

CMS

Policy 100-07

SUBJECT: CMS OFFICE OPERATION

BACKGROUND: Children's Medical Services (CMS) Director has determined it appropriate to clarify operation expectations for CMS employees and ensure that those expectations are regularly reviewed.

PURPOSE: To establish standards for Children's Medical Services (CMS) office operations including providing direction on work hours, time and attendance, and use of leave benefits.

POLICY:

The Office Operation Policy should be distributed to new employees during CMS new employee orientation sessions. It should be explained and the employee should sign and date the Employee Affidavit form (Attachment I) acknowledging receipt and understanding.

The policy should also be distributed to all staff, new and otherwise, at the time of their annual performance evaluation. The employee should sign and date the Employee Affidavit form (Attachment I) acknowledging receipt and understanding.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that each employee under their supervision receives and signs the policy during their orientation and at the time of each annual performance evaluation. Supervisors are responsible for reviewing this policy and its contents with employees each time it is signed.

Work Hours

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Policy 302 has established the official operating hours of department facilities as 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on County holidays. Each CMS section must be covered between these hours. Supervisors will determine the work schedules for their employees to meet program needs and ensure office coverage. Employees are required to be at their workstations and ready to work at the beginning of their scheduled workday. Each unit supervisor shall maintain an official schedule for all employees under his/her supervision.

In order to meet the needs of the program, effective November 1, 2010, the CCS Medical Case Management and Financial Eligibility units' hours of operation will be 7:00a.m. to 4:30p.m.

If a personal emergency arises while the employee is on duty, he/she should immediately speak to their supervisor or designee to request permission to leave work and to arrange the amount and type of time to be taken off. Please note that employees should not leave the work area without first reporting the circumstances or nature of the emergency to their supervisor or designee. Failure to obtain approval from the supervisor may result in the employee's timecard being coded Absent Without Pay.

Employees are expected to devote the full complement of time to the work for which they are paid. It is unacceptable to play computer games, pay personal bills, use the computer or Internet for non-work related purposes, engage in lengthy or non-emergent personal phone calls, read newspapers or magazines, etc., during scheduled work hours. Each employee will accurately and legibly record all time worked (based on sign-in/out sheet) and all time absent from work on timesheets provided by payroll, sign their electronic timesheet, and submit it within the time period specified by their supervisor and the timekeeper.

Alternative Work Schedule

An alternative work schedule permits employees to work their usual number of working hours per week in fewer days per week. The working hours per week do not include lunch breaks.

Alternative work schedules are available at CMS. Employees may request an alternative schedule through their immediate supervisor. Approval to work an alternative work schedule will be determined based on the needs of the program. Supervisors will respond to a request for an alternative work schedule within 10 working days.

Employees who are absent on long term sick leave or industrial injury over 30 days, military leave, medical leave, etc., will revert to an 8 hour/5 day work week for the period of the absence.

Sign-In/Out Policy

All CMS employees are required to sign in at the beginning of each scheduled work day and sign out at the end. The employee must sign their name in a legible manner. No one is allowed to sign in or sign out for another employee. Signing in and out for lunch is left to the discretion of the Executive Staff person of the unit.

Lunch and Break Periods

Supervisors will schedule breaks and lunch periods in a manner that ensures adequate coverage during business hours. Lunch periods will be limited to 30 minutes. Employees desiring a one hour lunch period may request an alternative work schedule to accommodate the longer lunch period (i.e. an employee working an 8 hour 5 day work week could request an 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. work schedule). Lunch periods are generally between 11:00a.m. and 2:00p.m., and may be assigned to specific/designated periods as necessary by the supervisor. Employees are given a 15-minute break in the morning and another 15-minute break in the afternoon.

Absence Due to Illness or Emergencies

All employees are responsible for notifying their immediate supervisor or designee of any unscheduled absence or tardiness within 30 minutes of their scheduled work time. Employees are expected to contact/telephone their immediate supervisor or his/her designee on a daily basis while out ill unless it is known that such absence will continue for an extended period.

When reporting an illness, injury, or other unscheduled absence, you are required to state the reason and the expected date of your return. Be advised that supervisors may require documentation of reason for absence.

A doctor's note (or other verification) may be required if an absence will continue for more than three (3) consecutive workdays. In such cases, a supervisor may inform the employee that it is not necessary to call in daily. If the employee cannot return on the anticipated date, he/she must notify his/her immediate supervisor or designee and make necessary arrangements.

For employees who are out sick four (4) to ten (10) working days, and their supervisor has determined that a physician's statement is required to return to work, the employee shall provide an original physician's statement on the first day the employee returns to work. This statement shall be given to the employee's supervisor.

Employees who are out sick for more than ten (10) days, or who are on extended sick leave, maternity leave, or family leave, must complete the *County's Request for Leave of Absence* form. For illness or maternity leave, their physician must complete a *Certification of Physical Condition* form. This certification must also be provided within five (5) working days from notification of leave. Leaves of Absence for more than thirty (30) days require Program Director/Designee signature.

The supervisor is to advise the employee of their rights to leave under the *Family and Medical Leave Act* if the leave of absence is due to the birth and care of a newborn; the placement of a child for adoption or foster care; the care of a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition; or the employee's own serious health condition which prevents the employee from performing the duties of his or her position.

No more than one unscheduled day's absence per month will be acceptable.

Employees who fail to report absences as required will be considered to be absent without pay for the entire period of the unreported absence. Any unauthorized absence will be recorded as unapproved absence without pay (AWOP).

Abuse of Sick Leave

An employee who has demonstrated a pattern of absenteeism may be required to furnish a physician's medical certification before such absence is authorized or further use of sick leave benefits are approved. In such cases, the supervisor must request medical certification from the employee prior to the employee's return to work. Employees will be informed in writing if they are placed on medical certification status.

Medical certification may be required under one or any combination of the following circumstances:

- After an employee has been off three (3) or more consecutive work days.
- When the employee calls in sick on a day he/she had previously requested off but was denied authorization to be absent.

- When an employee consistently displays a pattern of absenteeism or abuse of sick time. For example, frequent absences in conjunction with Fridays, Mondays, and/or holidays where prior authorization was not obtained.
- When the employee has been off sick on three (3) or more separate occasions during a thirty (30) day period.

Elements of Acceptable Medical Certification

If continued absence is due to illness, supervisors can request that employees provide acceptable medical verification to substantiate the illness. Acceptable medical verification must be on letterhead stationary of the physician or medical facility providing the care and must contain all of the following:

- ✓ Date(s) of treatment.
- ✓ Earliest expected date employee can return to work. If there are work restrictions, they must be described and their duration must be stated.
- ✓ An original signature of the person (or designee) that provided treatment or care.

Failure to provide acceptable medical certification when required may result in the timecard being coded Absent Without Pay.

Tardiness

No more than two (2) incidents of tardiness will be allowed in any one (1) pay period.

Accrued overtime, additional time worked, or other leave benefits cannot be used to cover periods of tardiness (in excess of 30 minutes per incident) not caused by emergencies. Working through lunch may not cover for tardiness.

Tardiness of 15 minutes or more may be subject to the employee timecard being coded as Absent Without Pay. Disciplinary action may occur with repeated episodes of tardiness.

Vacation Scheduling

Vacation schedules shall be submitted to the immediate supervisor. This ensures unit responsibilities are adequately covered. Such schedules shall be subject to the specific needs of the individual unit as well as the general needs of the CMS program. The following procedures shall be followed:

- Scheduling preferences will be determined on a first come, first approved basis; or by seniority (based on continuous service date). Employees with greatest seniority will be given priority to select their first preference for one vacation period in a given calendar year.
- Having once made such a choice, no employee may change his/her vacation schedule if such will conflict with the choice of any other employee.

- Employees assigned to a unit after the master vacation schedule has been prepared and having seniority in the new unit, must waive any seniority rights they have until the next annual vacation schedule is formulated.
- All other unscheduled vacation requests will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis.

Requests for Time Off

Except in cases of emergencies, prior approval is required for any paid or unpaid time off requested by an employee. Requests should be submitted to the employee's supervisors or designee at least ten (10) days in advance for approval of more than five (5) days off, or three (3) days in advance for five (5) or fewer days off. Approval is contingent on Unit coverage and operation needs as determined by the supervisor in consultation with the area manager.

Work Attire

It is essential to the functioning and safety of CMS that all employees are suitably attired during working hours and that the CMS image of public service is maintained. The CMS Work Attire policy is based on the Department of Public Health Professional Appearance in the Workplace Policy (Policy No. 704).

Telephone Calls

Telephones are to be used for County Business only (except in emergencies). Cell phones are not to ring aloud or be used for personal calls on county time (except in emergencies). Every effort should be made to answer telephone calls promptly and in a courteous manner.

Employees should answer telephone calls by first giving the name of their section and then their name and should ask how they can assist the caller. Every effort should be made to satisfy the caller. Transferring the caller to another person or section/unit should be discouraged and only be done as a last resort and/or according to protocol of the unit.

CMS telephone operators may use unique identifiers vs. their name, or a pseudonym, if approved by the Executive Staff person for the unit.

Use of County Office Equipment and Supplies

The use of all County purchased and supplied equipment, office supplies, and furniture is restricted to the performance of County business. County equipment and supplies include, but are not limited to the following items: computers/printers; fax machines; telephones; pencils/pens/markers/highlighters; paper of all types and sizes; envelopes of all types and sizes; binders; calculators; hole punchers; scanners; shredders; staplers, and furniture.

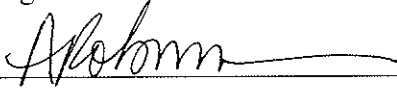
Interpretation of Policy

In all cases of policy interpretation, it is the employee's responsibility to seek information and guidance from his/her immediate supervisor. In cases where supervisors require assistance, they will discuss pending issues with their supervisors and, where appropriate, with other members of management or with representatives of Public Health Human Resources.

Authority: County Code
DPH/DHS Policies & Procedures
CMS Executive Staff

Attachment: Employee Affidavit

Prepared by: Margaret Scott

Approved by:  Date: 10/21/10

Revision Date: October 21, 2010

Employee Affidavit

My signature below acknowledges that I have received, read and understood the CMS Office Operation Policy #100-07 and I will comply with this policy. Please retain a copy of this document for your reference.

Employee Name (Print)

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

- c: CMS HR Personnel File (original)
- Employee
- Supervisor