

## Overbooking Radiology Studies

### Background:

Due to a combination of factors related to the Covid-19 pandemic, including mandated interruption in outpatient services and the need to respect continued social distancing guidelines and cleaning protocols during reactivation, radiology backlogs have increased dramatically, resulting in longer than usual wait times for exams.

### Purpose:

To provide guidance on overbooking radiology studies for radiologists and referring clinicians during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Definitions:

**Overbook:** An overbooked exam is one that is requested before the next available appointment for the given imaging modality. Of note, there is no way to exceed scheduling capacity due to social distancing guidelines, and approved overbooked exams may require rescheduling/delaying other studies.

**Time Released Appointments:** Appointment slots that are held open for overbooked exams until a specified time frame before the appointment.

**Cancellation List:** List of patients/orders that would receive priority in the event of cancellations of other patients.

### Procedure:

The only indication for overbooking an imaging exam is if the exam will alter management of the patient and there is significant potential morbidity or change in patient outcome if the study is delayed until the next available appointment (for example: cancer staging, acute medical issues, pre-operative imaging for non-elective surgery, etc).

The Department of Radiology is unable to approve overbooked exams for any other reason, including specific timing of subsequent clinic visits and/or patient/provider preference. REQUESTS FOR OVERBOOKS THAT ARE NOT MEDICALLY INDICATED WILL BE DENIED to promote equitable care for county patients.

**If there is a true medical indication for overbooking an exam, the specific time frame for overbooking it (eg within one 1 week, within 1 month, etc) should be determined by phone or written consultation between an attending radiologist and the referring clinician.** Depending on the specific modality workflow and real-time scheduling constraints, overbooked patients can be assigned time released appointments or may require rescheduling less urgent exams. Higher priority exams that do not meet

the threshold for a medical indication for overbooking can be added to a cancellation list if needed and if available for that specific imaging modality.

**If an exam is approved for overbooking, it is the responsibility of the ordering provider to message appropriate radiology scheduling personnel (see Cerner message pools detailed below) in writing via Cerner and cc the attending radiologist that provided approval.** The message must include the agreed upon time frame for overbooking the exam.

Contact Information:

Radiologists:

Body Imaging (CT or MRI) – 74791  
Neuroradiology (CT or MRI) - 74082  
MSK radiology – 65145  
Pediatric radiology – 47863  
Ultrasound – 74543  
Breast Imaging – 73894  
Nuclear Medicine – 73793

Schedulers (**Message Pool ID**):

**CT (OVM – CT – Scheduling Team)**

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