

TITLE: Trainee Leave	POLICY NUMBER: GME-7
SERVICE LINE/DEPARTMENT: GME Residents and Fellows	

PURPOSE: To establish a policy for all post-graduate medical/dental trainees sponsored and employed by HealthPartners regarding time away from training.

This policy applies to all sponsored and employed trainees in programs accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), the Council on Podiatric Medical Education (CPME), and the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). All information contained in this policy shall be used as minimum criteria for trainee time away from training. More detailed program-specific criteria shall be delineated by each program in its respective leave policy.

DEFINITIONS:

Post-Graduate Year (PGY): The trainee’s appointment year(s) following graduation from medical, podiatry, or dental school.

POLICY:

Each trainee shall be granted time away from training through Time Away from Practice (TAFP) and other means described below. TAFP cannot exceed four work weeks total per academic year, per the program’s tracking protocol. Program policies must be compliant with and governed by the regulations of the various specialty Boards, accrediting organizations, and employer groups. Unused TAFP does not carry over to the next academic year and is not paid out at the end of the year.

PROCEDURE:

Time away for academic purposes, such as conferences, is under the jurisdiction of the training program, which must ensure that time away is well spent and fits within the curriculum and content of their training. The four weeks of TAFP does not include academic time away, unless the trainee has exceeded the allowable amount of academic time away as dictated by the program.

The program must make mutually agreeable arrangements with any department that may be affected by the trainee’s leave.

Program Directors must approve requests for all leaves and TAFP. Each program is responsible for maintaining accurate records of the amount of leave time taken by each trainee.

Leaves of Absence

Prior to granting a leave of absence, Program Directors and the department, working with the trainee, must ensure the leave is compliant with all requirements concerning the effect of leaves of absence on satisfying the criteria for completion of the training program and eligibility for certification by the relevant certifying Board. The trainee should exercise consideration in informing the Program Director/Coordinator as early as possible, but no later than eight weeks prior to the leave, or as soon as otherwise practicable, to allow scheduling of curriculum plans to accommodate the leave. Individual

program leave policies will further clarify how leaves taken will affect the trainee's TAFP balance, their pay, and their program end date.

Minnesota Paid Leave & GME Paid Leave

Beginning January 1, 2026, trainees who spend a majority of their time working in Minnesota are eligible for the Minnesota Paid Leave program, which provides paid time off for qualifying medical leaves, parental bonding leaves, caregiver leaves, leaves to support a military family member or for certain personal or family safety situations.* More information on the Minnesota Paid Leave program can be found at <https://paidleave.mn.gov>.

Through this leave policy, trainees are eligible for six weeks of paid leave for qualifying reasons paid at 100 percent of their pay per post-graduate year, made available to them the day they are required to report for their program. The state of Minnesota Paid Leave program only provides a portion of the trainee's salary. Therefore, trainees with a qualifying leave will be able to utilize the state-provided leave benefit and will receive the remaining portion of their pay through the GME Paid Leave program for up to six weeks. Trainees may request additional time off, but any time taken over six weeks in duration may not be paid at the full amount of their salary.

Trainees may qualify to use paid leave for the following reasons:

1. Medical Leave:

Leaves for qualifying medical reasons will be covered by a combination of the Minnesota Paid Leave program and the trainee's short term disability insurance carrier.

2. Bonding Leave:

New parents may request time off to care for and bond with their newborn, adopted, or foster child for up to one year after birth or placement. Funding for this leave will come from a combination of the Minnesota Paid Leave program and the GME Paid Leave program. Birth parents receive this leave coverage through a combination of their short-term disability insurance and the Minnesota Paid Leave program. Birth parents can also request additional bonding leave through the Minnesota paid leave program, paid at a portion of their salary.

3. Caregiver Leave:

Trainees may request time off to care for qualifying family members with a serious health condition or need for continued treatment of a serious health condition. Funding for this leave will come from a combination of the Minnesota Paid Leave program and the GME Paid Leave program.

4. Military and Safety Leave:

Trainees may request time off to support a family member called to active duty or to respond to a domestic violence or stalking situation. Funding for this leave will come from a combination of the Minnesota Paid Leave program and the GME Paid Leave program.

5. Compassionate Leave:

Trainees may request time off in the case of certain emergency or distressing situations that are not included in the other leave categories above. Examples of compassionate leave include bereavement leave, dealing with a pregnancy loss or complications from infertility treatment, etc. Approvals for compassionate paid leave will be determined on a case-by-case basis between the Office of Health Professional Education and program leadership. Funding for this leave will be paid directly from the GME Paid Leave program.

Qualifying situations for medical, bonding, caregiver and military and safety leave are determined by the Minnesota Paid Leave program and the short-term disability insurance carrier, if applicable.

*Trainees in the Western Wisconsin family medicine residency program will only qualify for the MN Paid Leave program in their PGY-1 year. Any qualifying leaves taken in the remaining years of residency, located in Wisconsin, will receive paid leave through the GME Paid Leave program. More detail can be found in the program leave policy.

Requesting a Leave

Trainees should submit their request for leave to their Program Director/Coordinator within the timeframe described above. Programs will partner with the trainee and OHPE to complete the OHPE Trainee Leave Request Form. Leave approvals will be determined between the program and OHPE and will be communicated to the trainee by their Program Director/Coordinator. Once approved, the trainee will be directed to the HealthPartners leave of absence administrator for further instruction.

Personal Leave of Absence

A Personal Leave of Absence for education or personal time off may be granted at the discretion of the Program Director. If a Personal Leave of Absence is granted, the length of time for this leave is at the discretion of the Program Director. This leave does not qualify for the Minnesota Paid Leave program or the GME Paid Leave benefit. Individual program leave policies will further clarify how the leave taken will affect the trainee's TAFP balance, their pay, and their program end date.

Extensions of Training

If a training extension is needed, the trainee, Program Director, and Program Coordinator are responsible for ensuring all program and institution requirements are met in the new training timeframe.

Specialty Board requirements should be reviewed by the Program Director and trainee to ensure that they are familiar with the responsibilities for making up time away from training. If a training extension is needed, financial support for the additional training must be determined when arrangements are made for the leave and the make-up activity.

Returning to Work

Trainees must return to work no later than the first scheduled workday after the date through which the leave was approved. If the trainee is unable to return to work on the approved return-to-work date, the trainee must contact the Program Director and the HealthPartners leave of absence administrator as soon as they become aware of the need for an extension of leave and before the return-to-work date.

Impact on Benefits

Trainee benefits during an approved leave will continue in accordance with employer practice.

Trainee Schedules in New Innovations' Residency Management Suite (RMS)

The program must reflect all trainee leaves of absence and schedule changes on the block schedule in RMS. If a leave extends training, the program is responsible for reflecting that on the RMS block schedule and submitting the "Time Away Extends Form" to MMCGME Services once the trainee returns.

RELATED DOCUMENTS: OHPE Trainee Leave Request Form.

REFERENCE MATERIALS: Not Applicable

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Not Applicable

COMMITTEE/POLICY SPONSOR OR OWNER APPROVAL: Graduate Medical Education Committee