

IDENT	GME31
Type of Document	Policy
Applicability Type	Department-Level
Title of Owner	Dir GME
Title of Approving Official	GMEC
Date Effective	12/21/2023
Date of Next Review	12/21/2026



TITLE: Paid and Unpaid Leave of Absence

PURPOSE: To provide an opportunity for residents/fellows to be granted leave of absence for family/medical needs and other leave types.

POLICY STATEMENT: Leave is unpaid unless the resident/fellow chooses to use Paid Time Off (GME-30) or other paid leave available to them. Residents/Fellows may qualify for Caregiver Leave, Short-Term Disability and Long-Term Disability. Salary continuance is in accordance with UVM Medical Center Short-Term and Long-Term Disability benefits, which may be amended (UVM Health Network Benefits Guidebook – Residents | Fellows).

UVM Medical Center provides support to residents/fellows requiring family/medical leave consistent with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Vermont’s Parental and Family Leave Law (VPFL). Residents/Fellows must adhere to UVM Medical Center policy titled “Family and Medical Leave” (HR-D-01) and to GME Policy 29 titled “Family and Medical Leave Act and Vermont’s Parental and Family Leave Law.” FMLA is currently unpaid. However, residents/fellows may use Paid Time Off (GME 30), paid caregiver leave, and/or may receive disability benefits or Workers’ Compensation payments, if eligible (UVM Health Network Benefits Guidebook – Residents | Fellows).

Extended leave(s) of absence may require the resident/fellow to extend their training program, if the program can accommodate extension of training, to satisfy their program’s certifying Board and Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requirements.

PROCEDURE:

Short-Term Disability Benefit

1. Eligibility - Date of hire or benefits-eligibility date
2. Income replacement - 100% salary continuation for up to 90 days (may be amended), Resident Benefits Guide).

Long-Term Disability Benefit

1. Eligibility - must exhaust 90 days of short-term disability
2. Income replacement - 66²/₃% of base monthly earnings up to a monthly benefit maximum of \$8000 (may be amended), Resident Benefits Guide).

Caregiver Leave

1. Eligibility – Date of hire
2. Income Replacement – 100% salary continuation for up to 7 weeks
3. Provided that the notice and certification requirements are met, an eligible resident/fellow may be granted a paid leave of absence of up to seven (7) weeks once during their GME training program for the same caregiver leave event. Salary continuation is at 100% of base pay for the first seven (7) weeks of caregiver leave. For a resident/fellow’s own medical leave, including maternity leave, refer to Policies C-03 Short-Term Disability Benefits, C-04 Long-Term Disability Benefits, and G-05 On-The-Job Injuries.
4. A resident/fellow is not required to use their paid time off for the purpose of caregiver leave.
5. Partial leave days are not permitted.
6. If programs can accommodate, intermittent days can be allowed
7. Leave may be granted for the following purposes:

- a. To care for a resident/fellow's newborn child or placement of a child with the resident/fellow for adoption or foster care [Note: Leave for these purposes must conclude within 12 months of the birth or placement.]; or
- b. To care for a spouse, civil-union partner, child, stepchild, foster child, or ward who lives with the resident/fellow, the resident/fellow's parent, or parent of the resident/fellow's spouse/civil union partner, who has a serious health condition.

Notice Requirements for Caregiver Leave, Short-Term and Long-Term Disability

1. Residents/Fellows must give reasonable notice to their program director of their intent to take a leave of absence.
2. Residents/Fellows must follow UVM Medical Center process for requesting short-term (HR-C-03 policy) and long-term disability (HR-C-04 policy).
3. As soon as reasonable, the program director or their designee should notify the GME office of the leave. The GME office requires the following actions related to a leave of absence.
 - a. On the 'Block Schedule' in New Innovations, assign the resident/fellow to the GME LOA or Caregiver Leave rotation for the duration of their absence;
 - b. In the 'Confidential Notes' section in New Innovations, summarize the following information:
 - i. Leave type,
 - ii. Start and end date for the leave, and if applicable
 1. Date range for Paid Time Off; and/or
 2. Date range for disability benefit; and/or
 3. Date range for unpaid leave of absence.
 - iii. State whether an extension of training is necessary or unnecessary;
 - c. Update the 'Training Record' in New Innovations with 'Add Leave of Absence';
 - d. Update termination date in the New Innovations (if applicable); and
 - e. Update the resident/fellow's status on the resident/fellow roster in the program's ACGME Accreditation Data System (ADS).

Return to Work for Caregiver Leave, Short-Term and Long-Term Disability

1. Residents/Fellows must follow UVM Medical Center process for returning to work from short-term (HR-C-03 policy) and long-term disability (HR-C-04 policy).
2. When the resident/fellow returns from leave of absence, the program director or their designee should notify the GME office with the resident/fellow's name, return date, and, if applicable, the revised training end date.
3. Update the resident/fellow's status to "active" on the resident/fellow roster in the program's ACGME ADS.

End of Training Leave

This applies to residents/fellows in their last year of training. Dependent on the GME program's policies/procedures and the program director's approval, residents/fellows during their last month of training may use their allotted vacation/personal days to leave their training program prior to the end of their GME contract. Under no circumstance will a resident/fellow be allowed to use unpaid time off to leave their program early.

Jury Duty

Residents/Fellows selected for jury duty will be excused from work with continued salary support.

1. A resident/fellow is not required to use Paid Time Off.
2. If the needs of the court do not require a full workday to fulfill jury obligations, the resident/fellow is expected to contact their program director about returning to work.
3. Hours spent on jury duty do not count towards their GME duty hours.
4. Days used for Jury Duty may need to be counted as absences from the program in accordance with the program's specialty board requirements. It is the program director's and resident/fellow's responsibility to know and apply their board requirements for certification.

Bereavement Leave

Bereavement leave of absence is offered to provide continued salary support during time off from work because of a death in the family.

1. A resident/fellow may be granted up to three paid scheduled workdays following a death in the immediate family that does not count towards Paid Time Off days. Immediate family is defined as spouse, civil union partner, parent, step-parent, child, step-child, sibling, step-sibling, grandparent, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law or brother-in-law and corresponding relatives of a civil union partner. Paid absence for the death of other members of the employee's household or close family members may be granted at the discretion of the program director.
2. If additional time is needed after a death in the family, the resident/fellow can discuss the situation with their program director to assess whether additional time off can be granted using Paid Time Off days.
3. Days used for Bereavement Leave may need to be counted as absences from the program in accordance with the program's specialty board requirements. It is the program director's and resident/fellow's responsibility to know and apply their board requirements for certification.

Personal Leave of Absence

In unusual circumstances and personal emergencies, up to six (6) months of unpaid leave may be granted to a resident/fellow with one (1) year of service.

1. The program director must approve the unpaid personal leave of absence and may deny requests based on training requirements set by the program's certifying board and/or the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).
2. Unpaid absence will not be allowed unless all Paid Time Off has been used, except in cases of approved medical and/or family leave.
3. Extended leaves of absence may require an extension of the resident's/fellow's training if the program can accommodate the training extension.
4. As soon as reasonable, the program director or their designee should notify the GME office of the leave. The GME office requires the following actions related to a leave of absence.
 - a. On the 'Block Schedule' in New Innovations, assign the resident/fellow to the GME LOA rotation for the duration of their absence;
 - b. In the 'Confidential Notes' section in New Innovations, summarize the following information:
 - i. Leave type,
 - ii. Start and end date for the unpaid leave
 - iii. State whether an extension of training is necessary or unnecessary;
 - c. Update the 'Training Record' in New Innovations with 'Add Leave of Absence';
 - d. Update termination date in the New Innovations (if applicable); and
 - e. Update the resident's/fellow's status on the resident/fellow roster in the program's ACGME ADS.
5. When the resident/fellow returns from leave of absence, the program director or their designee should notify the GME office with the resident/fellow name, return date, and, if applicable, the revised training end date.
6. Update the resident's/fellow's status to "active" on the resident/fellow roster in the program's ACGME ADS.
7. Benefit status while on unpaid leave of absence:
 - a. If unpaid leave is 30 days or less, UVM Medical Center will continue paying its portion of the benefit cost for residents/fellows covered under its medical, dental, vision, reimbursement accounts and/or life and disability programs. The resident/fellow must continue to pay his or her portion of the applicable benefit cost during the leave as instructed by Human Resources. Coverage may be canceled if their portion of the benefit cost is not received as instructed. Coverage ends on the first day of the month that follows the month in which the leave began.
 - b. On the thirty-first (31st) day of an approved leave of absence, UVM Medical Center sponsored life insurance and short and long-term disability programs cease. If the resident/fellow wishes to retain coverage, they can assume full cost of continued life insurance and long-term disability through life portability and long-term disability conversion options. Beginning the first of the month following the end of thirty (30) days of leave, the resident/fellow can continue medical, dental, vision and healthcare reimbursement accounts through Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) as instructed by Human Resources. The resident/fellow is responsible for the full COBRA cost. Coverage may be canceled if the resident's/fellow's payment for the benefit coverage is not received as instructed.
 - c. No 403(b) contributions are made while on unpaid leave.

DEFINITIONS:

ACGME: Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education

ADS: Accreditation Data System

Printed on: 12/22/2023 11:21 AM By: Vasile, Benedetto

DISCLAIMER: Only the online policy is considered official. Please compare with on-line document for accuracy.

Documents Status: **APPROVED**

FMLA: Family and Medical Leave Act

VPFL: Vermont's Parental and Family Leave Law

COBRA: Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act

REFERENCES:

HR-D-01: Family and Medical Leave

GME 29: Family and Medical Leave Act and Vermont's Parental and Family Leave Law

GME 30: Paid Time Off

UVM Health Network Benefits Guidebook – Residents | Fellows

HR-C-03 Short-Term Disability Benefits

HR-C-04 Long-Term Disability Benefits

HR-G-05 On-The-Job Injuries

REVIEWERS: Vanessa Goodwin, Dir GME

OWNER: Vanessa Goodwin, Dir GME

APPROVING OFFICIAL: Melissa Davidson MD, GMEC