AFRICA CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES AND FORENSIC BIOTECHNOLOGY (ACENTDFB)

POLICY ON STAFF TIME REPORTING SHEETS

Version 1.0

Effective date: Upon approval

1.0 Purpose

This Policy establishes a consistent, transparent, and auditable system for recording, reviewing, approving, and retaining staff time and work activities at ACENTDFB. It supports attendance and workload monitoring, project/grant time allocation, institutional accountability, and accurate reporting to the Centre's funders and other authorised stakeholders.

2.0 Scope

This Policy applies to ACENTDFB employees and personnel engaged through institutional, project, grant, consultancy, temporary, casual, adhoc, or other approved arrangements where time reporting is required by ACENTDFB, ABU, a contract, or a funder. The applicable contract and ABU/funder rules prevail where they impose additional or different requirements.

3.0 Policy principles

- Time reports must be accurate, contemporaneous, complete, and submitted within the prescribed deadline.
- Staff must report actual time worked and activities performed; estimates or fabricated entries are prohibited.
- Time reporting is an accountability record and does not by itself establish salary, overtime, leave, or grant eligibility.
- ACENTDFB will use reports proportionately, protect personal information, and restrict access to authorised personnel.
- Staff must not charge the same hours to more than one project or funding source.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 Staff member

- Complete the approved Monthly Staff Time Reporting Sheet daily or as soon as practicable after the work is performed.
- Record actual start/end times, unpaid breaks, net hours, activity/project/grant, work location, and relevant remarks or leave code.
- Identify project/grant work accurately and provide supporting records when required, including fieldwork, travel, workshop, laboratory, or training records.
- Review totals, sign the declaration, and submit to the immediate supervisor by the monthly deadline.
- Promptly disclose errors and submit a corrected sheet with an explanation; never alter a previously approved record without authorisation.

4.2 Immediate supervisor / project lead

- Review completeness, plausibility, activity descriptions, project allocation, leave/absence entries, and supporting evidence.
- Resolve discrepancies with the staff member and document any correction or clarification.
- Sign and date the sheet only after review; return incomplete reports promptly.

- Confirm project time allocation is consistent with assigned duties and approved project budgets/workplans; escalate questionable allocations.

4.3 HR / designated administration

- Maintain the reporting calendar, approved forms, staff roster, and submission tracker.
- Check submission status and follow up on missing or late reports; maintain records of queries and resolutions.
- Coordinate with Finance and project administration on time records needed for payroll processing or grant reporting, without treating the timesheet as sole payroll authority.

4.4 Finance / grant administration

- Use approved time records where required to support cost allocation, budget monitoring, and donor reports.
- Check that project charges comply with the relevant award, contract, budget, and cost-allocation rules.
- Do not allocate unsupported, duplicate, or ineligible hours; refer inconsistencies to the supervisor and authorised management.

4.5 Centre management / authorised approver

Management shall approve the reporting process, deadlines, exceptions, and authorised reviewers; ensure adequate controls; and decide escalated matters in accordance with ABU rules, staff conditions, contracts, and funder requirements.

5.0 Approved form and required fields

The ACENTDFB Monthly Staff Time Reporting Sheet (Excel workbook) is the standard monthly form. It includes staff name, staff ID, designation, department/unit, supervisor, month/year, project/grant where applicable, and daily entries for date, day, start time, end time, break minutes, net hours, activity/project/grant, work location, remarks/leave code, and staff initials. The monthly total and summary are generated by the workbook.

Staff should use the current approved version and must not remove fields, change formulas, or modify the workbook structure without approval. If the form is unavailable, the supervisor may authorise a temporary equivalent record, which must subsequently be transferred to the approved form.

6.0 Recording rules

- Use 24-hour time (for example, 08:00 and 16:30) and enter the actual date for each workday.
- Enter unpaid break duration in minutes; enter 0 where no unpaid break applies. Net hours are gross elapsed time less unpaid breaks.
- Record work performed, not merely the project name. Activity descriptions should be specific enough for a reviewer to understand the work (e.g., laboratory analysis, field surveillance, data analysis, report writing, training, administration).
- Identify the relevant grant/project when time is attributable to it. Where work supports multiple projects, record separate, reasonable time allocations using the approved method and ensure the total does not exceed actual time worked.
- Record official travel, fieldwork, workshops, training, remote work, and other authorised duties in the activity and location fields, with supporting documents where required.
- Use the remarks/leave code field for annual leave, sick leave, public holidays, official absence, approved travel, or other non-working status. Do not enter fictitious work hours for leave or holidays.

- Overnight work or shifts crossing midnight must be recorded by actual date and time. Staff and supervisor must verify the calculated hours; any formula limitation must be corrected through an authorised process.
- Do not record overtime or extra hours as approved merely because they appear on a timesheet. Separate prior authorisation and applicable ABU/contract rules are required.

7.0 Submission and approval cycle

- Staff complete entries throughout the month and submit the signed sheet within the deadline communicated by ACENTDFB management, normally within the first five working days after month-end unless another deadline is announced.
- The immediate supervisor reviews and signs within the next five working days, or within the timeline set by management.
- Reports requiring project/grant validation may be forwarded to the project lead or grant administrator. Management approval is required where the internal process or funder requires it.
- HR/Administration records receipt, review status, missing information, and final filing. Finance receives approved records only where needed for payroll, project costing, or grant reporting.
- Where a deadline falls on a weekend or public holiday, submission is due on the next working day unless otherwise instructed. Management may set earlier deadlines for donor reporting or audit.

8.0 Corrections, late submissions, and exceptions

A staff member who discovers an error must notify the supervisor and submit a corrected sheet clearly marked "Revised," stating the reason and date of correction. The original and revised records must be retained. Supervisors must not make undocumented changes on behalf of staff.

A staff member unable to submit on time must notify the supervisor or HR/Administration before the deadline, where practicable, and provide the expected submission date. Late or incomplete reports shall be followed up and documented. Repeated non-compliance may be addressed through the applicable ABU employment rules, contract terms, and ACENTDFB procedures, with notice and an opportunity to explain. No automatic salary deduction or disciplinary sanction is created by this Policy.

Where staff are on approved leave, secondment, field deployment, or other exceptional assignment, the supervisor shall ensure that the report reflects the actual status and any required supporting evidence. Adhoc, casual, temporary, and grant-paid personnel shall complete time records when required by their engagement terms or the project/funder.

9.0 Use in payroll and grant reporting

Approved timesheets may support attendance confirmation, workload review, project cost allocation, and grant reporting. They are not, on their own, authority to determine salary, payment eligibility, overtime, allowances, leave entitlement, or donor reimbursement. Those decisions remain subject to appointment/contract terms, ABU policies, approved budgets, applicable law, and funder rules. Any staff cost charged to a grant must be supported by the required records and allocation method.

10.0 Monitoring, verification, and audit

- ACENTDFB may conduct periodic checks of time reports against duty schedules, leave records, field/laboratory logs, travel approvals, project deliverables, and other relevant records.
- Supervisors and authorised Finance/HR staff shall cooperate with internal and external audits and provide records through approved channels.

- Suspected falsification, duplicate charging, unexplained alteration, or material inconsistency shall be referred to management for review under applicable ABU and ACENTDFB procedures.
- Staff shall retain or provide supporting evidence as instructed; the centre shall maintain a secure central record and an audit trail of submissions, approvals, revisions, and exceptions.

11.0 Confidentiality and records retention

Time reports shall be accessed only by staff with a legitimate administrative, supervisory, financial, project, or audit need. Records shall be stored in a secure physical or electronic location with appropriate access controls. ACENTDFB shall retain time reports and related supporting records for the period required by ABU policy, applicable law, the relevant grant/contract, and audit requirements; where requirements differ, the longest applicable retention period shall be followed. Records shall not be destroyed while an audit, investigation, dispute, or funding close-out is pending.

12.0 Non-compliance

Failure to submit accurate and timely reports, knowingly false entries, unauthorised alteration, or duplicate project charging may result in corrective action or disciplinary referral in accordance with ABU policies, applicable staff conditions, contracts, and due-process requirements. ACENTDFB shall assess each case on its facts and shall not impose penalties inconsistent with governing rules.

13.0 Training and implementation

HR/Administration or a designated officer shall provide staff and supervisors with the approved workbook, submission calendar, guidance on project allocation, and instructions for corrections. New staff and project personnel shall be informed of applicable reporting requirements at engagement or project onboarding.

14.0 Review and amendment

This Policy shall be reviewed at least every two years, or earlier following changes in ABU rules, funder requirements, audit findings, or ACENTDFB operations. Amendments require approval by the authorized ACENTDFB management/ABU authority.

15.0 Approval

Approval Date: November 13, 2026

Signature: 

Name and Status of Approving Officer: Prof Y.K.E. Ibrahim, Centre Leader

Appendix A. Monthly submission checklist

a Staff details and reporting month are complete.

b Daily entries reflect actual work and dates; start/end times and unpaid breaks are recorded.

c Activities and project/grant allocations are sufficiently descriptive and supported where required.

d Leave, public holidays, travel, and absences are correctly coded and explained.

e Net hours and monthly total have been reviewed; formula or overnight-shift issues resolved.

f Staff declaration signed and dated; supervisor review and signature completed.

g Any revision, exception, or late submission is explained and documented.

h Approved copy filed and shared with authorised Finance/project staff where needed.

Appendix B. Relationship to the ACENTDFB workbook

This Policy is designed around the supplied workbook, which contains:

i. Monthly Timesheet,
ii. Instructions, and
iii. Monthly Summary.

The workbook currently calculates net hours from start/end time less break minutes, totals net hours, and summarises total hours and days with recorded hours. The workbook instructions state that it does not independently determine payroll, overtime, leave entitlement, or donor eligibility. This Policy preserves those limitations and adds institutional governance, review, approval, correction, records, and compliance procedures.