



**SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University  
Pediatrics Residency Program  
Leave Policy and Procedures**

In accordance with ACGME Institutional Requirements, Residents are provided with a minimum of six weeks of approved medical, parental, and 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. Leave is available beginning day 1 of the fellowship program and is paid without cessation of health benefits.

According to the Downstate GME and ACGME policy, residents/fellows can use up to three (3) weeks of annual vacation time and two (2) weeks of sick leave time to satisfy the six (6) weeks leave of absence request. One (1) week of vacation can be reserved and can be used at the discretion of the Resident/Fellow. An additional "floating" week off apart from the six weeks of approved medical, parental, and caregiver leave may be approved case-dependent and at the program director's discretion.

Residents must contact the Program Director and the Human Resources department of their employer as soon as they believe they might need to take an extended leave of absence from training for medical reasons. If residents take a leave of absence during required block rotations such that they have not completed board eligibility requirements for these rotations, they will be required to make up the missed time.

Under FMLA, **trainees may request additional leave. However, this may result in an extension of their training** which may not include pay or may delay their American Board Pediatrics certification exam. For more information on the New York State FMLA policy, please see process <https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/> for more details.

Parental leave is available to parents of all genders, including foster, adoptive, and surrogate parents, use of these leaves of absence (paid parental, sick leave, or caregiver leaves) will not be considered when making decisions regarding benefits, promotion, academic standing, or continued employment (although, as noted above, some leaves may necessitate extended training).

**Please see the process for submitting a Leave request below.**

***Process for Submitting and Approving Requests for Leave of Absence:***

- Residents must first submit leave requests to their Program Directors
- Under the direction of the Program Director, the resident must also submit the request to their Employer (pay source) and complete the Human Resource approval process.
- **All leave requests must receive final approval by their pay source Employer.**
- Program Directors must complete and submit the Leave Request Form to the (Institutional Oversight Committee) (“IOC”) All leave requests will be reviewed by the Graduate Medical Education Committee (“GMEC”) annually.
- A trainee’s entitlement to leave benefits depends upon their union collective bargaining agreements, applicable state laws, and Human Resources policies at the respective Employer.

**ABP Considerations for the ABP Certification Examination when considering a Leave-of-Absence:**

From the ABP website:

**Parental, Medical, and Caregiver Leave**

The duration of accredited training as required by the ACGME or RCPSC varies by pathway. For general pediatrics categorical residency and most core pediatric fellowship training, it is 36 months. All pathways, though, allow for one month of absence each year for time away from training which can be used for vacation, illness, or family leave.

Consistent with our long-standing policy, individuals in three-year core training programs are allowed up to a total of eight weeks of additional parental, medical, or caregiver leave once over their training period. Similarly, effective July 1, 2021, individuals in nonstandard\* and combined\*\* pathways will be allowed up to a total of six weeks of additional parental, medical, or caregiver leave once over their training period. The additional leave time is over the entire duration of training and is not allocated annually.

See **ABP Corporate Policy-Absences from Training Policy- Parental/Medical/Caregiver Leave**

<https://www.abp.org/sites/abp/files/pdf/cic-absences-from-training.pdf>

**ABR Considerations for extension of training and the ABR Qualifying Exam when considering a Leave-of-Absence:**

From the ABP website:

**Residency Leave Policy****Training Requirement for Initial Certification**

The total amount of leave time offered to the trainee is at the discretion of the institution. Programs have the flexibility to grant longer periods of leave time, but training must be extended to make up for any absences greater than what is allowed by the policy for vacation, parental, medical, or caregiver leave for a given residency or fellowship pathway. Trainees who experience an interruption in residency for greater than 24 continuous months or in fellowship for greater than 12 continuous months and who wish to re-enter training must petition the ABP to determine whether credit may be awarded for prior training.

To qualify for the additional absence from training, outside of the standard one month per year, all of the following requirements must be met for an individual trainee:

- The absence is due to parental, medical, or caregiver leave.
- The trainee is deemed competent by the Program Director and Clinical Competency Committee.
- All training requirements must be met except for elective training or research time as determined by the pathway; and
- The scholarly activity requirement must be met if the trainee is a fellow.

The ABP encourages trainees to take yearly vacation and strongly discourages "banking" vacation from year to year as it can negatively affect trainees' health and well-being. The ABP views educational leave, which includes attendance at training-related seminars, as bona fide educational experiences, and it need not be counted as time away from training. All trainees must have satisfactory performance in all core domains of competence to complete their training. In addition, trainees must complete all required experiences as outlined by the training pathway.

The ABP recognizes that leave policies vary from institution to institution and expects the program director to apply local requirements within these guidelines to ensure trainees have completed the requisite training period. This policy applies to ABP eligibility requirements for initial certification and does not supersede institutional or program policies and applicable laws.

**The following are considered Time Off:**

1. Vacation
2. Bereavement leave
4. Parental leave
5. Caregiver leave
6. Medical leave (sick time)
7. Other leave as determined by the program director

**The following are considered part of residency training (rather than Time Off):**

1. Research activities approved as part of the residency by the Program Director
2. Attendance at a scientific or educational meeting in, or related to, the specialty
3. Interview days away from the institution
4. Workdays performed off-site, including those resulting from a pandemic, natural disaster, etc.

## **SUMMARY**

There are several policies and procedures to keep in mind when you need to take a leave of absence.

The **ABP** policy will apply to your ability to:

1. Graduate on time.
2. Take your initial certification examination at the end of your residency training.

The **Human Resource department of your employer** (pay source) will determine your leave compensation and remaining sick and annual leave based on institutional guidelines and state and local laws.

It's best that you plan as far in advance as possible and include the program director and your HR department as soon as possible.