

GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION LEAVE POLICY

Radiation Oncology

- A. Subject** Vacation and Leaves of Absence from Graduate Medical Training
- B. Effective Date:** November 15, 2023 (Revised)

C. Policy Statement

In collaboration with the Sponsoring Institution (University of Virginia Medical Center), Radiation Oncology seeks to provide its Residents with appropriate time off to ensure the Resident’s well-being and to comply with the sponsoring institution’s policies and applicable requirements for accreditation and board certification.

This Radiation Oncology Leave Policy, following all ACGME leave requirements and institutional requirements, outlines various types of leave available to Residents and the rules and policies governing those leaves of absence. **Residents are provided with a minimum of six paid weeks of approved medical, parental or caregiver leave(s) of absence for qualifying reasons that are consistent with applicable laws, at least once and at any time during an ACGME-accredited program, starting the day the Resident is required to report. In the academic year in which a Resident takes those six weeks, they are also able to use one additional paid week of leave outside of the approved six weeks.**

The policy contains a worksheet application required for any medical, caregiver or parental leave-type requests. The purpose of the worksheet is for the Resident and Radiation Oncology to mutually review and discuss the proposed leave in advance and to understand any impact an extended leave might have on the meeting program and board eligibility requirements. This step is required by the ACGME. Residents must otherwise follow all individual program requirements surrounding leave requests and notifications.

D. Procedures

1. Requests for Leave

- a) Residents must submit requests in accordance with Program and Medical Center procedures and policies. Residents should submit leave requests in a timely fashion, especially if rotating on another service and coverage must be arranged.
- b) All leaves of absence must be reported in New Innovations within 30 days of the planned absence.
- c) Leaves of absence resulting from a Disciplinary Action must be coordinated with and reported to the GME Office (GMEO) per GMEC Policy 31.
- d) All Leave Requests should be filled out using our Leave Request Template at least 2 weeks before the leave is to be taken for all expected types of leave, including medical appointments.
- e) Leave Requests for unexpected types of leave (i.e. sick, bereavement) should be sent to the Program Director (PD) via email copying the Supervising Attending, Chief Resident and Program Coordinator as soon as possible before clinic is impacted.
- f) If a resident needs to take an extended Leave of Absence, they should discuss it with the Program Director and the GMEO. The Leave Worksheet should be filled out for any extended Leave of Absence.

2. Leaves Available for Residents

- a) **Bereavement Leave:** GME Residents may take up to 7 days of paid Bereavement Leave in the event of an Immediate Family Member’s death. Bereavement Leave may also be taken for pregnancy loss:
 - A Parent who experiences a pregnancy loss prior to twenty (20) weeks gestation is eligible for 7 days of Paid Parental Leave.
 - A Parent who experiences pregnancy loss at twenty (20) weeks gestation or beyond and prior to delivery is eligible for 4 weeks of Bereavement Leave.

Residents may take additional time for bereavement with the approval of their Program Director by applying sick or vacation time towards that leave.

For the purpose of Bereavement Leave, Immediate Family Member includes a) parents, including step-parents, in-laws and *in loco parentis* (a person who stood in place of parent); b) spouse; c) children, including step-children, foster children, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law; d) siblings, including step-siblings, siblings-in-law; e) grandparents and grandchildren; f) any person living in the Resident's household.

- b) Caregiver Leave:** Residents may utilize this category of leave to care for a child, spouse or parent with a Serious Health Condition as outlined in Medical Center Policy HR-600. Residents' health and disability insurance benefits (for themselves and covered dependents) will be extended for a minimum of six weeks for approved Caregiver Leave.
- c) Family and Medical Leave:** Family and Medical Leave, including Military Caregiver Leave and Qualified Exigency Leave, is federally mandated, job-protected leave which is available for Residents who have been employed by the sponsoring institution for at least 12 months. Please see Medical Center Policy HR-600 for details.
- d) Medical Leave:** Residents may utilize this category of leave to take time off due to extended personal illness, medical procedure, disability or other Serious Health Conditions as outlined in MC Policy HR-600. Residents' health and disability insurance benefits (for themselves and covered dependents) will be extended for a minimum of six weeks for approved Medical Leave.
- e) Paid Parental Leave:** Residents may utilize this category of leave within 6 months of the event (birth, adoption, or placement).
 - Residents who have been employed for at least 12 months prior to the start of PPL are eligible for up to 8 weeks of paid leave. Residents with less than 12 months of employment prior to the start of PPL are eligible for up to 6 weeks of consecutive paid leave.
 - PPL may be taken consecutively or may be taken in two 4 week blocks for those eligible for a total of 8 weeks of PPL, or two 3 week blocks for those eligible for a total of 6 weeks of PPL.
 - PPL must be taken within 6 months of the event
 - PPL can be taken once in a 12-month period and only once per child.
 - PPL is separate from vacation and sick leave (i.e., Residents may take vacation time in addition to approved PPL time).
 - PPL must be requested via the attached form, submitted to Program Director for approval and signature and then to the GMEO and should be requested at least 3 months prior to the birth, adoption, or placement of a child, if possible.
 - If both parents are eligible Residents, both parents are eligible to take PPL. However, the GMEO requests that both parents not take simultaneous PPL if both parents are in the same program.
 - Residents who have been employed for 12 months or longer are required by MC policy to also apply for FML which runs concurrently with their PPL (see below).
 - PPL may be used when a Parent loses an infant during birth or whose infant survives for only a short period of time following birth. Both or either parent may take either eight (8) weeks or six (6) of PPL depending on length of employment to date.
 - Residents' health and disability insurance benefits (for themselves and covered dependents) will be extended for a minimum of six weeks for approved Parental Leave up to eight weeks.

- f) **Professional Leave:** Time spent attending professional meetings, national conferences, presenting at an academic institution for a prospective job, taking board examinations or other examinations (also referred to as Academic days) are not counted as vacation if the activity is approved by the Program Director. This decision will be based upon the specific resident's performance and competency.
- **Interview Days:** In addition, senior residents get 5 Academic Days to be used for Interviews. That is 5 days total to be used during the PGY-4 and PGY-5 years.
- g) **Routine Medical Appointment:** Residents are encouraged to prioritize their own well-being by seeking necessary and proactive care. The ACGME requires that no resident or fellow should have to arrange their own coverage to seek or attend an appointment for medical or mental health. Leave for Medical Appointments should be requested using the Leave Request Template at least two weeks before leave is to be taken. Our program will provide coverage for Residents' routine medical appointments when we are provided reasonable notification. In some instances, medical appointments qualify for FML. Please refer to Medical Center Policy HR-600.3
- h) **Sick Leave:** Residents are provided up to 14 calendar days per academic year of paid sick leave, inclusive of time needed for mental health. These do not roll over to the next year. This leave type is for unexpected illnesses of short duration. See Medical/Caregiver Leave for additional options.
- i) **Self Care Day:** In Radiation Oncology Residency, Residents are provided a ½ day each month which they can use for self-care or development. This cannot interfere with clinic, calls, educational lectures or resident clinic coverage. This must be scheduled at least 2 weeks in advance.
- j) **Vacation Leave:** Residents must be provided a minimum of 15 business days of vacation time per academic year. Vacation Leave or personal time should be requested using the Leave Request Template at least two weeks before leave is to be taken. Vacation time does not carry forward, although exceptions can be made on an individual basis when specifically allowed by the certification board and approved in advance by the Program Director.
- k) **UVA Health Clinic Holidays:** Our Radiation Oncology Clinic follows the [UVA Health Clinic Holiday Schedule](#) during which residents are off duty. In addition, the residents get a bonus day off during the winter holidays.
- l) **Religious Holidays:** When requested, a Resident should be granted time off to observe a religious holiday consistent with these policies: <https://eocr.virginia.edu/staff-religious-accommodations>.¹ The days taken off will be counted against the Resident's vacation days.

¹ A reasonable workplace accommodation is a modification to an Employee's work or environment to enable the Employee to participate in their religious practice or belief which does not cause an Undue Hardship to UVA operations or activities. UVA is committed to providing accommodations, upon request, to ensure access to employment opportunities, benefits, programs, and services to all employees who have sincerely held religious beliefs. However, reasonable religious accommodations are not required or permitted when such accommodation would cause Undue Hardship, violate other laws, or interfere with the safety and security of UVA or its operations. Undue Hardship is a burden that would result in substantial increased costs in relation to UVA's business. Undue Hardship must be based on an individualized assessment of current circumstances that show that a specific reasonable accommodation would cause such burden or expense.

m) Remote Work: Remote work can be considered when applied for in advance during elective months on days without academic lectures. Up to 8 days per month of an elective month can be taken as remote work when approved. A list of accomplishments and/or duties will be expected when applying for these elective remote days. On clinical rotations, remote work is not allowed. Unexpected days where Residents need to stay home from clinic can be taken as vacation days and/or sick days.

3. Contingency Plans and Coverage

If a Resident is taking a Leave of Absence, the Chief Resident, in conjunction with the Program Director, will decide if the rotation will be covered during the Leave of Absence. And if so, who will cover the clinic. Residents will not be responsible for finding coverage for their Leave of Absence.

4. Certification Board Policy on Leave of Absence

The maximal Time Off defined by this policy is meant to apply to exceptional circumstances. This policy is not intended to define the typical Time Off that a resident should expect, nor the typical Time Off that a program should provide. Successful completion of residency training and achieving clinical competency will, in many cases, require more training time during residency with or without adjunct efforts at the discretion of the PD. Completion of the training period is a necessary but not sufficient element to establish competency.

A resident with "Time Off" that exceeds an average of eight weeks (40 workdays) per training year will require an extension of training beyond the planned graduation date to be considered eligible for Initial Certification. The length of such extension will be determined by the Program Director (PD) but, at a minimum, must equal the excess number of workdays missed during the training period.

Eligibility for Initial Certification requires the program director (PD) to attest to successful completion of the residency and competency. Irrespective of Time Off, PD should extend the length of training if a resident has not achieved competency.

Residents who began training prior to 2021 may apply to the ABR, with the approval of their PD, for an exemption to this new policy. Circumstances warranting such exceptions are expected to be uncommon.

▪ The following are considered Time Off:

1. Vacation
2. Bereavement leave
3. Interview days away from the institution
4. Parental leave
5. Caregiver leave
6. Medical leave (sick time)
7. Other leave as determined by the PD

▪ The following are considered part of the residency (rather than Time Off):

1. Research activities approved as part of the residency by the PD
2. Attendance at a scientific or educational meeting in, or related to, the specialty
3. Days linked to "off hours" work (for example, a Monday off following a weekend call)
4. Workdays performed off site, including those resulting from a pandemic, natural disaster, etc.

5. Other Considerations

a) Stipend and Benefits during Additional Time for Completing Board Requirements: In the event that additional training time is required to meet Board eligibility requirements (due to leave or other

circumstances), the Resident must be reappointed, with a stipend and benefits covered by the GME Office to continue for the extension.

- b) **Unexcused Leave of Absence:** Disciplinary or remedial action resulting from any unexcused leave of absence shall be at the discretion of the Program Director based on individual Department and/or accreditation requirements and regulations, and in consultation with the Designated Institutional Official.

- c) **Timely Notice of Leave Impact:** The program is required to notify the Resident if any given leave impacts the Residents' ability to satisfy requirements for program completion or Board eligibility at the initial discussion of leave with the Resident.

LEAVE WORKSHEET (for PPL, Medical and Caregiver Leave Requests)
Completed by Resident and Program Director, returned to GME

Resident Name		
Program		
Purpose of Leave Requested		
Leave Start Date*	Leave End Date*	Number of weeks requested

Will you have been employed with the Medical Center/University for at least 12 months prior to taking the requested leave? YES NO

How much leave of any type (vacation, sick etc) will you have *already taken* in this current academic year when you begin this requested period of leave? _____

Does your program lead to Board Certification? YES NO

RESIDENT AND PROGRAM: PLEASE REVIEW YOUR BOARD'S WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION ON HOW MUCH TIME CAN BE TAKEN OFF EITHER IN EACH YEAR, AND OR IN TOTAL BEFORE TIME IS OWED BACK TO THE PROGRAM. PLEASE INDICATE THAT ALLOWANCE HERE:

PROGRAM DIRECTOR - DOES THIS LEAVE TRIGGER AN EXTENSION OF TRAINING? YES / NO

If yes, how much time? _____

Residents owing back time must be reappointed and re-contracted for the make-up time, which is paid with benefits.

- Programs must follow relevant requirements to request complement increases (GMEC/ACGME) if a Resident's make-up time results in a training extension

 Program Director Signature

 Date

My signature indicates that I have read the leave policy and that I have been informed about the possible impact this leave has on any program and Board eligibility requirements, including my graduation date.

 Resident Signature

 Date

*The policy recognizes that leave needs and dates are subject to change.

Program must retain a copy of this application and ensure that leave dates are correctly recorded in New Innovations. Please forward a copy of this application to GME/ DIANE FARINEAU (DWF4H@uvahealth.edu)