
Policy Title: Paid Time Off Utilization Policy (formerly Leave Time)



Original Date: July 2014
GMEC Endorsed: July 2014
Next Revision Date: July 2016

Bradley F. Marple, M.D.
Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education
Designated Institutional Official

PURPOSE:

To clarify the types and amounts of leave time generally available to graduate medical education trainees.

DEFINITIONS:

Paid Time Off (PTO) – any days away from work for which the trainee receives payment from their employer

Approved Leave – PTO taken within the guidelines outlined below

Vacation Leave – PTO scheduled in advance according to the protocol of the individual program, to be used at the trainee’s discretion

Discretionary Leave – PTO above and beyond Vacation Leave that may be approved at the discretion of the Program Director for specific personal or professional reasons

PROCEDURE:

Vacation Leave

Fifteen days of vacation are allocated for use in each year of training as stipulated by the house staff contract with the hiring institution. Specific times for vacation may be requested using form(s) submitted to the Program Director’s office in accordance with individual program procedures. It is scheduled by the Program Director or designee. All vacation benefits must be taken within the current contract agreement year. Unused vacation benefits will not be paid upon termination. Vacation is defined as occurring Monday through Friday during normal business hours. Days for which work would not otherwise be scheduled do not require use of PTO.

Discretionary Leave

Residents will have an additional 10 days of paid time off to use at the discretion of the Program Director for special circumstances including: sick leave, Family Medical Leave, attendance at professional meetings and seminars, board and licensure exams, interview days, bereavement (beyond what is already provided by the hiring institution), or standard and elective rotations away from UT Southwestern Medical Center premises.

Holidays

Some services, including clinics, may close for holidays. Holiday work schedules are to be determined by the department. Departmental holiday time is exclusive of PTO or vacation or other approved leave time.

Sick Leave

Sick leave pay shall be granted only in cases of actual illness. Time taken off must be cleared with the Program Director (or designee). The residency program administrative office must be notified when a house staff is on sick leave. House staff may not use sick leave their last ten (10) work days unless a physician statement is provided. Information on use of short and long term disability to cover sick leave/temporary disability (maternity leave inclusive) should be referred to the Benefits Program sections. Unused sick leave will not be paid upon termination.

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides up to twelve weeks of job-protected leave to eligible house staff for certain family and medical reasons. This leave may be unpaid, depending on applicable and available PTO days. To be eligible for FMLA, a house staff must have been employed for at least one year and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous twelve months. FMLA provides leave to care for a newborn child or a child placed in the house staff's home for adoption or foster care; to care for a house staff's parent, spouse, son or daughter with a personal serious health condition; or for a serious personal health condition which prevents the house staff from performing his or her job. FMLA must be initiated and approved by the Program Director.

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Maternity/Paternity leave is provided under the Family Medical Leave Act and allows for up to twelve weeks leave for the birth or adoption of a child. Requests for maternity/paternity leave must be submitted to the Program Director before or as soon as possible after the house staff begins maternity/paternity leave (preferably within one week). Requests must include the beginning date of leave, the expected return date, and the type of leave that will be utilized (i.e., vacation, sick, LOA) with the number of days allocated to each type of leave. Once the house staff has utilized all available vacation and sick days, he/she will become LOA (Leave of Absence) without pay.

Jury Duty, Military Reserve Duty, Bereavement

Leave time for purposes of jury duty, military reserve duty, and bereavement will comply with the policies of the resident's employer.

Effect of Leave Time on Eligibility for Board Certification

Residents should be aware that graduation from residency and Board certification depends on the completion of a specified amount of training. See the GME policy entitled *Effects of Leaves of Absence Policy*.

The following rules apply for all approved leave: no cash conversion options, no cash-out at termination, and no accrued bank carryover.