

INSTITUTIONAL GME POLICY - Educational Leave

Approved by GMEC – 3/28/2014, 9/23/2016, 7/24/20, 7/22/22

Purpose: To provide a predictable and equitable allocation of Educational Leave days across all residency and fellowship programs.

NOTE: This proposal deals with the number of days allocated only. Funding for meeting and conference fees, and travel expenses during approved educational leave is not part of this proposal and is the budgetary responsibility of each respective Program and Department according to UH JABSOM and HRP budget and finance policies, procedures, and guidelines.

Definitions:

- 1) *Educational Leave* – is an approved leave-with-pay for residents and fellows who are in good standing to do one or more of the following activities as appropriate:
 - a. Attend and be a participant, presenter, discussant, and/or moderator at a local, national, or international professional society meeting or scientific conference
 - b. Attend specialty-specific board review courses at the direction of the Program Director
 - c. Participate in designated residency/fellowship interviews.
- 2) Educational Leave does not include the following activities:
 - a. Vacation and all other leaves-with-pay (e.g., family leave)
 - b. Job interviews (excluding residencies/fellowships)
 - c. American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) board certification exams—*unless the exam is scheduled prior to the program completion*
- 3) *Good Standing* – A resident or fellow in good standing should meet the following criteria for their academic and employment performance:
 - a. Meet the academic competencies and milestones commensurate with their academic post-graduate year and level of training
 - b. Have no current or impending academic sanctions, including academic notice, academic warning, probation, suspension, letter of non-renewal, etc.
 - c. Meet all HRP employment expectations and requirements
 - d. Be compliant with all hospital rules, including medical records completion.
- 4) *Curriculum and Administrative required/approved Leave-with-pay Activities* – Time spent on other required course work, certifications, and/or administrative leadership development is accommodated as part of the required curriculum. These activities include Basic Life Support (BLS), Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), USMLE exams, etc.

Procedural Requirements:

- 1) Program Directors or their designees have the responsibility, authority, and discretion for following this policy and procedure in their review and approval of all Educational Leave requests.
- 2) Medical Board Specialties certification training requirements must be considered in all approvals.
- 3) Residents must be in good standing before educational leave approval is given.

PAID EDUCATIONAL LEAVE SUMMARY

Residents/Fellows are eligible for 1 week (7 workdays) of paid educational leave as noted below for each Program. Educational leave may be used to attend local, regional, or national conferences as a participant/ speaker/presenter, specialty-specific board review courses, or designated fellowship interviews (not job interviews). Resident/Fellow must be in good academic and administrative standing (e.g., no sanctions or remediation). Unused educational leave days are not transferable to the following year.

Financial support for conference travel and registration may be available through the Program's annual budget, or any available departmental/grant funding, subject to established parameters or limits. Travel support may be used regardless of whether the time off is paid educational leave, vacation, or unpaid leave. However, travel support typically does not completely cover all costs associated with a conference. Early planning and discussion with the Program Director and Administrator is essential for the allocation of travel support as well as educational leave.

It is the Program Director's discretion to approve time away for educational purposes. Once paid educational leave is exhausted, vacation leave or unpaid leave will be applied.

Travel to international countries requires additional approval by the employer's Executive Director due to additional requirements (e.g., worker's compensation insurance).

Eligible Years for 1 week (7 workdays) of Paid Educational Leave:

- Fellowships = All years of fellowship training
- Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Family Medicine = Years 2 & 3
Psychiatry and OB = Years 3 & 4
- Pathology = Years 2 & 3
- Surgery = Years 3, 4, & 5
- Orthopaedics = Years 3, 4 & 5 (also: Orthopaedic Research Resident = Year 2)

Considerations for Program Director and Resident/Fellow:

- For PGY residents outside the "eligible" list above, the PD may consider granting educational leave under exceptional circumstances to present original research.
- Leave used in an ineligible year will be taken from leave in another eligible year resulting in no increase of total leave during training.
- Board Specialty and/or ACGME requirements for total-time-away from training must be considered for all requests, including for future planning.
- Conference quality and educational value.
- Financial impact to hospitals (educational leave time is not eligible for CMS reimbursement).
- Early planning in order to assure appropriate coverage for patient care and/or consider if the leave would negatively impact other educational experiences.