

Medical Education Policy: Leave of Absence

Facility: CMC
Origin Date:
Revision Date: May 2022
Sponsor: GMEC

Important: Duration and successful completion of residency and fellowship training is ultimately determined by the Program Director and informed by the requirements established by certifying board of the specialty. Residents may need to extend their training to meet the requirements of both the certifying board and the residency program. Each training program will have a written policy that indicates requirements for successful completion of the training program including 1) maximum amount of time away from the program and 2) required clinical experiences that must be completed.

1. **PURPOSE**

Carilion Clinic recognizes the need for residents in medical education programs to occasionally request an extended period of time away from their educational program and course of employment and offers a range of leave options to meet those needs.

Leaves of absence are administered fairly, consistently and without regard to race, color, religion, age, national origin, veteran status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or other protected characteristics.

2. **SCOPE**

This policy applies to the processes and practices related to leaves of absence specifically for residents and fellows in Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), Council on Podiatric Medical Education (CPME), and Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) accredited graduate medical education programs sponsored by Carilion Medical Center (CMC).

3. **DEFINITIONS**

Leave of Absence (LOA): a period of time away from employment and the residency training program.

Resident: refers to all interns, residents, and fellows participating in CMC post-graduate training programs.

Rolling-Year: The period used to evaluate the availability of FMLA leave time and eligibility for Personal Leave. When using a rolling-year the amount of FMLA used in the 12 months prior to the most recent absence is assessed. Residents may only use 1 Personal Leave per rolling-year.

Serious Health Condition: is a condition that may include a period of incapacity that involves inpatient care, outpatient care requiring absence plus treatment, pregnancy, chronic conditions requiring treatments, permanent/long-term conditions requiring supervision and/or multiple treatments (non-chronic conditions).

4. **TYPES OF LEAVE**

Carilion Clinic offers a range of leave types and options to comply with federal and state laws and regulations, as well as to meet the needs of our employees. For details on leaves of absence available to all Carilion Clinic employees, including residents, see the [Carilion Clinic Leaves of Absence policy](#).

The following leave types apply only to accredited Graduate Medical Education programs listed above:

Resident Paid Medical Leave (RPML):

This is a generous resident-specific benefit that only applies to trainees in accredited training programs. Eligible residents requiring LOA related to their **own serious health condition** will receive full salary continuation for a period of up to 150 calendar days, per rolling year. The resident must be under the care of a licensed physician or other approved healthcare provider not related to the resident during the LOA. The resident will be required to provide documentation to support the need for leave. The resident will be required to be evaluated by Carilion Employee Health or other approved healthcare provider of Carilion's choice to determine fitness for duty before returning to work.

Any other leaves the resident might be eligible for or entitled to as determined by absence management administrator (the Standard) will run concurrently with this salary continuation.

Resident Paid Family Leave (RPFL):

This is a resident-specific benefit that applies to trainees in accredited training programs. Residents will be provided with a maximum of six weeks of approved parental, family and/or caregiver leave(s) of absence for qualifying reasons with full

salary continuation. This leave is available to residents once during their time in an accredited training program. Documentation to support the need and duration of the leave will be required.

Eligible family members are defined as the employee's spouse/domestic partner, parent(s), spouse/domestic partner's parent(s), legal guardian(s), sibling(s), child, child's spouse or domestic partner, legal dependent(s), grandchild(ren), grandparent(s), spouse/domestic partner's sibling(s), spouse of the employee's sibling, and step-relations of any members listed above.

5. PROCEDURE

Notification:

- A resident requesting a LOA must notify the Program Director and those responsible for the scheduling of rotations and call as soon as it is foreseeable that a LOA may be required.
- Early notification allows adjustments in scheduling to minimize impact on the entire residency program.
- The resident must then contact Carilion's Absence Management vendor, The Standard, at (888) 288-1389 to initiate the leave of absence process.

Leave during critical or required rotations (as determined by the Program Director) may be detrimental to successful completion of the program and may extend the duration of the program or delay graduation to allow the resident to make up the missed rotation(s).

Impact on total duration of the program:

- Program and Board standards usually state the minimum duration of a residency program.
- A leave of absence that prevents the resident from achieving minimum program duration standards will need to be made up to achieve successful program completion.

6. PAY PRACTICES DURING LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Leave for the Resident's Own Medical Condition (RPML):

Eligible residents requiring LOA for their own serious health condition will receive full salary continuation for a period up to 150 calendar days, per rolling year.

Leave for Reasons other than the Resident's Own Medical Condition:

For approved parental, family and/or caregiving leaves of absence, residents will be provided with full salary continuation for a maximum of six weeks. This benefit will be available one-time during the course of training in a given program.

Additional salary continuation beyond six weeks or for circumstances other than the resident's own medical condition may be approved at the discretion of GMEC based on program length, tenure, and/or other extenuating factors.

For other types of leave, such as Bereavement or Military, refer to program-specific policies outlining the use of vacation days or other paid time off or to the [Carilion Clinic Leaves of Absence policy](#).

7. JOB PROTECTION AND BENEFITS CONTINUANCE DURING LEAVE(S) OF ABSENCE

Employment with Carilion Clinic and eligibility for all benefits continues during a leave of absence.

- If the duration of a leave of absence exceeds the period of pay or salary continuation, the resident will be required to make up benefit premiums for each period that pay was not received.
- The [Carilion Clinic Leaves of Absence policy](#) describes specific exceptions to benefits continuation for certain leaves of absence, as well as when benefits end if the resident is unable to return to work following an approved leave of absence.

8. RETURN TO WORK FROM A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leaves for the Resident's Own Medical Condition

- Residents should maintain regular communication with their Program Director during any leave of absence.
- The resident must contact their Program Director as soon as it is foreseeable that they will be returning to the training program.
- The Program Director will notify the DIO of the resident's intent to return to the Program.
- The resident must contact Carilion's Absence Management vendor, The Standard, at (888) 288-1389 to initiate the return process.
- The resident must provide medical documentation and be evaluated by Employee Health in order to return to work.

Leaves for All Other Circumstances

- Residents should maintain regular communication with their Program Director during any leave of absence.
- The resident must contact the Program Director to initiate the return process.

- The Program Director will notify the DIO of the resident's intent to return to the program.
- The resident must contact Carilion's Absence Management vendor, The Standard, at (888) 288-1389 to initiate the return process.

9. EFFECT OF LEAVE(S) OF ABSENCE ON OTHER PAID TIME OFF

One week of paid time off must be reserved for use outside of the first six weeks of the first approved medical, parental or caregiver leave(s) of absence taken in a program year.

Name	Title	Dept./Committee	Date
Daniel Harrington, MD	DIO	GMEC	December 18, 2007
Daniel Harrington, MD	DIO	GMEC	January 1, 2011
Daniel Harrington, MD	DIO	GMEC	April 1, 2011
Daniel Harrington, MD	DIO	GMEC	June 21, 2011
Donald Kees, MD	DIO	GMEC	August 19, 2014
Donald Kees, MD	DIO	GMEC	March 20, 2018
Arthur Ollendorff, MD	DIO	GMEC	May 17, 2022