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# COA Report

California Orthopaedic Association

February 26, 2021

## Breaking News

### DWC Releases Updates to the Medical-Legal Fee Schedule — Effective April 1, 2021

Highlights of the new Fee Schedule:

- Flat rate system starting at \$2,015 which includes 200 pages of records. \$3.00 per page of records thereafter. A projected 25% increase over existing reimbursement levels.
- Supplemental Medical-Legal Evaluation – \$650 - includes review of 50 pages of records.
- Reimbursement for Missed Appointments – \$503.75.
- Depositions - \$455 per hour – 2 hour minimum.

[READ MORE — DWC Newsline Medical-Legal Fee Schedule](#)

[Attend COA's 2021 Annual Meeting/QME Course to learn more about these changes.](#)

#### Want to Become a QME?

Take the DWC QME test on April 17, 2021. **Applications must be received by DWC by March 4, 2021.** The QME application and other information on the QME system can be found [here](#). New QMEs must take and pass the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) QME test and take a Mandatory Report-Writing Course. [Click here for information on COA's course](#). If interested in taking the QME test, [apply today](#). Let COA know of your interest, so we can update you as changes to the Medical-Legal Fee Schedule are implemented — [admin@coa.org](mailto:admin@coa.org)

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## **This Week's Highlight**

### **COA's 2021 Annual Meeting/QME Course**

Learn How to Perform a Telehealth MSK Examination

Edward Laskowski, M.D. of the Mayo Clinic will be the featured speaker and demonstrate how they are making telehealth musculoskeletal visits work. Telehealth visits will continue to be a practice management efficiency tool long after the COVID pandemic is under control. Patients also like telehealth visits. You will be provided with videos you can use in your practice.

[COA Agenda](#)

[Register for the COA Annual Meeting/QME course](#)

[AAOS Now article – Patient Safety in the Era of Telemedicine: Recognizing Red Flags](#)

## **Upcoming Webinars Cover Coding and Payment Policy Changes**

AAOS

Two upcoming webinars will review recent changes to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' Quality Payment Program (QPP) as well as the coding system. In the first webinar, on February 25 from 12:00-1:00pm ET ([register here](#)), staff from the AAOS will describe significant policy changes to both QPP pathways, the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) and Advanced Alternative Payment Models (APMS) from the 2021 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule, including new reporting options like MIPS Value Pathways (MVPs) and APM Performance Pathways (APP). The second webinar, on March 2 from 8:15-9:15pm ET ([register here](#)), will review in great detail the 2021 changes affecting CPT codes, CMS payment policies as well as ICD-10-CM and PCS codes related to orthopaedics. AAOS members are encouraged to attend the webinars and ensure they have the most up-to-date information on changes that will have a tremendous impact on practices. Register for the [QPP webinar here](#) and the [coding webinar here](#).

### **PRODUCT SHOWCASE**



#### **Weight Loss and Better Outcomes**

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## **Employed Vs. Independent Orthopedic Surgeon Pay in 5 Big Cities**

Becker's ASC Review

Orthopedic surgeons in independent practices report higher compensation than their counterparts employed by hospitals, and in some areas the gap widens as physicians gain more experience. Here is a comparison of orthopedic surgeon pay for employed and independent physicians in practice eight to 14 years and 15 to 21 years based on data from the Medscape's salary explorer tool. The company gathered data from more than 100,000 physicians in its annual survey prior to Feb. 20, 2020, and does not reflect the financial effect of the pandemic, according to Medscape.

[READ MORE](#)

### **COA Report**

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