

NUMBER

#20-31-01

DATE

April 10, 2020

OF INTEREST TO

County Directors

Social Services Supervisors and
Staff

County Fiscal Supervisors and
Staff

American Indian Child Welfare
Initiative (AICWI) Tribal Agency
Directors

AICWI Tribal Agency Social
Services Supervisors and Staff

AICWI Fiscal Supervisors and
Staff

Social Service Information
System (SSIS) Worker and Fiscal
Mentors

ACTION/DUE DATE

Please read information and
prepare for implementation

EXPIRATION DATE

Whenever peacetime
emergency is over

New Social Service Information System (SSIS) county sub-service codes for COVID-19 activities and non-program related activity codes

TOPIC

The Social Service Information System released a statewide sub-service code and new non-program administrative and payroll codes allowing statewide tracking of work and activities related to COVID-19.

PURPOSE

Provide information and instructions on SSIS codes for tracking activities related to COVID-19.

CONTACT

For SSIS fiscal-related questions:

- Melissa Meger, 651-431-2785 or Melissa.meger@state.mn.us

SSIS Help Desk:

- dhs.ssishelp@state.mn.us or 651-431-4801
- Include "COVID-19 tracking (your agency)" in the email subject line

SIGNED

NIKKI FARAGO, Assistant Commissioner
Children and Family Services Administration

TERMINOLOGY NOTICE

The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.

I. Background

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (department) is reviewing circumstances where temporary modification of policy and practice will align with measures to slow the spread of COVID-19 through social distancing and quarantine. Some modifications in policy will result in changes in the Social Service Information System (SSIS) to allow for and ensure accurate documentation.

Sub-service codes

On March 24, 2020, SSIS released a statewide sub-service code, “87 – COVID Related” that allows for statewide tracking of case/client-specific activities and payments related to COVID-19. The sub-service code is for all BRASS service codes and can be used for all program areas effective March 1, 2020.

The sub-service code can be used for documenting case/client-specific activities in SSIS. Program-specific instructions for using the sub-service code is included in bulletins related to specific program areas. For example, instructions for using the sub-service code were provided in [Bulletin 20-68-11](#) for documenting monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care via video-conferencing in lieu of face-to-face.

See section II of this bulletin for responses to frequently asked questions related to use of the “87 – COVID Related” sub-service code.

Non-program payroll and administrative activity codes

The department added non-program payroll and administrative activity codes on April 7, 2020, with an effective date of March 1, 2020. These activity codes were added specifically to provide agencies with ability to track administrative activities, e.g., tracking sick time and non-program administrative duties associated with COVID-19.

See section III of this bulletin for additional information regarding use of non-program payroll and administrative activity codes.

II. Sub-service code “87 – COVID Related” frequently asked questions

What should our process be for removing the County Sub-Service codes related to COVID-19 that we had already entered in SSIS prior to the state deployment?

Answer: Agencies are not required to remove county-specific sub-service codes that were added. If an agency chooses to remove county-specific codes, manually re-enter the correct sub-service code in the time record. Once the sub-service code 87 – COVID Related is added to time records, agencies can go in SSIS Admin and delete the county-created sub-service that was entered.

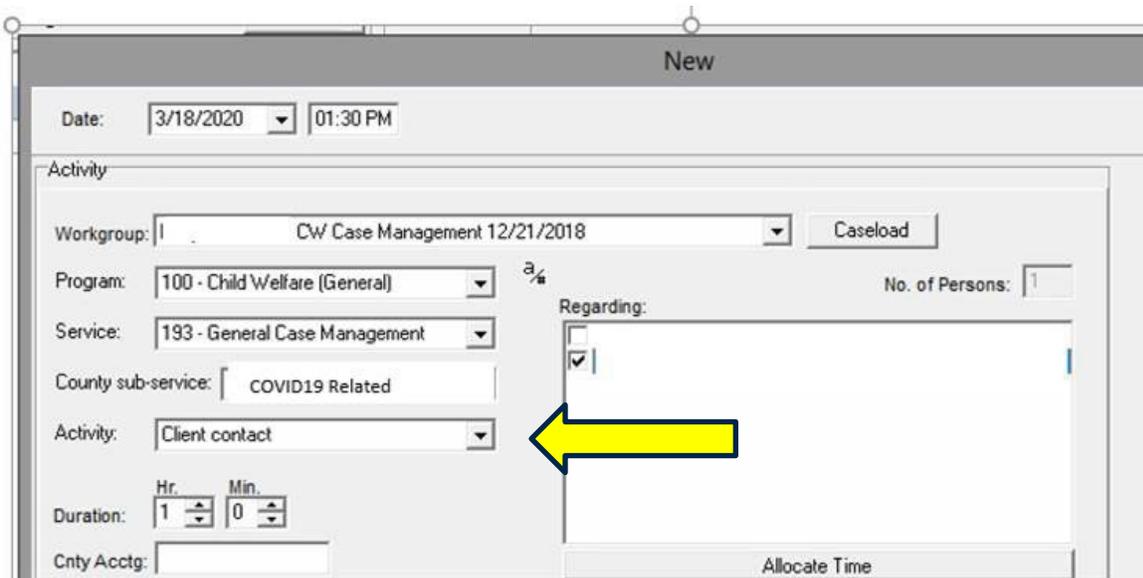
Can you please send me the directions on how to enter County Sub Services Codes so we can get them entered into SSIS ADMIN?

Answer: The department implemented sub-service code 87 – COVID Related in SSIS Administration. Agencies should use that sub-service code in lieu of creating their own. This will allow local agencies and the department to gather consistent data related to COVID- 19 impacts.

I see a bulletin came out regarding a sub-service code for COVID – 19 which is to be used in “lieu of face-to-face” contacts, however, I’m not finding it so I can instruct my staff properly. When will this be active as a sub-service code?

Answer: The bulletin referred to is [Bulletin 20-68-11](#) and is specific to required monthly caseworker visits with children in out-of-home placement.

Sub-service code 87 – COVID Related was deployed, available statewide on March 24, 2020, effective March 1, 2020. See the example screen shot below indicating where the sub-service code is located.



Is this sub-service code 87 ONLY for ‘in lieu of face-to-face’ or for any service code used related to COVID-19 responses by staff?

Answer: Sub-service code 87 – COVID Related can be used for all program areas: child welfare, adult services, and developmental disability waived services as an indicator for contacts made “in lieu of face-to-face” contacts. Agencies can use this sub-service code for other reasons as well.

When would I use this sub-service code?

Answer: Use this sub-service code on time records or payments when workers are performing duties differently related to COVID-19. An example includes if worker’s contact method was phone but likely would have been face-to-face contact.

What if we already enter sub-service codes in a time record for different purposes, ex. PMAP?

Answer: Contact the SSIS Help Desk and fiscal staff to discuss each situation individually. SSIS fiscal staff will work on how to identify the best solution with each agency.

The state has waived the face-to-face contact, and allowed phone and video-conferencing as an allowable contact. If the time record should be claimed for health care claiming, what do I do now?

Answer: [Bulletin 20-69-02, Targeted case management changes for face-to-face contact requirements](#), was released on April 2, 2020. Refer to that bulletin for instructions on how to document TCM contacts to ensure successful claiming and reimbursement.

III. Statewide non-program payroll and administrative activity codes

Two non-program payroll and administrative activity codes were added to SSIS on April 7, 2020, effective March 1, 2020. The addition of these codes provides ability for agencies to track staff time related to COVID-19 that is non-program related.

A. COVID-19 Related illness (payroll)

COVID-19 Related illness is a code added and used to track the amount of sick time that employees are taking related to COVID-19. Use of this code is optional; however, agencies are encouraged to use it consistently within agencies. Using the code is likely to be most beneficial for agencies requiring 100% time reporting.

Using this payroll code allows agencies to track time for staff who are not able to perform their duties due to being exposed to, exhibiting symptoms of, or diagnosed with, the COVID-19 virus. It also assists agencies in determining fiscal impacts of COVID-19 Related employee leave time.

See the screen shot below for an example of how to use the COVID-19 Related illness code when documenting leave time.

Date: 3/27/2020 12:00 AM

Activity

Workgroup: Caseload

Program: ^{3/4} No. of Persons: 0

Service:

County sub-service:

Activity: COVID-19 Related, Illness

Duration: Hr. 8 Min. 0

Cnty Acctg: Allocate Time

Note:

E Not able to perform duties due to a COVID-19 Related, illness.

B. Non-social service fund Emergency Activity Code

SSIS added a non-program activity code providing workers with a way to document their time when re-directed from their regular duties to other duties due to COVID-19. Use of this code is optional. The code may be most beneficial for combined health and human service agencies. An example of when this activity code is used is when income maintenance and/or social services staff are re-directed to public health due to COVID-19.

Public health activities are not part of the Social Service Fund Activity as defined in the Definitions of Social Services; therefore, there are no BRASS codes for public health activities and/or services. Workers whose duties shifted to the public health area can enter their time using the new non-program activity code, Non-social Service Fund Emergency Activity. Benefits of using this code include:

- For social service employees re-directed due to emergency situations, a way to report time correctly for Non-social Service Fund Activity.
- Time for non-social service fund activities should not be associated with a BRASS code. This code prevents staff from putting non-social service fund activities time to a BRASS code, ensuring integrity of time reporting and the system.
- The department's Financial Operations Division (FOD) will provide direction/instructions in an upcoming memo on how agencies should report costs in order to prevent duplicate reimbursement (double dipping), and prevent issues resulting from audits.

The screen shot below is an example of how to use the Non-social Service Fund Emergency Activity jCode when documenting time.

The screenshot shows a web-based time entry interface. At the top, there are fields for 'Date' (3/27/2020) and 'Time' (12:00 AM). Below this is a section titled 'Activity' containing several dropdown menus: 'Workgroup', 'Program', 'Service', 'County sub-service', and 'Activity'. The 'Activity' dropdown is currently set to 'Non-Social Service Fund Emerg'. To the right of these fields is a 'Caseload' button and a 'No. of Persons' input field with the value '0'. Below the dropdowns are 'Duration' fields for 'Hr.' (8) and 'Min.' (0), and a 'Cnty Acctg' field with the value 'COVID-19'. A 'Regarding:' box contains the text 'Non-Social Service Fund Emergency Activity', which is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow pointing from the 'Activity' dropdown. At the bottom right of the activity section is an 'Allocate Time' button. Below the activity section is a 'Note:' field containing the text 'Duties redirected due to COVID-19'.

IV. Resources

For information and resources, see:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) webpage
- [Minnesota Department of Human Services](#) webpage (sign up for email notifications)
- [Minnesota Department of Health](#)
- [BeReadyMN](#)
- [Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau](#)
- [Monthly Caseworker Visits Modified to Permit Video-conferencing](#), department bulletin 20-68-11

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling 651-431-3039 (voice) or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.