Coding Timesheets for Workers' Compensation

The following is intended to assist payroll personnel in understanding codes that need to be used when employees are out on work related injuries.

If you have questions related to specific situations not addressed herein, please do not hesitate to contact Bryan Aalberg, Loss Control Specialist in the Risk Management Division.

Doctor's Notes

Please note that coding timesheets should be consistent with doctor notes (or slips) which can release a worker to one of the following:

- No work
- Modified (light) duty
- A release to full (normal) duty

Doctor’s notes will dictate how a timecard should be coded. It is very important that employees provide supervisors with meaningful doctors’ notes whenever their work status changes. It is equally important that supervisors pass these on to Risk Management.

Employees are responsible for providing their supervisor with any doctor’s notes for work status whenever that status changes. Supervisors are responsible for keeping payroll clerks informed as to the employee’s work status.

Workers’ Compensation – Pay Continuation

When an employee is injured on the job, misses time from work and/or seeks medical treatment, Washington County pays full salary in the form of pay continuation. You should use the element workers comp – pay continuation for any time in which a worker is OFF work because of a workers’ compensation injury.

3-Day Waiting Period

There is a three (3) day waiting period that must be met before you start using the element workers comp – pay continuation. The three days starts on the day the employee begins missing work as a result of an on the job injury. If the employee leaves work on the day of the injury, that day shall be considered the first day (even if they only miss 1 minute of work.) Those first three days are measured by calendar day so weekends or normal days off count toward the three day period.

The first three days (or the portion of the first day they are gone) should be coded as sick time. These first three days are not reimbursed from workers compensation benefits unless the employee is hospitalized overnight within 14 days of the injury. The first three days are also recoverable if the employee is off work for 14 consecutive days because of their on the job injury. If either of these situations occurs, the payroll liaisons should go back and recode the three day waiting period from sick time to workers comp – pay continuation and reimburse sick time.

Example 1: An 8-5 employee is injured on the job on Friday at 3:00 and usually has the weekend off. Friday would be their first day, Saturday their second day, Sunday their third. Monday they have a doctor’s note restricting them from any work for a week because of their injury. Friday would be coded regular time – 6 hours, sick time – 2 hours. The following Monday through Friday would be coded work comp – pay continuation. Friday, Saturday and Sunday are the three day waiting period.
and remain coded as sick time, or in this case where the employee has weekends off, normally scheduled days off.

**Example 2:** An 8-5 employee is injured on Thursday at 2:00 and finishes their shift and doesn’t go to the doctor until the following Tuesday after work, at which time the doctor restricts them from any work for 2 weeks. Their three-day waiting period starts the day they start missing work so it would start that Wednesday after their doctor’s appointment. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday would be the three-day waiting period and would be coded using the element type sick time. That following Monday and on for two weeks would be workers comp – pay continuation. Since the employee has then missed 14 calendar days off work because of their on-the-job injury, that first three day waiting period would be recoded as workers comp – pay continuation. If this 14-day period is not met, it would remain sick time..

There is only one three-day waiting period per claim.

**Vacation and Holidays while on Workers’ Compensation**

If a holiday occurs while an employee is off work due to the injury, that holiday should NOT be coded with the element *holiday paid*, but instead you should continue using the code *workers comp – pay continuation*.

If the employee had a vacation scheduled and then ends up being off work due to the injury that should be coded as *workers comp – pay continuation* instead of *vacation*.

**180 Days Rule**

After 180 days of using *workers comp – pay continuation* for the first time, you will stop using that element and start using *workers comp – unpaid*. This is a County policy. Workers’ compensation law only requires that employers reimburse 66.66% of the employee’s wages. Pay continuation is something the County offers for 180 days as a benefit to make the employee’s wages 100%. After 180 days it changes to the 66.66% and the employee can (and usually does) use sick or vacation time to make up the other 33.33%

**Workers’ Compensation – Light Duty**

Please use the element *workers comp - light duty* when an employee is on workers’ comp modified (light) duty. Please note this element should only be used as it pertains to a workers’ compensation claim. If the light duty is not tied to a workers’ compensation claim, just use *regular time* as the element.

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- Using this element allows us to track light duty hours in Risk Management which is needed for OSHA compliance and for EAIP reimbursement requests which allows the County to request a percentage of wages back from the state for having employees on light duty. Using this element isn’t affecting the employee at all; they are still getting paid as they would for regular time.
- Per County policy, modified duty shall only last 120 working days.</UL>

**Doctor Appointments and Physical Therapy**

Doctor appointments and physical therapy should be coded as *sick time*. By law, an employee may not claim time loss or lost wages for doctor appointments under workers’ compensation unless the appointment is four or more hours in length.
This rule applies to all employees, even those exempt from FLSA.

**Independent Medical Examinations (IMEs)**

An exception to the doctor’s appointment rule above would be if Washington County or our TPA required the employee to go to an IME. In this case the time taken to go to that appointment should be coded as Work Comp – Pay Continuation.