

## **GME Consortium Vacation and Leave of Absence Policy (ACGME Inst. Reqs. 4.8.– 4.8.g.)**

This policy describes current benefits that are provided to House Officers including specified paid time off, as well as paid and unpaid leave should the need arise. This policy is intended to comply with the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) as applicable. House Officers refers to all residents and clinical fellows in ACGME accredited or non-ACGME accredited training programs sponsored by the GME Consortium.

Since each House Officer must meet certain education requirements, as defined by the individual training program, ACGME and/or by the applicable American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the House Officer may be required to make up missed time due to a leave prior to advancing to the next level of training and/or prior to completion of the graduate medical education (GME) program.

### **Paid time off**

Vacation and Personal Days: House Officers are given 4 weeks (7 days per week) of paid time off each academic year. This time off can be taken in 1-2 week blocks for vacation or in shorter full day intervals for the purpose of personal days. The number of individual days that can be taken for personal reasons are limited to 7 total days. A House Officer who is scheduled to work during the weekend may request an individual weekend day off for personal reasons as part of the 7 total days.

Sick Days: House Officers are provided 14 sick days each academic year. Sick days may be used for personal illness or for your own medical condition (including medical conditions related to pregnancy and childbirth) or for illness of a family member. Sick days may be taken one day at a time and during scheduled weekends.

Additional Paid Time Off: House Officers who will exhaust six weeks of paid time off during the academic year due to taking an approved medical, parental or caregiver leave will have two additional weeks of paid time off, per academic training program, that may be used to extend a paid leave or to take a vacation or personal days later in the same academic year. If a qualifying medical, parental or caregiver leave event spans across two academic years the additional two weeks may be taken in the next academic year.

Holidays: There are no recognized paid holidays.

Bereavement: House Officers may be paid up to 3 days in the event of the death of an immediate family member to attend a funeral or fulfill other additional responsibilities taken on by the House Officer with regard to funerals, settlement of estates, etc. The 3 paid days applies per event. Bereavement days do not need to be taken off consecutively and are to be scheduled with the Program Director. House Officers are to notify their supervisor of the need for time off as soon as is practically possible. Program Directors may allow additional days taken from personal or sick days as well as unpaid days based on circumstances and in accordance with state law.

For the purposes of bereavement leave, the immediate family is defined as: parents, siblings, spouse or domestic partner, child (including biological, legal guardianship or adopted), grandparents, including great grandparents, grandchildren, in-law, step, foster and domestic relationship of all of the above are also covered. A domestic partner is defined as a person who shares residency with a romantic partner without a legally recognized union.

Paid time off does not carry over: Paid time off does not carry over from year to year nor is there a payment for any days that are not used. For purposes of this policy, the year begins on the day of you first report. The vacation, personal days and sick days reset on the date of your first clinical rotation each calendar year. For example, if your first clinical rotation started on June 21, your paid time off days will reset on June 21 each year. Time off will be prorated for House Officers who join Barnes Jewish Hospital/St. Louis Children's Hospital/ Washington University School of Medicine during the middle of an academic year. The additional two weeks of paid time off is only available once during the entire length of the Training Program and does not reset each academic year.

### **Extended Leaves of Absence**

Notice of Leave: Whenever the need for leave is foreseeable, the House Officer will make a reasonable effort to schedule the leave so as not to unduly burden the program and give notice no fewer than 30 days before the leave is to begin. If the nature of the leave requires that the leave begin in fewer than thirty days, the House Officer will give notice as soon as is practical. A House Officer must give the Program Director notice (confidentially) as far in advance as possible regarding requests for planned leave after the birth of a child or planned adoption, surrogacy or foster care, in order to facilitate appropriate scheduling. It is the responsibility of the program director, not the House Officer, to facilitate schedule changes for requested leaves of absence and sick days. The House Officer will need to apply for the leave of absence through the appropriate HR or GME Consortium office.

Using paid time for parental, caregiver and medical leave: House Officers may apply for parental, caregiver and medical leaves of absence in accordance with GME and applicable Institutional policies. House Officers may use up to six weeks of paid time off per academic year for these types of leaves by using their available vacation, personal and sick days to cover for missed work time during these types of leaves. House Officers may also use the available two weeks of additional paid time off (if eligible), one time during their training program, to extend their paid leave up to an additional two weeks. If applicable, FMLA leave will run concurrently with parental, caregiver and medical leave.

Parental leave – taken in the event of childbirth, or for parenting a newborn child, or placement of a child for adoption or foster care within one year of birth or placement.

Caregiver leave – taken in order to care for an eligible family member (in accordance with institutional policy) with a serious health condition. A “serious health condition” is an illness, injury, impairment (physical or mental) that involves either inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Medical leave – taken because of a serious health condition for the House Officer that makes the individual unable to perform the essential functions of his/her position.

Unpaid Leaves of Absence: Additional unpaid leave may be available in certain circumstances, with the approval of the Program Director.

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA): House Officers who are eligible (employed for at least 12 months and worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 months prior to the commencement of the leave) may request leave for his/her own serious health condition, the care of a new child or the health care of a seriously ill family member or for any other reason as outlined under the FMLA

Leave policy. House Officers will use available paid time off hours (vacation, personal, sick, additional time off for paid parental, caregiver, or medical leave) during FMLA leave until exhausted. The remainder of approved FMLA is unpaid. Regardless of whether a House Officer receives pay during the FMLA leave, the full amount of leave time (paid and unpaid) will be counted toward the 12-week maximum available in a 12-month rolling period for FMLA leave in accordance with the FMLA Leave policy. Medical certification will be required for leaves due to your or your family member's serious health condition. Conditions and requirements apply; see also BJC Policy 4.08, Family and Medical Leaves of Absence, FMLA or the WashU Medicine policy [here](#).

Unpaid Leave: For those situations in which House Officers, for any reason, do not qualify for a FMLA leave, they may request a leave from the Program Director. The granting of such leave, as well as the duration thereof, is at the discretion of the Program Director. House Officers may apply for such leave with respect to absences in excess of 6 weeks. House Officers must supply such supporting documentation as requested by the Program Director including, for medical leaves, a physician's certification. For more information and for information regarding compensation during non-FMLA leaves contact the GME Consortium Office or see BJC HealthCare Policy 4.09, Non-FMLA Leaves of Absence.

Leave for Military Service: House Officers may also be eligible for leave for Military Service in accordance with Institutional Policies. For more information regarding leaves for Military Service contact the GME Consortium Office or see BJC HealthCare Policy 4.09.

Return to work: Trainees should follow institutional policies for return to work after any leaves.

Benefits during Extended Leave: House Officers and their eligible dependents will continue to have elected health insurance benefits and applicable disability insurance coverage during any approved medical, parental, or caregiver leave of absence.

Moonlighting: Moonlighting while on parental, caregiver or medical leave, including concurrent FMLA leave is not allowed and may result in the termination of the previously approved leave from Training Program shifts or disciplinary action.

## **Individual Training Program Leave Policies**

Individual training programs are required to develop program-specific policies that provide further information on how these benefits are requested and used. These policies are required provide residents/fellows with accurate information regarding the impact of an extended leave of absence upon the criteria for satisfactory completion of the program and upon a resident's/fellow's eligibility to participate in examinations by the relevant certifying board(s).

House Officers should follow their Training Program's and Institution's policies for requesting and scheduling time off and when applying for applicable paid and unpaid leaves. For any unscheduled absence, it is the House Officer's responsibility to notify the department as soon as feasible and, if required by the department, to provide documentation per institutional policies. Any non-vacation time off that extends beyond 14 consecutive days require the House Officer to apply for leave.

## **Qualifying Time for Board Requirements & Make-up Time**

While this policy provides a summary of the types of leave a House Officer may be entitled to,

please note that it is the responsibility of the department, program and trainee to be in compliance with program requirements concerning the effect of leaves of absence on satisfying the criteria for completion of the training program and Certifying Board.

If make-up time is required to meet the educational objectives or American Specialty Board requirements, salary and benefits remain in effect. The trainee should discuss these issues with the Program Director prior to taking a leave of absence.

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