

GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE POLICY NO. 34

A. SUBJECT: Graduate Medical Education Trainees' Away Rotations

B. EFFECTIVE DATE: February 19, 2025 (R)

C. REASONS FOR POLICY:

The University of Virginia Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC) recognizes the need to provide educational opportunities that occur outside of the Sponsoring Institution. This policy is intended to ensure the quality of learning opportunities and supervision of GME Trainees ("Trainees") when they engage in clinical and/or research opportunities that have been approved in advance by GMEC outside of the University of Virginia Medical Center (UVAMC).

D. DEFINITIONS

Sponsoring Institution: The organization (or entity) that assumes the ultimate financial and academic responsibility for graduate medical education programs and Trainees. The University of Virginia Medical Center is the sponsoring institution for UVA Trainees.

Participating Site: An organization providing educational experiences or educational assignments/rotations for Trainees not under the same governance as the sponsoring institution.

Program Letter of Agreement (PLA): A written document that addresses graduate medical education responsibilities during an Away Rotation between the Sponsoring Institution and a Participating Site at which Trainees have Required or Elective educational experiences. A PLA is not required if the Away Rotation is exclusively a research or non-clinical experience.

Away Rotation: a clinical, research, or non-clinical experience, which results in educational credit, and may include both Required Rotations and Elective Rotations for graduate medical Trainees that occurs at a Participating Site or at another location, even when supervised by UVA faculty members.

Required Rotation: a clinical, research, or non-clinical educational experience in which all Trainees in a program are required to participate as part of the program curriculum.

Elective Rotation: a clinical, research, or non-clinical educational experience in which a Trainee may voluntarily participate.

International Experience: A clinical research or non-clinical experience outside the continental United States and the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Travel Registry: A confidential and secure database for maintaining key travel information about GME Trainees traveling for University-related purposes. The travel registry is the official and authoritative source of traveler information that forms the basis for the University's emergency response protocols and communications strategy when responding to an emergency or critical incident abroad.

Travel Advisories: The U.S. Department of State's Consular Safety and Security Messaging system, which employs four levels of advice for every country. A Travel Advisory may also be issued for a particular region of a country. While the overall advisory for a country may be at lower risk, a region or regions within the country may be assessed as "High Risk."

University Travel Restrictions: A restriction on student or Trainee travel for university-related purposes issued by the International Studies Office (ISO) under the direction of the Risk Management Committee for Education Abroad and the Vice Provost for Global Affairs and published on the ISO website. A University Travel Restriction may limit Trainee travel to a region.

E. POLICY STATEMENTS:

1. Procedures

- A) **Required Rotation:** The program must receive approval for Required Rotations by the GMEC and by the certification board or the accreditation organization if required.
- B) **Elective Rotation:** Elective Rotations can be one-time or recurring when more than one Trainee in a program participates at the same site.
- C) **Application:** An application signed by program director with supplemental documents (e.g., supervising faculty CV and Program Letter of Agreement) must be received at least 90 days in advance of the starting date for all new Away Rotations (Required and Elective) for GMEC review and approval.
- D) **Review and Approval:** Each application will be reviewed by the GME Subcommittee on Education and presented before the full GMEC for approval based on its educational merit. Approval is granted by the majority vote of the GMEC.
- E) **Required or Recurring Rotation Renewal:** For Required or Recurring elective rotations, review by the Education Subcommittee and GMEC is required every three years, or in the event of significant changes at the approved site.
- F) **Program Letter of Agreement:** There must be a PLA between the Sponsoring Institution and each Participating Site for all Away Rotations. This requirement may be waived in the following cases determined by the University Counsel.
 - Exclusively research only rotations
 - Non-clinical rotations at a domestic or an international NGO, UN, or governmental agency
 - Rotations of minimal duration, less than 3 days
 - Observation-only rotations
 - Away rotations for learning courses such as pathology, radiology, or toxicology courses required for graduation
- G) **Approved Required or Recurring Electives:** It is the program's responsibility to notify the GME Office at least 60 days from the starting date in advance each time a GME trainee rotates at an approved site, using GME Away Rotation Form B. For required or elective **research rotations with prior approval by GMEC**, the program

must notify the GME office **at least 30 days in advance** from the starting date, using Form B.

- H) **Stipend and Benefits During Away Rotations:** Once approved by the GMEC, the UVA Medical Center will extend stipends and benefits, including liability coverage for Trainees.
- I) **Frequency and Duration of Away Rotation:** Trainees may apply for up to 30 calendar days away elective(s) per academic year as long as the absence for elective experience does not interfere with accreditation and/or board certification requirements. Exceptions must be approved by the GMEC.
- J) **Changes in Away Rotation after the GMEC approval:** If changes occur in the rotation site or the supervising faculty at the rotation site after the GMEC approval, a new application should be submitted to the GME Education Subcommittee for review.
- K) **Trainees with the ECFMG-sponsored J1 Visa:** ECFMG must be informed at least 30 days in advance of any proposed off-site rotation that will be conducted at a location other than the approved "Sponsoring Institution" or a "Participating Site" for the training program as reported to and recognized by the ACGME, including both domestic and international rotations.
- L) **Requirements for International Experience by the University:** Trainees seeking to participate in international experiences must adhere to relevant portions of the University of Virginia Policy PROV-010. GME Trainees must:
- enter their travel information in the University's Travel Registry;
 - purchase a policy with the University's designated health and emergency assistance insurance provider;
 - affirm that they have read, understand, and agree to the University's Conditions of Participation and Acceptance of Risk for international travel;
 - enroll in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) if a U.S. citizen; and
 - ***petition for an exemption when*** traveling to or through nations or regions which
 - have a Level 3 or Level 4 Travel Advisory issued by the U.S. Department of State Travel,
 - have a Level 3 Travel Health Notification issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC),
 - are a U.S. Dept. of Treasury Sanctioned Country, or
 - are subject to a travel restriction issued by the University.
- M) **Petition for an Exemption to Travel:** Trainees wishing to participate in international experiences in countries or regions of the world identified in section 1- J of this policy will be subjected to a two-step process. The GMEC must first review and approve the elective for its educational merit. Subsequently, the Trainee must then petition for an exemption following the process in University of Virginia Policy PROV-010. In order for travel to be approved by the University's Provost Office, the Trainee must prove that their research, clinical or educational experience cannot be

completed anywhere else in the world and must have the written approval of the faculty advisor and Designated Institutional Official.

- N) **International Conferences:** Trainees traveling outside the United States to attend educational conference(s) do not need to obtain GMEC approval. However, they must obtain the program director's approval, register through the University's Travel Registry, and notify the GME Office using Away Rotation Form B at least 30 days in advance of travel. Trainees will be subjected to the process outlined in section 1-L.
- O) **Safety Plan Addendum:** Programs must provide a safety addendum to form B for Trainees on an international research experience that describes how Trainee safety will be monitored during the experience.

2. Program Director Responsibilities

- A) The program director or their designee must monitor the clinical learning and working environment and ensure adequate supervision in all Away Rotation sites.
- B) The program director or their designee must approve the Trainee's Away Rotation application and ensure compliance with the institutional policies and the accreditation and/or certification board requirements.
- C) The program director or their designee must inform the Trainees of required away rotations as early as possible and no later than 60 days prior to the start date.
- D) The program director or their designee must approve a supervising faculty member at each rotation site who is accountable for education, supervision, and evaluation of the Trainees.
- E) The program director must obtain an evaluation of the Trainee's clinical or research experience from the identified supervisor(s) and make it available to the Trainee.
- F) The program director must obtain an evaluation of the Away Rotation experience from the Trainee.
- G) The program director or DIO may revoke approval for Away Rotations at any point in any of the following cases:
- When there is inadequate supervision of the trainee at the Away Rotation sites;
 - When it is determined that a Trainee's Away Rotation experiences negatively impact their ability to fulfill their clinical duties and patient care;
 - When it is determined that a Trainee's Away Rotations negatively impact the learning and working environment for other trainees in their home program;
 - When the site has been deemed unsafe or inadequate to provide quality education and supervision for Trainees;
 - In the event that the Trainee is deemed unfit for duty;
 - When the program director or the program's Clinical Competency Committee has issued a Letter of Remediation to a Trainee;

- When the Trainee is suspended from their training program activities or clinical activities;
- When the Trainee is found to be non-compliant with any applicable Medical Center or GME policies or expectations including, but not limited to, the mandatory compliance training courses, and Health System Policy OCH-002: Occupational Health Screening and Maintenance requirements;
- When the Away Rotation results in Clinical and Educational Work Hours violations.

3. GMEC Oversight

- A) The GMEC approval of Away Rotations will be conditioned upon (i) the educational merit of the rotation, (ii) qualifications of the identified supervisor for the rotation, (iii) approval by the Trainee's Program Director, and (iv) compliance with State Department and CDC regulations, as well as compliance with University policy related to those regulations. The GMEC shall review and approve all applications for Away Rotations in collaboration with its Education Subcommittee.
- B) The DIO or designee shall review and approve any requests for exceptions to all applicable policies regarding Trainees' Away Rotations.

Drafted and Reviewed by the GMEC Policy Subcommittee: March 13, 2018

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