

## **Risk Recognition Pay FAQ:**

### **How should I talk to my employees who previously received Premium Pandemic Pay, but will be ineligible for Risk Recognition Pay (RRP)?**

It is understandable that some employees who previously received Premium Pandemic Pay and will not be receiving Risk Recognition Pay will be frustrated. While we wish we could continue providing additional pay at the level of Premium Pandemic Pay, the County needs to spend its CARES money on the highest-need, highest-risk areas for our employees and the community. As we have learned more about the virus over the past several months, we have learned that certain job duties are not as risky for transmission as we thought when the pandemic first started. This is good news for our employees, as we want everyone to be in the least-risky work environment possible. There are employees who are still working in high-risk settings for the transmission of COVID-19 and we want to use our remaining CARES money to compensate these individuals appropriately for their service.

### **How does this order differ from the Premium Pandemic Pay order and what is it trying to accomplish?**

The previous Premium Pandemic Pay (PPP) Order was drafted when we didn't know a lot about COVID-19. We wanted to address the risk some employees were incurring as a result of the public health crisis. The PPP awarded pandemic pay based on those job titles we identified as possibly having COVID-19 exposure risk. The new RRP focuses less on who you are and more on what you do. It is more tightly aligned with OSHA and CDC guidance, which focuses on whether an employee's specific job duties expose them to a High or Very High Level of Risk. Even a qualifying employee will probably move in and out of High or Very High Exposure Risk duties throughout the day. We understand this may add an administrative burden for time tracking but believe this is the best way of recognizing and compensating employees for performing duties which may put them at higher risk of COVID-19 exposure.

### **Who decided to implement RRP?**

The Re-Opening Steering Committee (ROSC) is leading Milwaukee County's internal response to COVID-19 in order to mitigate operational and workplace risks and also oversees the development of Administrative Orders. Many administrative orders are developed in response to risks or needs flagged to the ROSC by department leaders, which was the case with the RRP Order. Leaders had taken great strides to mitigate risks in their work environments, but some employees are at heightened risk of exposure to COVID-19 because of the nature of the duties they perform and it was time to revisit additional compensation for these employees. After consulting with the budget office, human resources, public health experts, and the County Executive, the ROSC moved forward with the development of the RRP Order.

### **When did this go into effect? Can employees claim RRP for exposure prior to that date?**

The Risk Recognition Pay Administrative Order and subsequent revised Order went into effect at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday, Sept. 6, 2020, and does not cover time worked prior to the effective date.

**When does Risk Recognition Pay expire?**

Risk Recognition Pay for eligible employees is expected to run through the end of CARES funding, December 30, 2020. The County Executive may end the Order earlier at his discretion.

**What is a leader’s responsibility with regard to the administration of the Risk Recognition Pay Administrative Order?**

Leaders should review the Risk Recognition Order and understand of definitions of “High Exposure Risk” and “Very High Exposure Risk” and whether they have employees who may be eligible to receive RRP.

They should review their employees’ timecards and, if the risk recognition code has been entered, verify the employee is eligible to receive RRP based on the job duties performed. By approving their employees’ timecards, they are verifying that they have validated their employees’ eligibility to receive RRP. For any questions about RRP eligibility, please email [COVID-19@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:COVID-19@milwaukeecountywi.gov)

**What is the process for approval if an employee believes they are eligible for RRP?**

If an employee believes they may be entitled to Risk Recognition Pay, they should contact their supervisor to discuss their eligibility and receive approval **before** they enter this payroll code into their timecard.

**Is Risk Recognition Pay limited to a certain number of hours per week?**

Risk Recognition Pay is limited to those hours an employee performs duties that result in a High or Very High Exposure Risk to COVID-19 as defined in the Order. Those hours could be one hour per week or 40 hours per week, depending on how much time an employee works a qualifying duty.

**What are the increments of Risk Recognition Pay? For example, if I spend 2 hours and 10 minutes performing a High Exposure Risk job duty total for the work day, what should I enter on my timesheet?**

If an employee spends a partial hour performing High or Very High Exposure Risk duties, they should round up to the nearest hour when entering their time. In the example above, the employee should round up from 2 hours and 10 minutes to 3 hours of High Exposure RRP. If an employee works 15 minutes performing High or Very High Risk duties, they should enter 1 hour of RRP.

Employees should round their time for the hours worked in a shift. For example, if an employee works 15 minutes performing a High Exposure Risk duty and later in the day spends another 15 minutes performing another High Exposure Risk duty, their time for the shift is 30 minutes, which they would round to 1 hour on their timecard.

**Can I request to be assigned to work in specific areas / have specific duties so that I am eligible for RRP? Or can I request to *not* be assigned to work in specific areas / have specific duties in exchange for *not* receiving RRP?**

An employee may discuss this with their supervisor; however, operational needs will determine assignments to duties with High or Very High Exposure Risk. Specific staffing decisions will ultimately be made by department management.

**Doesn't the RRP policy incentivize employees to take on Higher Risk duties in order to get an increase in pay?**

The best way to respond to exposure risks to COVID-19 is to mitigate or eliminate the risks. RRP is designed to compensate employees for risk that cannot be mitigated or eliminated because of the nature of the work being performed. Employees should never engage in duties that unnecessarily put them at a heightened risk of exposure to COVID-19.

**Will there be any audit in place to ensure that only eligible employees and job duties are receiving RRP?**

Yes, the Comptroller's Office and Human Resources, in collaboration with department leaders, have prepared a list of eligible high orgs, low orgs, and job titles that are likely to perform qualifying job duties. This list will be used to review timecards after manager approval to ensure only eligible time for High and Very High Exposure Risk duties performed are receiving RRP. Coding entered by employees not on this approved list will be removed by Central Payroll. If an employee or manager's time is removed and they believe it should qualify, they should work with Central Payroll and their HR Business Partner to determine eligibility and adjustments to the qualifying list to be made, as needed.

**A Milwaukee County first responder conducts CPR on an individual Friday night and learned the person was COVID-19 positive the following Monday. Can the employee enter RRP in their timecard and at what level?**

Yes, this employee would be eligible for Very High Risk Recognition pay **as long as the information was learned and coding was entered before the close of the pay period.** Administratively, timecards cannot be adjusted after the close of the pay period.

**A Milwaukee County employee must physically restrain someone. Does the employee qualify for RRP for this time?**

It depends. Restraining someone would qualify as close contact, but RRP will only be given if the person being restrained has a **known or probable case of COVID-19** (see definitions in Order). If the COVID status of the restrained individual is never found out, then the person is **not** a known or probable case and the time does not qualify for RRP.

If it is found out that the restrained individual has a known or probable case of COVID-19, the employee would qualify for Very High Exposure Risk pay for that time worked **as long as the information was learned and coding was entered before the close of the pay period.** Administratively, timecards cannot be adjusted after the close of the pay period.

**An individual in the custody or care of Milwaukee County claims they have COVID-19. If the employee is in Close Contact with this individual, do they qualify for RRP for the time spent with the individual?**

No. A statement by an individual that they are COVID-19 positive would not, on its own, classify an individual as having a Known or Probable Case of COVID-19. If additional screening and testing is conducted and they were identified as a Known or Probable Case, the time working

in close contact with the individual would qualify for RRP and could be claimed **as long as the pay period was still open.**

**Would a Milwaukee County Sheriff Deputy performing an OWA assessment to check for the odor of alcohol qualify for RRP?**

Likely not, but it depends. If the individual being tested for alcohol is arrested, transported to the jail, **and is found to have a Known or Probable Case once tested for COVID-19**, the Deputy could claim RRP time for duties performed while in close contact with the individual (the time in this example would likely qualify as a mix of Very High and High Exposure Risk time depending on direct physical contact versus close proximity) **as long as the pay period was still open.**

**A Milwaukee County Security Guard briefly interacts with a visitor to the courthouse who, the employee learns later, has tested positive for COVID-19. Does the Security Guard qualify for RRP?**

No, the Security Guard's interaction with the visitor would **not** be considered close contact, which would require that the employee be within 6 feet of the COVID-positive individual for more than 15 minutes.

**A Milwaukee County BHD employee works in the patient intake area and is recognized in the RRP Order as an area where they would be eligible to receive RRP. Would their entire 8 hour shift be coded as High Risk?**

It depends on the amount of time there were community members in the intake area during the 8-hour period. Only when patients are present in the space, regardless of whether any patients have a Confirmed or Probable Case of COVID-19, would the hours of their work be eligible for RRP. Just because an employee is working in the area does not mean all of their time spent on shift will be RRP.

**Is someone able to claim RRP pay if they find out they were in close contact with a co-worker or vendor who tested positive?**

No. Employees who learn they have had close contact with a co-worker or vendor in the workplace who later tests positive for COVID-19 would not qualify for RRP. RRP is reserved for High or Very High Exposure Risk duties between employees and members of the public in which risk cannot be adequately mitigated.

**A Milwaukee County Facilities Management employee is working on a plumbing system and has contact with waste water from a unit housing COVID-19 positive individuals. Would he be eligible to receive RRP?**

No. CDC guidance says that contact with untreated wastewater is not a known vector for COVID-19 transmission (it is only a theoretical risk at this point in time). For that reason, this **would not** qualify for RRP.

**How will we code RRP for payroll?**

As employee's job duties change, or they perform different tasks during the course of their day, they may move from one COVID-19 Exposure Risk Level to another. Therefore, employees may move in and out of Risk Recognition Pay eligibility throughout the day and over time. Specific procedures for coding time, based on FLSA and non-FLSA status, can be found in the order.

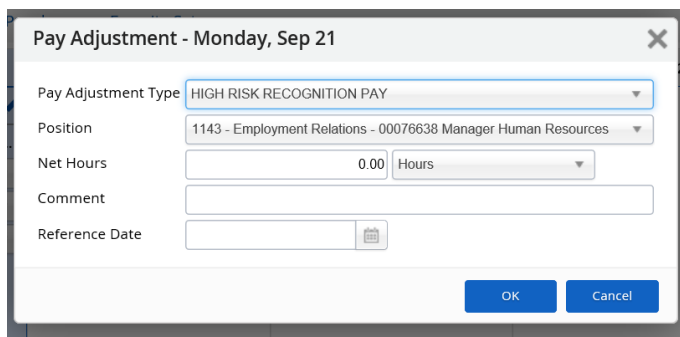
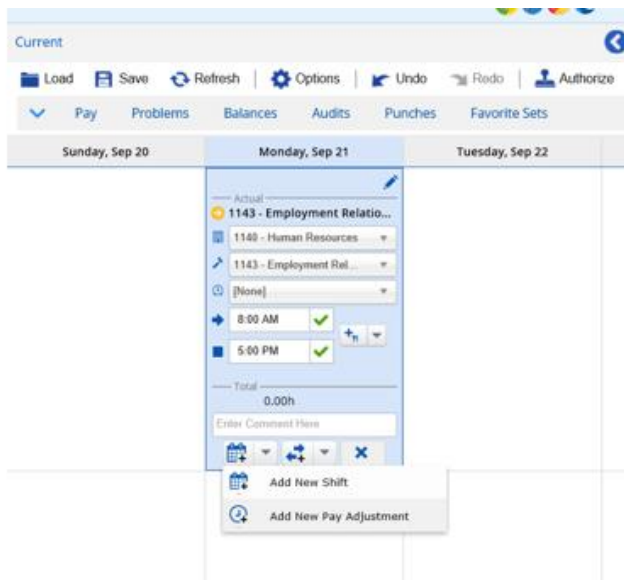
## How will timecard coding be audited?

Leaders who approved timecards are being asked to do a mid-pay period audit to ensure appropriate coding is being utilized by employees. Central payroll will also be running reports. The Comptroller's Office and Human Resources, in collaboration with impacted departments, has prepared a list of eligible high orgs, low orgs and job titles that are likely to perform qualifying job duties. This list will be used to review timecards after manager approval to ensure only eligible time for High and Very High Exposure Risk duties performed are receiving RRP. Coding entered by employees not on this approved list will be removed by Central Payroll. If an employee or manager's time is removed and they believe it should qualify, they should work with Central Payroll and their HR Business Partner to determine eligibility and adjustments to the qualifying list will be made, as needed.

*We have provided screen shots below to assist employees with how to enter RRP into their timecards:*

## Timecard Entry for Non FLSA Exempt Hourly Employees:

Click on "Enter Pay Adjustment" - select Pay Adjustment type and enter percentage of time spent in High or Very High Risk job duties



## Timecard Entry for FLSA Exempt Hourly Employees:

Click on “Enter Pay Adjustment” - select Pay Adjustment type and enter percentage of time spent in High or Very High Risk job duties

The screenshot shows a form with the following fields:

- Pay Adjustment Type: HIGH RISK RECOGNITION PAY
- Position: 3757 - Central Payroll - 00004161 - Supervisor Payroll-
- Net Hours: 0.25 Hours
- Department: [None]
- Activity: [None]
- Function: [None]
- ReportingCategory: [None]
- JobCosting: [None]
- Comment: (empty text box)
- Reference Date: (calendar icon)

Buttons: OK, Cancel

## Timecard Entry for ECP Employees or Exception Reporters:

From Arrow select Add Amount Pay Adjustment

The screenshot shows a timecard entry interface for the period September 13 - September 19, 2020. The interface includes a toolbar with options like Save, Refresh, Options, Undo Delete, Authorize All, Unauthorize All, Copy, and Print. Below the toolbar, there are tabs for Pay, Problems, Balances, and Favorite Sets. The main table displays the following data:

Date	Daily Total	Pay Code	Hours
13 Sunday	0.00		
14 Monday			8.00
15 Tuesday			8.00
16 Wednesday			8.00
17 Thursday			8.00
18 Friday			8.00
19 Saturday			

A context menu is open over the table, showing options: Add Row, Add Pay Adjustment, Add Amount Pay Adjustment, Copy Day, Paste Day, and Apply Favorite. The total hours for the period are 40.00.

## Select High Risk Recognition Pay or Very High Risk Recognition Pay

Today September 13 - September 19, 2020

Save Refresh Options Undo Edit Pay Code Authorize All Unauthorize All Copy Print

Pay Problems Balances Favorite Sets

Date	Daily Total	Pay Code	Hours
13 Sunday	0.00		
+ x ▾			
		HIGH RISK RECOGNITION PAY	\$0.00
14 Monday	8.00	BERV-Bereavement	8.00 1
15 Tuesday	8.00	CLOSE-Closure	8.00 1
16 Wednesday	8.00	CRIT-Critical	8.00
17 Thursday	8.00	DHDC-Dog Handler Expense	8.00 1
18 Friday	8.00	Extra Day	8.00 1
19 Saturday	0.00	FFCRA EPSL Bank Healthcare Quar	8.00 1
		FFCRA EPSL Bank Care	
		FFCRA EPSL Bank FMLA Childcare	
		FFCRA EPSL Bank Symptoms	
		FFCRA EPSL COVID Quar	

Total Hours 40.00

## Enter in Dollar (\$) amount for the week as shown in order

Today September 13 - September 19, 2020

Save Refresh Options Undo Edit Hours Authorize All Unauthorize All Copy Print

Pay Problems Balances Favorite Sets

Date	Daily Total	Pay Code	Hours
13 Sunday	0.00		
+ x ▾			
		HIGH RISK RECOGNITION PAY	\$40.00
14 Monday	8.00	Regular	8.00 1
15 Tuesday	8.00	Regular	8.00 1
16 Wednesday	8.00	VAC-Vacation	8.00
17 Thursday	8.00	Regular	8.00 1
18 Friday	8.00	Regular	8.00 1
19 Saturday	0.00		

Total Hours 40.00      Total Amount \$40.00

## Click on Save Button