

Vacation and Leave Policy FAQ's

1. Is there a recommended way in which the 20 days of paid time off ("PTO") be allocated?
 - a. It is recommended that the paid time off be divided between blocks of vacation and personal days, such that every trainee gets a total of 20 weekdays off. Since the GME Consortium does not recognize weekends as part of paid time off, vacation is intended to include the 5 weekdays and a weekend associated with those weekdays.
 - b. We recommend an allocation such as this:
 - i. 3 weeks of vacation, with a week defined as 5 weekdays (Mon – Fri) and a weekend (Sat-Sun) associated with those weekdays. These are recommended to be taken as 1 week blocks, but may be distributed differently at the Program Director's discretion
 - ii. 5 personal days (Mon – Fri), to be used for any purpose to meet a trainee's personal needs. These are intended to be taken as single days at an individual trainee's request anytime during the year. Program Director's may not request a reason for the personal day. It is recommended that program directors set an expected time frame for advanced requests – ideally not to exceed 1 month, however they may need to accommodate unexpected/urgent situations. Program Directors may designate specific rotations for using these days if non-emergent.
 - iii. These 20 paid days may also be used for sick days or in connection with an approved leave of absence.
2. Can vacation days be divided into individual days or groups of days instead of being taken as one 7 day block of time?
 - a. Yes, but vacation days are intended to be used as a 7 day block of time. Individual or department circumstances may be directed by the Program Director
3. Clinic schedules for my specialty are made 60-90 days in advance. How should a program director/clinic director balance a personal day request (made 30 days in advance) with an existing schedule of patients?
 - a. Patient care duties will need to be supported (established patient appointments should be prioritized) by others in the program (i.e., a jeopardy list, or other trainee coverage) in order to accommodate a personal day request.
 - b. The program director may limit the number of requested personal days for a specific day if patient care will be impacted.
 - c. Program directors are encouraged to have a written program-specific policy for use of personal days.
4. Can personal days be used for sick days if a trainee has used > 10 sick days?
 - a. Yes, personal time off days must be used after a trainee has exhausted their 10 paid sick days.
5. Does a trainee need to take a personal day for a medical/dental appointment for which they will be gone for only 1-2 hours?

- a. No. Personal days are meant to be used when a trainee needs to be gone for a full day.
 - b. Residents and fellows should work with PDs to schedule non-urgent appointments during time/rotations that are most amenable for leaving work.
6. If we are going to an educational or research conference, or we need a day off to take a licensing exam (USMLE), do we need to take a personal day?
 - a. No. For attendance at conferences to present research or for educational purposes, programs can use the *GME named Off-Site Meeting/Course rotation in New Innovations.
 - b. For USMLE exams, a new rotation will be created in New Innovations so that this time can be accounted for appropriately,
7. Is there a time period for use of bereavement days after an event? What if there is more than one family death in a year?
 - a. Bereavement days can be used any time during the academic year. They do not roll over to future academic years.
 - b. House staff are able to take 3 bereavement days per event.
8. I would like to take parental leave this academic year. How much time do I get off paid and unpaid?
 - a. If the trainee has not taken any PTO days the trainee can use a maximum of 30 paid Monday through Friday days for approved leaves and the remaining are unpaid days per either FMLA (BJC employed trainees) or PD-approved leave (WU fellows).
 - b. If the trainee has already used PTO in that year, then those days are subtracted from the 30 total PTO days to give a remaining number of PTO days available for paid approved parental leave.
9. If I take parental leave will my training be extended?

Additional leave beyond 30 days may require extension of the training program depending on the guidelines, established by the ACGME, RRC and/or certifying Board for the particular program. The trainee and PD must check their specific Specialty Boards to understand the impact of time away on requirements for board certification.
10. If my partner is giving birth or we are adopting, am I able to use sick time for parental leave?
 - a. Yes. The sick days are able to be used for any parent, biologic or adoptive, for parental leave.