

# COMPENSATION TRANSPARENCY

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## Sample Questions for a Healthcare Documentation Specialist to Ask a Current or Potential Employer

It is extremely important to have a clear understanding of the compensation model by which you are being paid, whether you are currently working or interviewing for a new position. The following are topics to consider and/or ask about to determine the best situation for you as a healthcare documentation specialist.

*How am I being paid (e.g., hourly, hourly plus incentive, production only)?* Ask for details of the pay model.

*How does each system in which I am working count production?* Are headers and footers included in line count or does this fall under non-productive time? It should be noted that footers are usually not included since these are automatically filled in by the system with no involvement by the HDS. Please refer to [Definition of Line Count Methodologies](#) in the toolkit.

*Will my pay be based on the individual production model for each system I am required to utilize? If not, will a translation table be utilized to convert to a common line count for overall pay?* Please provide me with a written outline of how this conversion will work.

*What is my rate for traditional transcription versus back-end speech editing? If new to back-end speech editing will I be paid an hourly rate while training before moving to production? If so, how long will I be paid an hourly rate?*

*Is back-end speech editing included in the incentive for production program?*

*How will I be paid for training?* This question is important whether training for a new job or learning a new account or new technology with your existing employer.

*Will I be transcribing directly in an EHR? Given that I may need to access the patient encounter through multiple screens, how will my time be paid to accommodate this additional requirement?* Please provide specifics if paid by production.

*What is the acceptable production standard for a satisfactory job performance? If new to the organization, how long before I will be held to that standard? If I fall below standard, what steps are taken?*

*What is the QA requirement? Will I receive additional compensation for outstanding QA? If so, could you please explain your program?*

*Is your QA program tied to compensation in any punitive manner? Example, if I send more than a certain percentage to QA, will I lose compensation? How do you ensure the fairness of this program—for example, if I have a series of dictations that are of such poor quality (due to cell phone, excessive background noise, etc.) that I must send to QA, are these held against me?*

Please define “downtime” and how I will be paid for unavoidable downtime due to system failure, etc. *If I am not paid for downtime, am I expected to “make up” my time?*

*If no work is available during my scheduled time to work, but I am expected to continue checking for work throughout my shift, how will I be compensated for my time?*

*If I am paid per line for production, what is my hourly rate for PTO, FMLA, and sick time (if offered)? What is my hourly rate for downtime, non-productive time, etc.?*

*How is overtime calculated in a production environment? Whatever the compensation model, is overtime based on any hours over an eight hour day or any hours over 40 in a given week? NOTE: This may vary from state to state.*

*Do you require mandatory overtime on occasion? If so may I choose the hours to work?*

*If I fail to make minimum wage in a production environment, how will the company add to my check to ensure federal or state laws are met?*

*How will I be paid for recognized company holidays, if working or not working?*

*Am I eligible for a yearly merit increase on my base pay and/or production pay?*

*How often is the production or incentive pay model reviewed?*

*If I am offered employment will I be made aware of your compensation policies and procedures related to the pay model? If I accept the position will I have access to all compensation policies and procedures?*

*How often will I be paid? How will I be paid (direct deposit, live check by mail, etc.)?*