

## POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

### SCHULICH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY

### POLICY ON RESIDENCY LEAVES OF ABSENCE

**Approved by PGME Committee:** March 9, 2022

**Approved by ECSC:** April 1, 2022

**Date of Next Scheduled Review:** 2025

#### Preamble

It is recognized that residents may require an interruption of training for personal or professional reasons. This policy provides the processes and procedures for residents, residency programs and the Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) office for requests and granting of leaves of absence.

This policy applies to all residents registered with PGME. Area of Focused Competence (AFC) trainees and clinical and research fellows should contact their program or fellowship director with respect to departmental policies and procedures.

Internationally Sponsored Residents (ISRs) are given the equivalent opportunities, rights and privileges afforded to their Canadian counterparts as provided for in the Collective Agreement between the Professional Association of Residents of Ontario (PARO) and the Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario (CAHO) with respect to all non-monetary matters. ISRs are afforded the same access to leaves of absence as outlined in this policy, but in respect to payment during such leaves, the resident must first consult with their sponsoring agency, as the terms set out in this policy related to paid and unpaid leaves do not apply to ISRs.

#### Policy and Resource References

- [General Standards of Accreditation for Institutions with Residency Programs](#) (Requirement 4.1.3.4)
- [Professional Association of Residents of Ontario \(PARO\) Agreement](#)
- [Leaves from Ontario Postgraduate Residency Programs](#) (Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine)
- [Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship](#)
- [College of Family Physicians of Canada Eligibility and Application](#)
- [PGME Leaves Form](#)

#### Definition

A leave of absence is an approved interruption of training for any reason. For the purpose of this policy, 'leaves' do not include vacation, professional leave (the PARO Collective Agreement entitles residents for a professional leave of up to 7 working days per year) or leaves for the

purpose of taking certification examinations that residents are entitled to as per the PARO Collective Agreement.

## Principles

1. Residents on leave must maintain a current training appointment with Schulich Medicine. The resident on leave:
  - i. Is expected to maintain a standard of conduct in keeping with the standards of the residency program, Schulich Medicine, and the medical profession at large.
  - ii. Residents on leave must verify and approve a Letter of Appointment (LOA), pay any registration fees, and complete all other registration requirements to maintain residency training appointment with the PGME office.

Failure to meet these two obligations may result in the withdrawal of a resident's appointment in the program.

2. The residency program director considers all interruptions of training and approves requests for leave. It is the resident's professional responsibility to ensure that the program director and program administrator are notified regarding their request for leave prior to the start of the leave. In urgent circumstances, it is recognized that this may not be possible; the resident must notify the faculty supervisor or chief resident to ensure that clinical responsibilities are reassigned as required.
3. Leaves of absence greater than one week in duration must be reported to the PGME Office by the program and approved by the Associate Dean PGME. The [leave form](#) must be accompanied by supporting documentation relevant to the leave.
4. The PGME office will notify the relevant parties (College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (Royal College), and the paymaster of interruptions of training greater than one week, as reported to the program director. Residents must be aware of their professional obligations to report leaves to the CPSO when applying for or renewing licenses. Failure to disclose leaves from the training program may result in delays in license renewal.
5. Residents will return to the residency program following a leave. It is anticipated that the required training experiences missed will be made up with equivalent experiences in the residency upon return to the program.
6. Salary and benefits continuation during a leave of absence is determined by the PARO-CAHO Collective Agreement.

## Types of Leaves

- Sick Days/Medical Leave (paid)
- Bereavement Leave (paid)
- Personal or Compassionate Leave (unpaid)
- Educational Leave (unpaid)

- Pregnancy and Parental Leave (paid)

Further information for types of leaves is found in the Summary of Leaves Document.

### Salary Classification

Residents will normally advance to the next salary level of training at the successful completion of 12 months of training. Residents who have taken a leave of absence of more than four weeks during the training year will proceed to the next salary level at the discretion of the Program Director. In exercising this discretion, the program director will consider the resident's academic record in the program.

### Return to Training

It is anticipated that the required training experiences missed will be made up with equivalent experiences in the residency on the resident's return to the program. Normally all residents will be required to complete all mandatory and elective components of the program.

While residents normally will return to the program at the same level as when the leave was taken, the Program Director, in discussion with the returning resident, shall determine:

- The training level to which the resident will return following the leave; and
- The necessary educational experiences required for the resident to complete the residency requirements and learning objectives/competencies of the training program.

If a modified program is required, it must be submitted to and approved by the appropriate Residency Training Committee and the Associate Dean PGME.

A resident returning after medical leave, a leave longer than six months, or a Long-Term Disability leave, must provide a written medical certificate from their treating physician indicating their capability and fitness to return to the program. The program director or the Associate Dean PGME may also require an additional independent medical opinion to ensure the resident's capability to resume the residency program. In addition, residents returning from an extended absence (of six months or longer) may require a return-to-work accommodation to transition back to residency training. In addition to providing a medical certificate, the resident must coordinate with their home program and the Learner Experience Office on their return-to-work plan. The PGME office can provide guidance on this process.

### Appendices

- **Appendix A:** Leaves Process
- **Appendix B:** Summary of Leaves