Title: Leave of Absence Policy	GME-215
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Scope: Applies to all University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine ("USF MCOM") residents and fellows ("Residents") in Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education ("ACGME") accredited and non-accredited/non-standard programs as appointed through the House Officer Contract issued by the USF MCOM Graduate Medical Education Office ("GME Office").

Background: The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for leaves of absence ("LOA") in accordance with the federal law, state law, and institutional policies. This policy is also consistent with ACGME Institutional Requirements 4.8. Each USF MCOM GME program may supplement this policy with written procedures regarding approval and scheduling of LOA.

Policy: LOA generally and broadly refers to Residents' requests to take leave from work to manage any of a variety of personal and family needs: personal or family illness, pregnancy, military service, etc.

Residents MUST follow the procedure/guidelines of their training program in requesting, obtaining approval, and scheduling LOA. Failure to follow departmental and program procedures may result in the request not being approved. **Each Resident must submit a leave request in writing to their Program Director, or their designee.** Program Directors, or their designee, have the final authority to approve Program Approved LOA requests. The total time allowed away from a GME program in any given year or for the duration of the GME program will be determined by the requirements of the applicable specialty board and will be tracked by each program. **Board requirements override USF MCOM GME permitted LOA with the exception of federally protected time.**

LOA in excess of board allowance will cause training period to be extended. Extension of training is at the discretion of the Program Director, based on achievement of competency level, case logs, clinical competency committee ("CCC") feedback, board requirements, and subject to availability of funding and approved complement. Residents are encouraged to refer to the specialty board for specific details. Programs should refer to GME Policy -218 for extension due to remediation.

All leave is to be used during the contract year it is accrued and may not be carried over from one contract year to the next. Leave time is prorated for contract periods less than one (1) year. No payment for unused leave days will be made upon a Resident voluntarily or involuntarily leaving the program during the contract period.

Program Directors will need to report availability (or lack thereof) of resources resulting from leaves of absences to the Department Chair, GME Director, and/or DIO when approving leave.

Leave Categories and Allocations:

Program Approved Leave

Annual Leave: All Residents will receive up to twenty (20) weekdays of paid annual leave per contract year. Annual leave must be used for any time away from the program not covered by other leave benefits below, including board exams, Step 3, and interviews. Program in-training exams do not require leave time.

Conference Leave: A Program Director may authorize paid leave for a Resident in good standing to attend a local, regional, or national educational meetings relevant to the training program. Such paid leave is limited up to five (5) days each contract year, is not considered part of the Resident's annual leave, and may not be carried forward to subsequent years. Conference leave must be preapproved at least 45 days in advance with additional approval according to VA policy and timeline from the VA DEO if the absence involves a VA rotation.

Sick Leave: Residents will each be allocated up to fifteen (15) days of paid sick leave at the beginning of each contract year. Sick leave is to be used for any health impairment that disables an employee from full and proper performance of duties when the Resident is scheduled to work (including illness caused or contributed by pregnancy when certified by a licensed physician). Residents may be required after three (3) full or partial days of absence for medical reasons (consecutive or non-consecutive days) in any 30-calendar day period, to provide a medical certification from the Resident's physician before any additional absence for medical reasons will be approved.

A Resident experiencing a medical situation necessitating use of sick leave without prior approval must notify the Program Director as soon as possible.

Sick leave may be used for scheduled medical appointments and may be taken in half-day increments, as needed.

A Resident who is discovered to have obtained sick leave pay under false pretenses is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination per GME Policy -218.

Domestic Violence Leave: Residents may be provided one (1) additional day per contract year if the Resident or a family or household member is a victim of domestic violence (additional time beyond one (1) day must use accrued or unpaid leave and Residents must be allowed at least 3 (three) days total in any 12-month period if needed). Except in cases of imminent danger to the health or

safety of the Resident or to the health or safety of a family or household member, Residents seeking Domestic Violence leave must provide the program advanced notice of the leave. Domestic Violence leave does not require written approval or documentation. "Family or household member" under this section means spouses, former spouses, persons related by blood or marriage, persons who are presently residing together as if a family or who have resided together in the past as if a family, and persons who are parents of a child in common regardless of whether they have been married. With the exception of persons who have a child in common, the family or household members must be currently residing or have in the past resided together in the same single dwelling unit.

GME and Program Approved Leave

Medical/Parental/Caregiver: All Residents will receive medical/parental/caregiver leave per qualifying event up to a max of ten (10) paid days per contract year. Residents may elect to take annual leave and sick leave collectively with medical/parental/caregiver leave. The Leave of Absence form must be completed and submitted for approval to both the Program Director and GME Director for Medical/Parental/Caregiver leave requests.

Residents can use medical/parental/caregiver leave to cover absences related to parental leave (birth, adoption, placement for adoption, or fostering), a personal illness/injury, or immediate family member's illness/injury. For purposes of this policy, immediate family includes spouse, domestic partner, grandparents, parents, stepparents, brothers, sisters, children, and grandchildren of both the Resident and the spouse.

Eligibility for medical leave will require a medical certification from the Resident's physician and will be approved under the same conditions provided under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Parental leave can be taken after delivery or adoption of a child and within 90 days of the event. Eligibility for caregiver leave will require a medical certification from the Resident's family member's physician and will be approved under the same conditions provided under FMLA.

First time leave: The Program, in collaboration with the Sponsoring Institution, shall ensure that Residents receive 100% of their salary for the initial six (6) weeks of the first approved medical, parental, or caregiver leave(s) of absence. In accordance with ACGME policy for first-time medical, parental, or caregiver leave, Residents are entitled to six (6) weeks of paid leave, drawn from a combination of annual, sick, and medical/parental/caregiver leave. The one (1) week of annual leave reserved for use outside the medical/parental/caregiver leave event may be taken either before or after the leave period.

Residents are required to obtain advanced approval from the Program Director when feasible, to ensure optimal scheduling and to discuss any potential impact on board eligibility. The initial six (6) weeks of parental leave must be protected and scheduled prior to approving any additional leave requests. Departments that

have programs that fail to comply when advance planning could have been made will be responsible for additional stipend and benefits incurred due to the insufficient leave balances.

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA): The FMLA provides eligible employees with job-protected leave for qualifying family and medical reasons if they meet the FMLA's eligibility requirements (worked at least 12 months, at least 1250 hours over the past 12 months). Residents may take up to a total of twelve (12) weeks of leave under the FMLA if they meet the qualifications stated in the FMLA.

The FMLA simply guarantees unpaid, job-protected leave for employees who meet the FMLA's eligibility requirements. However, the Program requires employees who are eligible for FMLA leave to use other forms of accrued paid leave available to them (like annual, sick, or Medical/Parental/Caregiver leave) concurrently with their FMLA leave. Therefore, when an employee's health condition qualifies for FMLA coverage, the employee is required to take the FMLA (unpaid) leave at the same time as any other paid leave available to the employee. FMLA time will run concurrently with any other paid or unpaid time taken, so as not to exceed a total leave time of twelve (12) weeks, beginning with the first day of the qualifying event. If both parents are USF residents a combined total of 12 weeks of parental leave is allowed as prescribed by the Family Medical Leave Act.

To access information on the FMLA, please visit
https://www.usf.edu/hr/benefits/attendance-leave/fmla.aspx

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA): Residents may request reasonable accommodations for known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions under the PWFA. Accommodations must not impose an undue hardship on the employer. The PWFA applies only to accommodations and does not replace federal, state, or local laws that provide broader protections against discrimination based on pregnancy-related conditions. Residents seeking accommodations under the PWFA must apply through USF HR to initiate the process and ensure appropriate workplace adjustments are provided.

To access information on PWFA, please visit
https://www.usf.edu/hr/employment-resources/important-resources/pregnancyaccommodation.aspx

Sick Leave Pool: Sick Leave pool ("SLP") is available for extended illness of the Resident (illness of family members does not qualify) and may be used by Residents who are required to discontinue work because of medical needs. Such use may be allowed only after exhaustion of sick leave, medical/parental/caregiver leave and annual leave, up to a maximum of forty-five (45) calendar days (weekends and holidays count toward the 45 days of total SLP) per individual. Pre-approval must be obtained from the Program Director and the GME Director. The use of the Sick Leave Pool is not available for parental or caregiver leave. Residents sent for mandated fitness for duty

assessment are only required to exhaust their sick leave balance and 10 days of medical leave prior to utilizing Sick Leave Pool. Sick Leave Pool resets after 36 months since the last SLP day independent of program.

Military: USF GME follows the USF Systems leave policies/procedures tied to military leave qualification and procedures. Reference USF Attendance and Leave Guide for more information.

Bereavement Leave: In the event of death in the immediate family, the Resident may be granted up to four (4) days of Bereavement Leave to attend the funeral and assist in estate settlement. A miscarriage is included in this definition of death in the immediate family. The Leave of Absence form must be completed and submitted for approval to both the Program Director and GME Director for Bereavement leave requests.

Unpaid Leave: Residents must utilize available annual, sick, and medical/parental/caregiver leave balances before going on unpaid leave unless saving 1 week of annual leave is necessary to remain in compliance with the ACGME leave policy or future leave has already been scheduled for upcoming parental leave.

After a Resident has exhausted all eligible leave, the Resident will be placed on unpaid leave with approval of the Program Director and the employer cost of benefits and malpractice will be billed to the home department to fund. Continuation of salary is at the discretion of the Chair of the Department for Residents on extended LOA (exceeding the total of leave available). Benefits, however, will not continue for more than six (6) months.

Unexcused Absence: If a Resident does not show up for assigned hours, including night call, without notifying the chief resident or Program Director, the absence will be considered unexcused and subject to progressive discipline up to and including dismissal. Unexcused time will be taken as leave from the Resident's leave entitlement. Per the USF Attendance and Leave Guide, a Resident who fails to report to work for three (3) consecutive days without notification is considered to have abandoned their position.

Holiday Policy: GME Residents follow the holiday schedule of the program and training site where the Resident rotates at the time. If the Resident is utilizing annual, sick, or parental/medical/caregiver leave and if the rotation site is closed on a holiday that the USF practice plan observes, the Resident does not need to count the holiday day against the leave balance with approval of the Program Director.

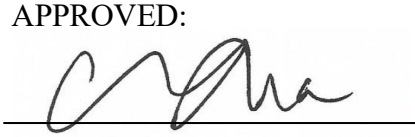
Religious/Cultural Holidays and Activities: USF GME follows USF Policy 0-602 regarding religious holidays.

Procedure

Responsible Party	Action
Resident	Agrees to abide by the LOA procedures set forth in this policy, in the Housestaff Handbook, in the House Officer Contract, and by the programs as applicable. Know and follows program's approval and notification procedures and board eligibility requirements. Submits the appropriate LOA Form requesting leave to the Program Director in a timely manner. A LOA for medical reasons may require documentation from a physician stating that the resident has a serious medical condition that will impact training and the estimated amount of time away from the training program.
Program Director	Develops procedures for LOA approval and documents when and how annual leave can be taken in ACGME block schedule, as applicable. Advises Resident and GME Office of approval or disapproval. Maintains accurate records of the amount of all LOA Residents have used and reports use of leave accurately in New Innovation. Knows and ensures Residents are meeting board eligibility requirements Follows disciplinary process for Residents who have unexcused leaves or misuse of sick leave. Follow ABMS requirements and procedures for any preapprovals required by the ABMS as applicable. Program directors will need to report availability (or lack thereof) of resources resulting from leaves of absences to Dept Chair, GME Director and DIO when approving leave.

Office of GME	Obtains GME Director signature and returns completed LOA form to Resident and Program Administrator if the request is not for annual or sick leave.

APPROVED:



Senior Associate Dean, Graduate Medical Education/DIO

Date of Origin	Effective	Revision/GMEC Approval:	Originally Policy #
01/1999	07/2025	07/2003; 06/2005; 08/2008; 01/2011; 05/2011; 07/2013; 03/2014; 02/2022; 04/2023; 10/2023; 04/2025; 04/2026; 10/2026	N/A