

GME: Paid Time Off and Leave

Scope

Applies to all St. Clair Health Graduate Medical Education (SCHGME) sponsored residency and fellowship programs.

Purpose

To provide guidance to training programs for the purposes of vacation, illness, interviews and conference attendance, and other leave.

Policy

A. Paid Time Off/Vacation

- a. At the outset of each year's training contract, all residents are provided minimum of 4 weeks paid time off (PTO) per contracted year. SCHGME provides residents with PTO for vacation, limited sickness (vs. FMLA or extended medical leave), and personal time as well as to attend interviews for career progression with the approval of the program director and the Office of GME.
- b. PTO shall be available uniformly across all residents in their respective program.
- c. Unused PTO days will not be paid at the end of any academic year or at completion of training. Unused PTO does not "carry over" into the next training year.
- d. To ensure the delivery of quality patient care, SCHGME requires advance scheduling of PTO whenever possible. SCHGME will encourage programs to accommodate residents' requests for PTO, but such requests cannot be guaranteed.
- e. PTO may be used for unscheduled time off for personal emergencies that are not pre-scheduled. Unscheduled PTO is to be reported by the resident according to established program procedures and standards. Individual program standards may vary. Any unauthorized absence may result in an unpaid absence and/or result in corrective action. In those instances where additional absences would result in a critical staffing shortage, unscheduled PTO may be denied. Proof of emergency situation may be required.
- f. Residents submit their request for PTO through the Resident Management System to be reviewed by the Office of GME for approval.

B. Emergency/Bereavement Leave

- a. SCHGME programs may grant short periods of paid absence (up to 3 days and does not deduct from PTO) due to serious illness or death in the resident's immediate family.
 - i. "Immediate family" is defined as: Parent, sibling, spouse, child, grandparent, parent-in-law, child-in-law, grandparent-in-law, grandchild, great-grandparent, and great grandchildren as well as all legally recognized step relatives.
 - ii. Legally recognized step relatives are defined as: step-parent, step-sibling, step-child, step-grandparent, step-grandchild, step-great grandparent and step-great grandchildren.
- b. A bereavement absence may be taken immediately after receiving notification of a death and/or later (within 6 months) to attend a service for the deceased family member.
- c. Time away for bereavement is generally taken in consecutive calendar days.
- d. Bereavement absence days may be taken in separate blocks of time to allow for both immediate time away upon notice of death and time away at a later date to attend a service.

- e. During bereavement absences the resident's stipend and benefits continue.
 - f. Any circumstance which arises and does not fall within the scope of the above will be reviewed by the Office of GME in conjunction with the Human Resources Department for consideration as to whether the resident is entitled to bereavement leave and, if so, the terms thereof, or whether the resident is eligible for an alternative leave type.
- C. Parental, Medical and Caregiver Leave
- a. Residents receive six weeks of paid approved parental, medical, and caregiver leave(s) of absence for qualifying reasons that are consistent with applicable laws at any time during a graduate medical education program, starting the day the resident is required to report (first day of program appointment).
 - i. Residents must inform the program director of the request.
 - ii. Formal requests must be submitted through the Resident Management System.
 - b. Qualifying reasons for leave include:
 - i. Medical Leave: for the resident's own serious health condition.
 - ii. Parental Leave: for the birth of a child, adoption of a child, or placement of a child in the resident's care.
 - 1. Once approved by the program, residents must submit a "Birth or Placement of Child" form to the Human Resources Department.
 - iii. Caregiver Leave: for the resident to care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition.
 - c. Residents will receive 100 percent of their salary for the first six weeks of the approved parental, medical, or caregiver leave(s) of absence taken.
 - d. Residents will have a minimum of one week of paid time off reserved for use outside of the first six weeks of the first approved parental, medical, or caregiver leave(s) of absence taken.
 - i. The week is to be available within the appointment year in which the leave is taken.
 - e. Resident and dependent benefit coverage will continue under the same terms and conditions as if the resident had not taken leave.
 - f. Parental, medical, and caregiver leave will run concurrently with any leave to which the resident is entitled under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). After the resident has exhausted Parental, medical, and caregiver leave, they may be entitled to an additional six weeks of unpaid FMLA leave.
 - g. SCHGME reserves the right to require:
 - i. Medical certification from a health care provider in support of a resident's request for leave due to the resident's own serious health condition or a covered family member's serious health condition;
 - ii. Certification from the health care provider for intermittent and reduced schedule medical leaves;
 - iii. Periodic recertification of a serious health condition, as permitted under FMLA regulation; and
 - iv. Second or third medical opinions at St. Clair Health's expense.
- D. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Leave
- a. Residents are eligible for FMLA leave if they have been employed at SCHGME for at least 12 months and worked at least 1250 hours in the last 12 months.
 - b. An eligible resident is allowed up to 12 weeks of FMLA during a 12-month period, for one or more of the following reasons:
 - i. For the birth of a child, and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth;
 - ii. For the placement of a child with the resident for adoption or foster care, and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement;

- iii. To care for the resident's spouse, child (including adult child "incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability"), or parent (does not include in-laws) who has a serious health condition; or
 - iv. Because of a serious health condition that makes the resident unable to perform the essential functions of the resident's job;
 - c. Residents will submit FMLA requests through the Office of GME, in partnership with the Human Resources Department.
 - i. The Office of GME will receive notification of approval or denial for FMLA benefits by the Human Resources Department.
 - d. Resident and dependent benefit coverage will continue under the same terms and conditions as if the resident had not taken leave.
 - e. Short-Term Disability (STD) and Long-Term Disability (LTD) may apply during the course of an FMLA Leave.
 - f. SCHGME reserves the right to require:
 - i. Medical certification from a health care provider in support of a resident's request for leave due to the resident's own serious health condition or a covered family member's serious health condition;
 - ii. Certification from the health care provider for intermittent and reduced schedule medical leaves;
 - iii. Periodic recertification of a serious health condition, as permitted under FMLA regulation; and
 - iv. Second or third medical opinions at St. Clair Health's expense.
- E. Military Family Leave (Qualifying Exigency and Military Caregiver)
 - a. Residents are eligible for Military Family Leave if they have been employed by SCHGME for at least 12 months and worked at least 1250 hours in the last 12 months.
 - b. Military Family Leave entitles eligible residents to Qualifying Exigency Leave and/or Military Caregiver Leave.
 - i. An eligible resident is allowed up to 12 weeks of unpaid Qualifying Exigency Leave, subject to the terms and conditions of the Military Family Leave provisions of the FMLA. To take Qualifying Exigency Leave, the military member must be the resident's spouse, parent, or child.
 - ii. An eligible resident is allowed up to 26 weeks of unpaid Military Caregiver Leave, subject to the terms and conditions of the Military Family Leave provisions of the FMLA. To take Military Caregiver Leave, the military member must be the resident's spouse, parent, child or next-of-kin. The 26 weeks of unpaid Military Caregiver Leave include incremental leave, in a 12-month period for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness, when the resident is the spouse, child, parent, or next-of-kin of the current service member. The single 12-month period for Military Caregiver Leave begins on the first day the resident takes leave for this reason and ends 12 months later, regardless of the 12-month period established by the employer for other FMLA leave reasons.
 - iii. The resident is not required to be the only individual available to care for a qualified family member or covered service member.
 - c. Residents are eligible for FMLA leave once in a 12-month period. A rolling 12-month period is measured backward from the date a resident uses FMLA leave, except for Military Caregiver leave. The 12-month leave period for Military Caregiver Leave is measured forward from the date of the resident's first FMLA leave to care for the covered service member.

- d. Requests for leave related to either Military Caregiver or Qualifying Exigency Leave must be accompanied by a Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of a Veteran for Military Caregiver Leave or a Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Leave.
- F. Specialty Certification, Specialty Board, or Licensure Examinations Leave
 - a. SCHGME will provide paid time away for required certification exams, specialty board, or licensure examinations as outlined below in addition to resident's PTO time.
 - b. Resident's benefit coverage continues during approved paid time away for taking required certification exams, specialty boards, or licensure examination.
 - c. Medical Licensure Examinations
 - i. Paid time away to fulfill SCHGME medical licensure requirements is provided for USMLE (United States Medical Licensing Examination), COMLEX (Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination), or MCCQE (Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination), previously known as LMCC (Licentiate of the Medical Council of Canada) examinations for state medical licensure.
 - d. Specialty Board Examinations
 - i. Paid time away for up to a total of five days throughout training, subject to program director approval, is provided for specialty board (e.g., American Specialty Board or Canadian Fellowship) examinations and travel time in the U.S. or Canada.
 - ii. This paid time away does not include study and preparatory time.
 - iii. Residents must request approval of time away for this purpose through the Resident Management System to facilitate program-specific approval processes.
 - iv. Board review courses can be taken as:
 - 1. PTO, or
 - 2. An unpaid personal leave
 - a. If using PTO or unpaid personal leave, SCHGME does not assume financial responsibility for the cost of a board review course.
 - v. Time away for out-of-state licensure examinations must be taken as an unpaid personal leave or PTO and submitted through the Resident Management System for approval.
 - e. Certification Exams
 - i. Paid time away to fulfill certification required prior to graduation to meet eligibility requirements is provided for certification exams.
 - 1. Residents will be reimbursed for first-time exam fees and transportation to a regional testing site.
 - 2. Residents will be responsible for exam fees and transportation and must use PTO or unpaid personal leave for retakes.
 - 3. Residents may complete certification exams in conjunction with a presentation or attendance trip.
 - 4. SCHGME will not reimburse additional conference registration fees for conferences where these certification exams may be offered.
- G. Jury Duty
 - a. If jury duty will seriously disrupt training, a resident may ask the court to reschedule or to be excused from serving. The request must be signed by the program director and the DIO.
 - b. If a Resident serves on a jury, each day must be entered in the Resident Management System to facilitate the program-specific approval process.
 - i. The program may require that the resident provide documentation of the summons or subpoena within one week of receipt or at the time of receipt as part of the approval process.

- c. Resident stipend continues during leave for jury duty.
 - d. If the resident cannot serve on the jury as scheduled but would be able to at a later date, the resident must provide the jury manager an alternative two-week time period and ask for the jury assignment to be rescheduled.
 - e. If there is not a future date that coordinates with the resident's schedule, residents must ask their program director to contact the Office of GME who will advise and coordinate requests for residents to be excused from jury duty, as appropriate.
- H. Court Appearances
- a. Residents asked to become involved with or testify in any legal action involving SCH, an external facility, or a physician must notify their program.
 - b. The program, in coordination with the Office of GME, will contact the Chief Legal Officer to review conflict of interest or liability.
- I. Leave of More than Seven Days
- a. If PTO or other leave is required for a period longer than 7 consecutive days, it must be approved by the Office of GME and recorded in the resident's training history in residency management system.
 - b. A leave of absence for exceptional personal circumstances may be granted by the program director only with approval of the DIO and is not to exceed 12 months. All PTO will be paid before leave without pay begins.
- J. Effect of Leave on Satisfactory Completion of the Program
- a. Absences in excess of specialty/board or program requirements may result in extension of the resident's training program. Individual ABMS specialty board leave requirements may be more limiting than applicable SCHGME leave policies. The impact of leave must be made clear to the resident at the time of leave approval.