



LOWELL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Graduate Medical Education Policies and Procedures

Subject: GME Paid Time Off and Leaves of Absence	Page: 1 of 3
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Purpose:

This Policy establishes Paid Time Off (PTO) and Leave of Absence (LOA) standards for all residents and fellows enrolled in Lowell Community Health Center sponsored graduate medical education programs.

The Residency Program must have a policy that is compliant with both GME and Lowell Community Health Center regulations regarding PTO and LOA. This policy should be available to all residents in the program and include written procedures regarding application, oversight, and use of resident Paid Time Off. The Program Director is responsible, in conjunction with the Program Coordinator, for maintaining accurate records of the amount of leave time that their residents have used. In any situation in which Lowell Community Health Center's vacation or personal day policy applicable to all its employees conflicts with this GME Policy, the terms of this Policy shall prevail.

Definitions

Paid Time Off: One bank of time for all absences to accommodate time off needs including vacation, sick, and personal days.

Leave of Absence: Time away from a training program due to an eligible illness or injury of an employee or eligible family member or for the time away from work due to the birth or adoption of a child as defined in Lowell Community Health Center's Leave of Absence policies.

Policy - Paid Time Off:**PTO Days**

On an annual basis, each resident has 21 working days of integrated PTO, inclusive of sick, vacation and personal time. Any time off is considered Paid time Off (PTO) including time for illness, appointments, etc. Time off is counted in half day sessions (1 half day session = 4 hours PTO).

Planned PTO/vacation time

Use of planned PTO/vacation hours at any time requires the specific permission of the Program Director and must be scheduled in accordance with program specific policies and procedures. All planned PTO/vacation time must be scheduled in advance and be approved by the Program Director. The Program Director (or designee) may approve use of planned PTO/vacation days in advance of accrual and/or limit the use of planned PTO/vacation days during specific rotations, time periods, or to meet patient care or educational needs.

All PTO accrued during the appointment year must be used during the year in which it accrued. All unused, accrued PTO during an appointment year will be forfeited and will not be reimbursed to the Resident (no carry over).

Unplanned PTO/Sick time

Unplanned PTO/sick days are intended to be used when a resident is unable to complete their duties for a short period of time due to non-work-related illness or injury, or for care of the Resident's spouse, parent, or dependent child under the age of 18 (or an adult child who is 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability). Residents absent from work due to work-related illness or injury are eligible for benefits under Worker's Compensation. Residents may use unplanned PTO/sick days in advance of accrual only with specific approval by the Program Director.

It is expected that residents will notify their Program Director (or designee) of any absence or tardiness at least one hour prior to their scheduled work start time. It is the responsibility of the resident to follow the policies of their program in using PTO.

Residents requiring longer leaves of absence are referred to the section on **Leaves of Absence**.

Holidays

Due to the 24-hour nature of patient care, residents are not entitled to holiday leave. Residents on inpatient assignments should report to work as scheduled on holidays.

There is no mechanism by which worked holidays are “made up for” nor is there additional compensation for working holidays. However, the Program Director may approve time off on a holiday for a Resident who is rotating on a clinic or service that closes due to the holiday or may reassign the resident to another location.

Holidays are NOT included in allowed PTO, and time will not be deducted. If a holiday falls within a scheduled vacation, that day is not deducted from the annual PTO allowance.

Leaves of Absence (LOA)

Residents in GME programs are entitled to the LOA benefits for Lowell Community Health Center, as applicable. Residents are also entitled to the LOA benefit described in the ACGME leave policy (<https://www.acgme.org/newsroom/blog/2022/acgme-answers-resident-leave-policies/>). All resident LOA is subject to standard Lowell Community Health Center approval processes and must also be discussed with the Program Director, as there may be unique educational or training specific implications of LOA.

Neither Lowell Community Health Center nor the Program Director can guarantee that a Resident will be able to complete their training program as it was originally scheduled if that training is interrupted by absences due to an extended leave. An extended absence, for any reason, may impact an individual resident’s training program, including specific aspects of the curriculum, the overall duration of training and/or the anticipated date of program completion.

The Program Director, under advisement from the Clinical Competency Committee, is charged with ensuring that each resident’s training experience complies with ACGME and specialty specific board requirements for program completion.

Consequences of Unapproved Leave

Failure to comply with Lowell Community Health Center and the Residency Program’s policies, including obtaining prior approval, may result in Disciplinary Action (see Policy on Promotion, Appointment Renewal, Disciplinary Action and Dismissal) and/or be reflected in the resident’s final summative evaluation as an unprofessional behavior.