



**DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY**  
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*DHA-Policy Memorandum 20-003*  
May 13, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION MARKET  
DIRECTOR, JACKSONVILLE MARKET  
DIRECTOR, COASTAL MISSISSIPPI MARKET  
DIRECTOR, CENTRAL NORTH CAROLINA MARKET  
DIRECT SUPPORT ORGANIZATION, ARMY  
DIRECT SUPPORT ORGANIZATION, NAVY  
DIRECT SUPPORT ORGANIZATION, AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Memorandum for Defense Health Agency Staff – Military Medical Treatment Facilities to Implement Updated DHA COVID-19 Medical Coding Policy.

Reference: (a) DoD Directive 5136.01, “Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD(HA)),” September 30, 2013, as amended  
(b) DoD Directive 5136.13 “Defense Health Agency,” September 30, 2013  
(c) DoD Instruction 6040.02, “Management Standards for Medical Coding of DoD Health Records,” June 8, 2016.  
(d) DHA-Procedural Instruction 5025.01, “Publications System,” August 24, 2018

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) Memorandum, based on the authority of References (a) and (b), and in accordance with the guidance of References (c) and (d), establishes the DHA’s procedures to standardize the coding for Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Military Medical Treatment Facilities (MTFs). This memorandum cancels and replaces DHA- Policy Memorandum 20-003 of (13 April 2020). A change was issued since the cancelled Memorandum 20-003 of (13 April 2020), the Attachment titles were updated to reflect that Attachments 1, 2, and 4 are considered Policies as opposed to Guidance.

This Policy Memorandum applies to all assigned, attached, or detailed Service members, federal civilians, contractors (when required by the terms of the applicable contract), and other personnel assigned temporary or permanent duties at MTFs. This Policy Memorandum is effective immediately; it will expire effective 12 months from the date of issuance, or until superseded by updated coding guidance issued by DHA.

In accordance with the DHA COVID-19 Medical Coding Policy (Attachment 1), a patient is an official COVID-19 patient if tested and confirmed with the use of a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Emergency Use Authorization (EUA)-approved diagnostic test for COVID-19 performed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a DoD laboratory, a commercial reference laboratory, a local laboratory or a state laboratory. A specimen may be collected and tested locally; if positive, this is a "confirmed" COVID-19 patient and needs to be coded according to the policy in Section 2 of Attachment 1.

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For encounters prior to April 1, 2020, MTFs must utilize the Interim DHA COVID-19 Medical Policy (Effective Date 23 March 2020) (Attachment 2). For encounters dated April 1, 2020 and thereafter, MTFs must utilize the updated DHA COVID-19 Medical Coding Policy (Effective Date 13 May 2020) which includes the updated diagnosis, testing, exposure, and screening codes for COVID-19, as indicated by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Official Coding and Reporting Guidelines (Effective Date 1 April 2020) available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/icd/COVID-19-guidelines-final.pdf>. MTFs are encouraged to review the April 2020 “Coronavirus/COVID-19” training presentation (Attachment 3).

In addition, MTFs must comply with the updated DHA COVID-19 Virtual Encounter Coding Policy (Attachment 4), released on 08 April 2020, which details the procedures to accurately document and code virtual clinical encounters. Virtual Encounters include telephone only and visual and audio telecommunication encounter types. The policy was updated to require the use of code T2025 for effective tracking of telephonic encounters during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please address questions regarding this Policy Memorandum to Ms. Michele (Gowen) Frens at (571)286-9028 or [michele.a.gowen.civ@mail.mil](mailto:michele.a.gowen.civ@mail.mil).

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Attachments:

1. The DHA COVID-19 Medical Coding Policy (Effective 13 May 2020)
2. The DHA Interim COVID-19 Medical Coding Policy (Effective 23 March 2020)
3. April 2020 “Coronavirus/COVID-19” training presentation
4. The DHA COVID-19 Virtual Encounter Coding Policy (Effective 8 April 2020)