



Graduate Medical Education Policy

GME VACATION AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Applies to: Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine (ESFCOM) Graduate Medical Education (GME) and all accredited post-graduate medical training programs (i.e. residency or fellowship) and non-accredited clinical fellowship programs sponsored by the College of Medicine

GMEC Approval: 05/15/21

1.0 Policy Statement:

It is the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine (ESFCOM) policy to set guidelines and provide guidance for use of vacation and leave of absence for ESFCOM Trainees.

2.0 Definitions

Designated Institutional Official (DIO): The individual in a sponsoring institution who has the authority and responsibility for oversight and responsibility of all of the ACGME-accredited programs.

Immediate Family Member: The following definitions is applied for purposes of this policy:

- a. Spouse or registered domestic partner; parent; step-parent; child; step-child; brother; sister; legal guardian; legal ward; grandparent, grandchild, or parent-in-law, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law.
- b. "Parent" means a biological, foster or adoptive parent, a stepparent, parent-in-law, legal guardian or person standing in loco parentis.
- c. "Child" means a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward or child of a person standing in loco parentis.

Leave of absence: approved time away from residency duties, other than regularly scheduled days off as reflected in a rotation schedule.

Paid Time Away (PTA): includes time that a Trainee is away from his or her Program.

Program: The unit of specialty education, comprising a series of graduated learning experiences in graduate medical education, designed to conform to the ACGME Program Requirements of a particular specialty.

Program Director: The designated person accountable for the Program; this person must be selected by the Designated Institutional Official and possess qualifications acceptable to the appropriate Residency Review Committee (RRC) of the ACGME.

Trainee: a physician in training at an ACGME accredited graduate medical education program, the term includes Interns, Residents, and Fellows or other trainee enrolled in an educational program whose education falls under the purview of the ESFCOM Office of Graduate Medical Education.

3.0 Responsibilities

GMEC and DIO

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4.0 Procedures

ESFCOM recognizes that a Trainee may need to be away from their training program due to medical or certain family reasons. Each training program must have a written policy published in the program handbook that articulates specific time off requirements/restrictions for the program and/or specific rotations. All leaves will be scheduled with prior approval by the Program Director, with the exception of family emergencies or unexpected illnesses. In unexpected/emergency situations, the resident should contact the Program Director and/or Program Administrator, per program policy, at the earliest possible time.

Each training program will provide its Trainees with a written policy in compliance with its Program Requirements concerning the effect of leaves of absence, for any reason, on satisfying the criteria for completion of that training program. All paid time away (PTA) is tracked and monitored by the Program including leave and any planned or unplanned absences using the Resident Management System.

The amount of time a Trainee can be away from program duties and still meet Board requirements varies among the specialties. It is the Trainee's responsibility to be aware of his/her ACGME and specialty board requirements. Each Program Director will provide information relating to eligibility for certification by the relevant certifying board to Trainees. If leave time is taken beyond what is allowable by ACGME and/or the specialty board and the Trainee is required to extend his/her period of activity in the training program to meet these requirements, the Trainee should request permission to extend and should establish a schedule for doing so in consultation with the Program Director. The GME Office and DIO should be notified in advance of these discussions. The appropriate documentation including contacting the ACGME and appropriate certifying board should occur in advance of any action.

When the need/request for leave is foreseeable, the request should be submitted at least thirty (30) days prior to the leave. When the need for the leave is unforeseeable or the thirty-day notice cannot be given, the request should be submitted as soon as practical.

Appropriate medical documentation and clearance must be provided to the Program Director and GME Office upon request.

POLICY GUIDANCE:

A. PAID TIME AWAY:

Paid Time Away (PTA) includes time that a Trainee is away from his or her program. A Trainee receives twenty (20) planned PTA days per academic year. PTA does not accrue from year to year and must be scheduled and taken in the same academic year earned. Program policies and procedures for requesting and assigning leave schedules must be in writing and be in compliance with each program's ACGME Program Requirements, and the effect of leaves of absence, for any reason, on satisfying the criteria for completion of the program and specialty board eligibility/certification.

B. EDUCATION LEAVE:

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Absence from the program to attend educational, scholarly, and/or professional activities must be scheduled with the approval of the Program Director, per program policy.

C. FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE:

Pursuant to the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 and the State of Washington Family Leave Act, Trainees may take up to twelve weeks of leave within any 12-month period to attend to personal medical reasons or for qualifying family reasons. Trainees are eligible if they have worked at least 12 months and have had at least 1250 hours of work in the preceding 12 months from the date FMLA is to be used. Additional leave may be granted by the Program Director in his or her sole discretion. Personal leave taken in excess of allotted PTA is uncompensated, unless otherwise agreed upon between the Trainee, Program Director, and the DIO.

FMLA may be appropriate for a number of reasons, including but not limited to the following:

1. for the birth of or to care for a newborn child of the Trainee;
2. for the placement of a child with the Trainee for adoption or foster care or to care for a newly adopted or new foster child;
3. to care for the Trainee's Parent, Child, or other member of the Trainee's Immediate Family, who is suffering from a serious health condition;
4. to care for the Trainee's own serious health condition;
5. to address exigent circumstances caused by the military service of a Trainee's spouse, registered domestic partner, Child, or Parent; and
6. to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, when the resident is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the servicemember. This type of leave (military caregiver leave) may be for up to 26 workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period.

D. FAMILY CARE LEAVE

Under Washington State Law, Trainees are eligible to use available PTA as family care leave. Under the law, a Trainee is entitled to use any or all of their PTA to care for a sick child with a routine illness; a spouse, parent, parent-in-law, or grandparent with a serious or emergency health condition; and an adult child with a disability.

E. MEDICAL LEAVE:

Medical leave which is not FMLA eligible or which is requested after FMLA leave is exhausted is available at the discretion of the Program Director in up to 30-day increments up to a maximum of 52 weeks. Medical documentation is required if the Trainee is away for more than 5 calendar days. Trainees will be required to exhaust other forms of leave for which they may qualify prior to being eligible for medical leave. If PTA is available, it must be used prior to going into unpaid status.

F. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE:

Trainees may take up to three days of paid leave for bereavement in the event of the death of a member of the Trainee's immediate family. Requests for bereavement

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leave must be submitted as soon as possible and must be approved by the Program Director, per program policy.

G. MILITARY LEAVE/JURY DUTY:

Trainees will be granted military leave or leave for jury duty as required by applicable law. Please contact the GME Office for specific questions about such leave.

H. PERSONAL LEAVE:

If a Trainee does not qualify for FMLA, Family Care Leave, or medical leave, they may be allowed to take personal leave. Personal leave may be provided at the discretion of the Program Director in up to 30-day intervals according to the policies established by the individual residency program. Trainees will be required to exhaust other forms of leave for which they may qualify prior to being eligible for personal leave.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE:

Administrative leave is a general leave status, initiated by the Program Director, which is paid. Examples of when a Trainee may be placed on administrative leave include but are not limited to: an internal review or investigation, or for an investigation of an external event, such as an arrest. Program Directors should consult with the ACGME Designated Institutional Official before placing an individual on leave to determine the appropriate type of leave and to coordinate the appropriate payroll processing information.

AMERICAN BOARD OF MEDICAL SPECIALTIES REQUIREMENTS:

It is the responsibility of the Program and Trainee to be in compliance with the program requirements concerning the effect of leaves of absence on satisfying the criteria for completion of the training program, and guaranteeing eligibility for certification by the relevant certifying Board.

Prior to granting leave, American Board of Medical Specialties requirements should be reviewed by the Program Director and Trainee to ensure that the Trainee is familiar with the possibility of having to make up time away from training. If extended leave results in the requirement for additional training in order to satisfy board requirements, the GME Office should be notified, financial support for the additional training time must be determined when arrangements are made for the leave and the makeup activity.

5.0 Related Policies

GME Renewal and Promotion

6.0 Key Search Words

Leave of absence; Vacation; Time Off

7.0 Revision History

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Policy Contact: Designated Institutional Official

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