



Long-Term Care Facility Automates Compliance



**COLONIAL MANORS OF
COLUMBUS COMMUNITY, INC.**
SINCE 1975

Colonial Manor Has Confidence in New ACA-Required Reports

Colonial Manor, a skilled nursing and assisted living facility in Columbus Junction, Iowa, has been an Attendance Enterprise customer for over a decade. In January 2016, the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) mandated that all Long-Term Care (LTC) facilities submit quarterly Payroll-Based Journal (PBJ) reports beginning in July. PBJ reports must be specified in a midnight-to-midnight calendar day format regardless of skilled nursing care shifts. This creates problems for LTC facilities which are 24-hour operations with shifts that cross over midnight to the next day. Colonial Manor proactively looked for and found a solution in the new PBJ feature of their existing timekeeping software, Attendance Enterprise. The PBJ feature automatically formats the necessary data in the correct midnight-to-midnight format without changing the way Colonial Manor tracks employee time or calculates its payroll.



Colonial Manor

Colonial Manor is a LTC facility established in 1975. It has been independently owned and operated since 1994. The facility is an around-the-clock operation with two buildings: a skilled nursing facility and an assisted living home. The facility employs approximately 50 staff members in the nursing, housekeeping and maintenance, and dietary areas. There are three shifts for nursing, two shifts for dietary employees, and one shift of housekeeping and maintenance employees. The nursing staff sometimes transfers between the two buildings performing multiple duties.

Tracking Employee Time

Around 2006, Colonial Manor decided to automate its timekeeping with Attendance Enterprise, a labor management system configured by a local dealer. Prior to purchasing Attendance Enterprise, Colonial Manor tracked employee punches manually. The task of ensuring proper wages by hand was time consuming and took an entire 8-hour day each pay period. Once complete, Colonial Manor mailed the paperwork to an outside accounting firm for paychecks to be cut and distributed. The process was cumbersome and error-prone.

Excellent customer support and service from Time Management Systems (TMS) based in Sioux City Iowa, helped configure Attendance Enterprise to automate punches, time tracking and calculations. Employee punching errors are now visible in one easy report. The manager reviews the error report and verifies corrections with the employee before any changes are made to an employee time card. When all pay period information is accounted for, the manager simply exports the payroll file and it automatically uploads to the accounting firm.

“Attendance Enterprise shortened our payroll process from an 8-hour day to a 90-minute task every two weeks with no daily work,” said Molly Bausch, Business Office Manager of Colonial Manor. “We have been very happy with Attendance Enterprise and TMS.”

The Challenges of Compliance

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) poses many challenges for organizations, especially LTC facilities. Employers must eventually offer full-time employees health insurance or face severe financial penalties. Determining an employee’s full-time status and benefit eligibility on an ongoing basis requires an understanding of the ACA lookback method and measurement periods. Attendance Enterprise offers Colonial Manor a simple, at-a-glance report using a tool called VisualACA, for evaluating full-time, part-time, and variable hour workers. It provides guidance values to help maintain the employee’s hours at the desired status by Colonial Manor.

Payroll-Based Journaling

One component of the ACA is PBJ reports. Starting July 1, 2016, all LTC facilities have been required to report daily staffing and other census information through the online PBJ system to the CMS every fiscal quarter. This information includes job title, services provided, hours worked, and other parameters. CMS also requires hours to be reported by calendar day or from midnight to midnight. This causes shifts to be broken apart if they cross the day divide for PBJ purposes. Reporting shifts in this way poses a challenge for most LTC facilities, as they do not track employee shifts in this fashion.

Implementing the PBJ Feature

In late January 2016, Colonial Manor's accounting firm, Brighton Consulting Group, alerted Colonial Manor of the need to submit PBJ reporting in July. Colonial Manor knew they needed a solution to help manage not only the information required but also tracking employee time, down to the minute, at the skilled nursing facility.

Time Management Systems and Brighton Consulting Group had worked together with other LTC facilities and encouraged Colonial Manor to take a proactive approach to finding a solution. They found a great solution in the new features of their existing Attendance Enterprise system.

"If I would have had to figure (the PBJ reporting) out, it would have been an absolute nightmare. I don't know how I would have gone about doing that," said Bausch. "Attendance Enterprise automatically does that for us and puts it in a format where you see what you are sending. You have that confidence that it is doing what it's supposed to. It has eliminated, I don't even know how many man hours."

Attendance Enterprise tracks employee data each day and divides the shifts appropriately to fit into the PBJ scheduling format. This is incredibly helpful for Colonial Manor as they are an around-the-clock establishment and have shifts that cross the day divide. Colonial Manor also uses Attendance Enterprise to report the hours of their nursing staff. Some of their nurses can perform multiple duties at different facilities. Attendance Enterprise tracks the movement between different jobs and different facilities right down to the minute.

To help with transfers, Colonial Manor uses two time clocks. When a nurse enters the nursing home facility, the nurse initiates a transfer by swiping a badge and entering a code to specify the job performed. This keeps track of the hours Colonial Manor must report to CMS separate from other work activity. The employee can transfer back to the other facility by using the time clock in the same manner. Once the data is compiled, Attendance Enterprise presents the PBJ report for the manager to view before sending it to CMS. The report shows a breakdown of each employee's shifts from midnight to midnight as well as all pertinent employee data.

“(The PBJ process) requires a lot more time to review because of the transfers,” said Bausch. “Our payroll was down to an hour and a half but has easily grown to a 4-hour process with the review of all of the transfers. But if I had to do all of those edits by hand, and then double check my work, you’re talking a full day again.”

Confidence and Peace of Mind

In addition, the staff at Colonial Manor quickly adopted the new time tracking methods. They have a high level of confidence validated by accurate and timely paychecks. Colonial Manor management is happy because in addition to a streamlined PBJ reporting process, the full-time employee status information required for ACA matches their payroll report from Brighton Consulting Group, giving them additional peace of mind about ACA compliance.

“So PBJ has added a lot more work, but Attendance Enterprise has made it easy and has minimized what we have to do to make payroll happen,” concludes Bausch.

About Colonial Manor

Colonial Manors of Columbus Community, Inc. began serving the community in 1975 with the opening of Colonial Manor nursing home. In an effort to provide another needed service to the community, the Colonial Heights independent living duplex units opened in 1998. Colonial Estates, opened in 2010, is the latest addition to the Colonial Manors of Columbus Community, Inc. family. Colonial Estates is the first assisted living facility in Louisa County—just one more way to provide for the community.

About Time Management Solutions

TMS offers the finest time and attendance, labor tracking and door access security systems technology on the market. Family-owned and operated since 1985, TMS delivers full service implementation, detailed training and unbeatable customer support.

About InfoTronics

InfoTronics, Inc. is a technology company with more than 30 years of expertise in developing employee time and attendance solutions that provide businesses of all sizes a cost-effective, easily deployed workforce management system. Attendance Enterprise is the flagship product and provides advanced features for managing labor data—calculating pay rules, scheduling employees, budgeting labor, automating benefit accruals, tracking attendance-based merit points—while meeting the scalability, reliability and security requirements of large organizations. An extensive North American dealer network has helped more than 20,000 organizations use InfoTronics products to reduce labor expenses and improve decision making.