



Radiology Department Administrative Policy and Procedure

Title:	WELL-BEING / LEAVE OF ABSENCE	Policy Number: RAD114
Regulation Reference:	Title ACGME	Effective Date: 01/29/2025

Policy Statement To establish protocol and procedure standards within the Paul L Foster School of Medicine at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Department of Radiology residency and fellowship programs to ensure the quality and safety of patient care as well as the wellbeing of the resident physician.

Procedure

Definition and Scope:

To ensure residents are provided the opportunity for well-being and self-care outside the work environment in order to prevent burnout and to provide a safe positive culture in the clinical learning environment. This includes time away from the learning environment to engage with family and to take care of personal and family needs including medical, mental health and dental care appointments.

Call and Post Call Time Off

- Residents are on short and/or long call (including weekends and holidays) throughout the four years of residency.
- On call residents currently follow a night float schedule which has the resident off duty for patient care 14 hours between shifts and off duty for 48 hours every 5th consecutive night. Duty hours average 47 hours/week over a 4-week period for the four years of residency (see Appendix VI).
- Any changes in Night Float/weekend call coverage by Residents must be made through QGenda.
- Half Monday off after weekend duty. The current work schedule ensures that residents have at least 4 days off on average within a 4-wk block or in any given month.

Vacation

Vacation is approved for no more than 15 working days for PGY level 1 and 2 and not more than 20 working days for PGY levels 3 and above, subject to residency program requirements. Any variance from this policy must be justified by the Program Director/Chair, recommended by GME, and approved in advance by the Dean. Timing and scheduling of vacations is at the discretion of the individual department. Vacation benefits do not carry forward from year to year and must be taken within the current contract agreement year. Unused vacation benefits are not paid upon completion or termination of the agreement. Residents must ask for vacation requests at least one month before vacation time can be approved. Residents are discouraged from asking for vacation time as they enter their new rotation. No more than six residents at one time will be allowed to be out on vacation. If a resident fails to notify his/her absence, the time away will be deducted from vacation time regardless of the reason, this applies also to delays or cancellations of a flight or any other travel delay. For those arriving late the following morning as a result of flight cancellation or delay, they are expected to come to work directly from the airport no later than 1:00 pm and leave by 10:00 pm to allow for time off per ACGME prior to next morning duty. If unsure on how to proceed after a cancelled or delayed flight notify Faculty, Program Director, Program Coordinator and Chief Residents by email.

No more than one week of vacation per 3-blocks of service assignment can be anticipated without accommodation for selective rotation make-up assignment. Approval for more than one consecutive week of vacation is best scheduled before the beginning of the year and is *not* guaranteed. 75% of 4-week rotation attendance or 50% of 2-week rotation is required for evaluation purposes, hence, if more than one consecutive week is planned it is best to schedule at the end and beginning of consecutive rotations.

Every effort is made to allow residents and fellows to obtain vacation when they wish, provided service assignments and night/weekend call can be adequately covered. They can expect to have limited vacation time available during June and July when fewer trained residents are on duty. Times of the major radiological meetings (RSNA, ARRS, AAR, TRS), American Board of



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Radiology Qualifying examination or In-Training examination times are also not suitable for vacation. Ensure that vacation days being requested are still available with Program Coordinator. She will then confirm that there is not already more than the allowed number of residents scheduled off for days being requested prior to approval by Program Director in QGenda.

Should a resident or fellow need to request a Leave of Absence, discussion with the Program Director is the first step. The department adheres to the procedure for leave of absence as outlined by the institution in the current GME Policies and Procedures Manual.

Please note that the ABR requires that a minimum of four months of the four-year diagnostic radiology training program must be spent in nuclear radiology and a minimum of three months must be spent in mammography/breast imaging, any leave (vacation, bereavement leave, interview days, parental leave, caregiver leave, medical/sick time leave and other as determined by PD) during these rotations must be made up. No more than 16 months may be spent in any one subspecialty or in research.

Educational Leave

Each year, residents are given an additional 6 days as Educational Leave to use for out-of-town or virtual fellowship interviews or when attending a conference meeting at which the resident is presenting or representing the Program such as Department representative: *i.e.* national or regional society committees, A3CR2, ACR, TMA, RSNA, TRS, etc. Fellows are given 6 days of Educational Leave to use when attending a conference meeting on which the fellow is presenting. If the resident will be attending a meeting during an Emergency Radiology rotation or Night Float/weekend call, the resident is responsible for finding coverage, notifying Chief Residents, Program Director, Program Coordinator, and Faculty, with changes reflected in QGenda.

Sick Time

Residents and fellows are required to notify their attending, chief residents, program coordinator, and program director by e-mail (or telephone if e-mail is not available) of any unexpected absence due to sickness by 8:00 am of that workday. A sick day request on QGenda must be submitted right after notification has been sent to all listed above. Same applies for night float shift, with notification before 3:00 pm to allow for coverage arrangements. If the resident calls in sick for more than three consecutive week days, on a day prior to or after a holiday, or on a Monday or Friday, a physician affirmation must be presented before returning to work.

Sick leave entitlement may be approved for up to twelve working days per year and carried forward from one contract year to another. Residents or fellows will not be compensated for accumulated sick leave. If this number is exceeded, the resident or fellow must extend the residency or use vacation days. Deficiencies in total service attendance guidelines will need to be accommodated.

Inappropriate use of sick time is a serious cause for concern as it impacts patient care, education and workflow and does not conform to institutional, departmental standards and milestones for professionalism. The Department of Radiology adheres to GME policies in regards to disability and sick time, but if that disability or sick time is in excess of twelve days per year, the Education Committee will review the resident's or fellow's activities and determine if additional days of training need to be added to that year before advancement to the next year of training or graduation from the program. The Education Committee also reserves the right to take similar action in instances suspected of being excessive use of sick time.

When these determinations are made the information will be relayed to the resident or fellow in a timely manner so that arrangements in the individual's personal schedule/commitments can be adjusted accordingly. The resident needs to be aware that any incompleteness of residency requirements must be recorded annually in the ABR database of training rotation completion.

Consequently, vacation days for the following year may not be used to make-up time lost.

For the above and any other type of leave while on Emergency Radiology rotation, the resident is responsible for finding coverage, notifying Chief Residents, Program Director, Program Coordinator, and Faculty, with changes reflected in QGenda.



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Paternity Leave/ Maternity Leave

Paternity/maternity leave is provided to residents under the Family Medical Leave Act and allows for up to 12 weeks unpaid leave for the birth or adoption of a child. In order to qualify, a minimum of 1,250 hours must be worked during the preceding year (12-month period).

It is the resident's responsibility to make his/her request directly to the Program Director well in advance in order to provide adequate coverage and make appropriate schedule and rotation adjustments, as well as filing the appropriate paperwork with the residency program and Human Resources Department.

Bereavement

Bereavement family leave: based on individual circumstances as determined by the Program Director

The program director can make additional time available under exceptional circumstances, as long as total educational time away does not exceed American Board of Radiology limitations and does not negatively impact learning objectives or ACGME minimum case logs of scheduled rotations. It can be anticipated that allowances of additional non-educational time away may impact the availability of other allowances.

How to Request Time Off

The proper procedure to request away time (vacation and leave) is:

- *Check the number of days of available vacation time with Program Coordinator first, who will notify Program Director
- *Submit a request through QGenda after cleared by Program Coordinator and Program Director
- *Chief Resident is to assure that night/weekend call is covered
- *Obtain approval from the Program Director via QGenda
- *The Section Chief will be notified for that rotation/time with indication that total leave from the service rotation is within guidelines; no more than 5 days of leave is allowed within a rotation since a minimum of 75% of attendance is required for evaluation purposes for 4-week block rotations and 50% for 2-week block rotations.

Approval authority:

This policy is approved by the Chairman of the Department of Radiology

Responsibility and Revisions:

The Chairman of the Department of Radiology and the Radiology Residency Program Director will review and initiate revision on this policy when necessary.

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Signatory approval on file by:	Jesus E. Calleros-Macias, M.D. Acting Chair of Radiology Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso