# Procedure for Request, Approval of and Return from Leave of Absence

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| **Procedure:** | Procedure for Request, Approval of and Return from Leave of Absence |
| **Policy reference:** | Leave of absence from residency training |
| **Contact:** | Clerical Assistant, PGME Office  306 966 8557 |
| **Last update:** | November 2018 |

## 1. PURPOSE

To establish the procedure for requesting, approving and returning from a leave of absence from a residency training program, as well as notifying the relevant parties.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

A leave of absence is an approved interruption of training, which may be granted for a variety of reasons.

**3. SCOPE**

This document applies to all Residents in all residency training programs at the College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan.

**4. DEFINITIONS**

n/a

**5. RESPONSIBILITIES**

n/a

**6. SPECIFIC PROCEDURE**

1. **Request and approvals for leave of absence** 
   1. The Resident submits a written leave of absence request to the Residency Program Director.
   2. Residency Program Director, in consultation with the Residency Program Committee, reviews the request for approval. Approvals of leaves of absence must be in accordance with the PGME policy, and with the policies of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) or of the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), as applicable.
   3. The residency program must notify the PGME Office of leaves greater than five days or of unpaid leaves for applicable processing.
   4. The PGME Office will notify CPSS, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, CMPA and the University of Saskatchewan of the leave of absence.

The Resident’s educational license, credentialing/privileges, and University student registration are interrupted upon notification of the leave of absence.

CMPA is notified of any interruptions to residency training including leaves of absences. However, Residents must contact CMPA directly to determine what, if any, gaps in coverage will be applied.

1. **During the leave of absence**
2. Residency Program Director and Residents should communicate on a regular basis (with the exception of a leave with predetermined end date).
3. Residents must notify their Residency Program Director of any change requests to the previously approved leave of absence. The Residency Program Committee will consider such changes and approval.
4. Any changes with respect to the status of the leave of absence will require the program to notify the PGME Office.
5. A leave of absence approved for medical reasons is accompanied by the expectation that the Resident must receive care and support.

Residents requesting a medical leave of absence must produce a medical certificate to verify that medical care is being received. The Resident’s privacy is respected and information on the medical certificate will not disclose the reason for the medical leave. The medical certificate will, however, include the anticipated duration of the leave of absence.

In the event of an extended medical leave, monthly medical certificates are to be provided by the treating physician and must be submitted to the Residency Program Director. The Program will then report updates on the medical leave status to the PGME Office.

1. If there are recurrent leaves, the Residency Program Director/PGME Office may require a physician’s note.
2. **Returning from a leave of absence**
3. Residents must provide adequate notice of their return to the Residency Program Director as required by the program and/or the PGME Office.
4. Residency Program Director must notify the PGME Office of the resumption of training with as much notice as possible but at least one week prior to the date of return.
5. The PGME Office will notify:
6. CPSS to initiate reinstatement of the educational license
7. Saskatchewan Health Authority to reinstate credentialing/privileges
8. University Registration to activate student status
9. CMPA of return date
10. University Payroll to reinstate salary where applicable and any other mandatory requirements.

A Resident cannot resume training until CPSS licensure, Health Authority credentialing/privileges and CMPA are reinstated.

1. Residents should not return from a leave of absence until they are ready.
2. Medical leave of absence: The Residency Program Director requires from the physician involved in the Resident’s care, a written medical certificate or declaration of readiness to return as a condition of returning to work.

The Residency Program Director, Residency Program Committee, and/or the Associate Dean, PGME may request an additional independent medical opinion in order to ensure the Resident’s medical fitness to return from the leave of absence.

1. Residents returning after a prolonged non-parental leave of absence may require a modified educational program and may be assigned to a less advanced training level than that prior to the interruption of training. For specialty Residents (RCPSC programs), no assurance can be given that all training taken prior to the interruption will still be acceptable, even though previously recognized by the Royal College.
2. In order to determine the appropriate training level and program structure, a Resident may be assigned a period of Graduated Return to Residency. A Graduated Return to Residency (GRR) period is required for a Resident returning after a leave of absence that is equal to or greater than one calendar year. The need for a GRR period for a Resident returning after a leave of absence which is less than one year will be determined by the program.
3. The Residency Program Director in consultation with the Residency Program Committee and educational resources will develop the GRR plan.
4. A GRR period refused by a Resident cannot be applied retroactively once training has been resumed.
5. All Resident assessments during the GRR period will be reviewed by the Residency Program Director in consultation with the Residency Program Committee. A recommendation regarding the Resident’s re-entry to training should be submitted to the Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education (or designate) not later than two (2) weeks after the end of the GRR period. Possible outcomes of a GRR period include unconditional re-entry into the program or re-entry with a modified structure/training level.
6. A GRR period may be credited towards residency training time, if recommended by the program.
7. In exceptional circumstances, the Residency Program Committee may determine that it is not appropriate for the Resident on a leave of absence to return to the program. This decision must be submitted to and must be approved by the Associate Dean, PGME. The Resident will be notified by the Associate Dean, PGME of a program’s decision against re-entry to the training program. Appeals of this decision follow the College’s Postgraduate Medical Education policies/procedures for appeals.

# 7. FORMS AND TEMPLATES

# Leave of Absence Request Form

Graduated Return to Residency Plan

Fitness to Return to Residency

**8. REFERENCES**

Leave of Absence from Residency Training

*Collective Agreement between University of Saskatchewan and The Resident Doctors of Saskatchewan* Article 13- Paid and Unpaid Leaves of Absence

RCPSC Policy and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship- Residency education and modifications to residency training

College of Family Physicians of Canada- Requirements for Residency- Leaves of Absence

**9. CHANGE HISTORY**

November 2018