day or week may be spent on routine activities such as emails, meetings and inquiries that could add up substantially in a week. Conversely, certain roles may spend a half-day per week on COVID-19-related activities (e.g. 20 hours) – and these hours should also be tracked.

26. How do I code and estimate COVID-19-related activities when attending meetings throughout the day?

NYC Health + Hospitals employees are asked to use their best judgment to determine the time spent on COVID-19-related activities. This means, calculating the number of hours or blocks of time that correspond to the number of hours spent on one or several activities. Due to the limitation of the timesheet (allowing only three rows of activity types per day), your estimate should represent the total hours spent on COVID-19-related activities. C1, C2 and C3 categories must be reported separately.

For example: If a Lincoln Hospital employee attended two meetings related to COVID-19 preparedness (from 9-10am, 1pm-2pm), it may be reported as 9 am -11am with code **JC1**.

27. What code should employees who are redeployed within their regularly assigned facility use?

Employees reassigned to support COVID-19 efforts are required to add the correct reimbursement code to their timesheet that corresponds to the assigned facility. If you are redeployed or reassigned to a different department or function, but working in your regularly assigned facility, please use the facility code for your current facility.

28. Which facility code should employees who are working from home on COVID-19-related activities use?

Employees working from home should use the facility code of their regularly assigned facility. Please use timekeeping code 52 to indicate that you are telecommuting.

29. Do we need to track COVID-19-related activities for Telecommuters who are performing COVID-19-related activities?

Yes. Telecommuters assigned to COVID-19-related work are required to track and report their time following the *COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes*.

Telecommuters are reminded to review the new [Temporary Telecommuting Policy](#) for further guidelines related to working from home.

30. Are employees -- such as patient escorts, Environmental Services and Food and Nutrition service aides -- who are assigned to provide services to patients at a facility serving COVID-19 patients required to follow the COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes?

Yes. All NYC Health + Hospitals employees who are directly or indirectly involved in providing care to COVID-19-related patients and the general operation of COVID-19 dedicated facilities must track and report their time using the appropriate *COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes*, regardless of title or role.

For EVS staff, please follow the same *COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes* Guidance. Examples where COVID-19 reimbursement coding is required include, but are not limited to: extra cleaning cycles due to COVID-19 and assignments to COVID-19 units.

As a general rule for all titles/staff (even where it may not be clear), if a significant amount of time is spent on COVID-19-related patients or functions, attending employees should code that time as COVID-19-related:

- If you have a shift where you are covering a COVID-19 unit, include that timeframe on your timesheet and annotate with the appropriate COVID-19 reimbursement code;
- If you are transporting COVID-19 patients as a part of your day -- for example: you transported patients to/from COVID-19 units for three hours during the day at Elmhurst, then annotate three hours on the corresponding timesheet with the Elmhurst Facility Code and C2 for COVID-19 functions;
- All employees assigned to new COVID-19 locations (Tents, RIMC and hotels) should code all hours worked at those alternative locations as COVID-19 with the appropriate alternate location code;
- Hospital Police assigned to COVID-19 units or sites, should code those shifts on their timesheets with the appropriate COVID-19 effort code.

Additional Resources

31. Where can I get more information about managing COVID-19-related activities?

There are several resources available to help you determine if your work activities are related to COVID-19. If you need assistance determining how to apply the *COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes*, there are several steps that you can take:

- Review the [COVID-19 Timesheet Reimbursement Codes Guidance](#) that is available through Employee Self Service.
- Speak directly with your assigned supervisor if you have questions about COVID-19-related activities.
- Reach out to Payroll Shared Services (PRSS) Call Center (646) 694-7777 or email payrollinquiries@nychhc.org if you supervise others or lead a team/function for additional information.