

Policy Title:	VACATION & LEAVE OF ABSENCE
Most Recent Approval Date:	July 1 st , 2024
Contact:	Rush University Medical Center Designated Institutional Official (DIO)
Related Policies/Documents:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GME House Staff Member Leave Form 2. Wellbeing and Sick / Wellness Days Policy 3. HR-B 14.00 Leave of Absence Policy 4. HR-E 07.00 ADA Accommodation Request Process
Regulatory Elements:	2022 ACGME Institutional Requirements [I.B.4.a).(5), IV.I.4., and Sections IV.G. & IV.H.]

Scope:

All Graduate Medical Education (GME) Programs under the oversight of the Rush University Medical Center (RUSH) Designated Institutional Official (DIO). This policy applies to both accredited and non-accredited GME Programs.

Policy:

House staff members may take time away from training for a variety of reasons. All full-day absences must be submitted and approved in Medhub in advance or within one week of the house staff member's scheduled time-off, starting the first day the house staff member is absent. It is the responsibility of the program for tracking, recording, and approving all full-day absences in MedHub. The program must provide an accurate accounting of all time away from training used and the benefits still available to house staff members throughout the academic year.

Training programs must have written and accessible specialty-specific policies consistent with applicable laws, specialty certifying board training requirements, and this institutional GME policy. The program policy and the implementation of such policies may be reviewed by the Rush Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC) at least annually.

Certifying Specialty Boards may require a specific number of months of actual training per year in order for promotions to the next level or graduation; some allow a maximum number of weeks of leave. Program Directors must be knowledgeable of the specialty board's rules and inform house staff members intending to use any leave benefits of the effect the leave will have on their training completion date and how the house staff member can meet the requirements for successful completion of the program.

House staff members shall be provided up to six weeks of approved medical, parental, or caregiver leave(s) of absence for qualifying reasons that are consistent with applicable laws and at any time during the program, starting the day the resident/fellow is required to report. During the qualifying leave, House Staff Members must be provided with at least the equivalent of 100 percent of their salary and benefits.

Qualifying leave of absences will run concurrently with any available Family Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA), as consistent with applicable laws.

I. Rush House Staff Benefits:

Vacation – House Staff Members receive the equivalent of four work weeks with pay. Vacation must be scheduled by mutual agreement with the Program Director or their designee. House Staff Members may not carry over accrued but unused vacation beyond the end of the academic year. Any accrued but unused vacation will be forfeited at the end of the academic year.

Sick Leave – The program director may approve time away from scheduled work due to illness. House Staff Member may use up to five days in any given academic calendar year without GME Office approval. *Please see the Wellbeing and Sick/Wellness Days Policy in MedHub for more information on this benefit.*

Wellness Days – The program director may approve up to two days in any given academic year without GME Office approval. *Please see the Wellbeing and Sick/Wellness Days Policy in MedHub for more information on this benefit.*

Parental Leave (Maternity/Paternity/Adoptive/Foster) – Up to six weeks of leave shall be paid with benefits for the care of a newly born child or a child placed under the house staff member's care through adoption or foster. Leave may be taken for a defined period of time, either consecutively or intermittently. Intermittent scheduling shall be permitted in 2-week or longer leave increments, or as recommended by a treating physician. The defined period of time, including the use of consecutive or intermittent leave must be outlined in the initial leave request form.

The intent is that the six weeks of parental leave is the maximum amount of paid parental leave for a birth or child placement event. For example, a house staff member having twins would not receive twelve weeks of paid parental leave. A house staff member would also not receive another six weeks of paid parental leave if the leave is used in two different academic years.

At the individual's discretion, they may use as much of their available vacation time as desired to extend parental leave beyond the total of six weeks of paid leave.

Pregnant House Staff Members who may need an accommodation or additional leave due to pregnancy and/or pregnancy complications should contact their Program Director and the GME Office. Any additional leave post-delivery would begin after the Parental Leave and would require appropriate medical documentation.

Parental Leave must be completed within 12 months after the birth, adoption, or foster placement date.

Caregiver Leave – Up to six weeks of leave shall be paid with benefits for the care of an immediate family member (child, spouse, or parent/guardian) with a documented medical condition. Leave may be taken for a defined period of time, either consecutively or intermittently, as recommended by the treating physician. At the individual's discretion, they may use as much of their available vacation time as desired to extend caregiver leave beyond the total of six weeks.

Salary Continuation Period – The House Staff Member may qualify for up to three months of paid leave with 100 percent salary and benefits due to a personal health condition, extended illness or disability, where appropriate under the Salary Continuation Period. The period of leave will be determined based on documentation provided by the treating physician. This type of leave may be used intermittently at the recommendation of the treating physician. The House Staff Member must follow Leave of Absence procedures.

Medical Leave of Absence – House Staff Members may use up to twelve weeks total leave to care for a spouse, parent/guardian, or child with a serious health condition, where appropriate and with a note from the individual's or the individual's spouse's, parent's or child's treating physician. After available sick, wellness, vacation and parental/caregiver leave is exhausted, subsequent leave is unsalaried; however, the House Staff Member may maintain benefits by paying the Health and Dental insurance premium contribution. House Staff Members should contact [Jennifer L Hayes@rush.edu](mailto:Jennifer.L.Hayes@rush.edu) if they are considering taking an MLA.

Armed Services Reserve Duty Leave – Up to two weeks paid with benefits. House Staff Members may use another qualifying leave option to extend time away.

Unpaid Leave of Absence – May be extended at the request of the House Staff Member and the discretionary approval of their Program Director. Extension does not guarantee that the House Staff Member's position will be held open pending their return to work; the unavailability of a position when a House Staff Member wishes to return to work shall result in termination of the House staff Agreement. House Staff Members may elect to maintain benefits during this leave by making arrangements with the GME Office and paying COBRA rates for health insurance coverage.

II. Process for Requesting, Approving, and Recording Leaves of Absence:

Failure to follow the required process for reporting, approving, and recording leaves of absence may result payroll errors.

1. The House Staff Member must request leave by completing the GME House Staff Member Leave Form (see page 4) and submitting it to their program director for approval. The House Staff Member must provide as much notice as is practicable to the Office of Graduate Medical Education and their Program Director when requesting leave.
2. The program director must review the requested leave and discuss with the House Staff Member the impact, if any, the time off will have on their training, including whether training will need to be extended. The program director and coordinator are encouraged to consult with the GME Office to ensure that the leave request is consistent with this policy and house staff member benefits.
 - a) House Staff Members on a visa must notify the Rush Immigration Specialist, prior to taking the leave of absence.
3. The program coordinator must enter and approve the dates of the leave, the signed request form, supporting documentation available at the time of request, and any time training will be extended in MedHub. *Please see the [GME Vacation and Leave of Absence page](#) on Inside Rush for information.*
4. The program and/or the House Staff Member must contact the GME Office if the dates or the conditions of the leave change.
 - a) Parental Leave generally begins on the day of birth or placement of a child, it is essential that the GME Office and the Program Director be notified of the actual start date of the leave if it is different from the date on the request, the number of vacation days to be applied toward the leave following the paid six weeks, and the actual return date. It will also be necessary for the program to send an updated rotation schedule for accurate MedHub reporting to Medicare.
5. When requested, the House Staff Member is responsible for providing any additional documentation to the GME Office for their qualifying leave.

III. Process for Returning from a Leave due to a Personal Medical Condition:

The following process is informed by the Medical Center return to work clearance for all employees following a medical leave.

1. The House Staff Member must provide to the GME Office documentation completed by the treating clinician(s) certifying the House Staff Member is capable of performing the duties of the program in which they are training. The date of return must be clearly indicated and may, at the House Staff Member's request, include any restrictions, accommodations, and/or follow-up plans enumerated.
2. If returning to work after a 90 days absence, the House Staff Member will be required to complete return to work screening process which is facilitated by RUSH Employee Health. The House Staff Member will be instructed to schedule an appointment with Employee Health for clearance screening.
3. When deemed necessary by the DIO or program director, additional clinical evaluation of the House Staff Member may be required prior to return or during the program if there is a concern about performance or capacity to perform the duties of the training program. This additional evaluation if required, will be at RUSH's expense.
4. House Staff Members may request reasonable accommodations through the HR-E 07.00 ADA Accommodation Request Process. *Please see Medical Center Policy in Inside Rush PolicyTech for more information.*



GME House Staff Member Leave Form

House staff members on visas must notify Ann.Bretzer@rush.edu prior to taking a leave of absence.

House staff members should use this form to request the leave types below. See pages 1-2 for descriptions of leave benefits in the GME Vacation and Leave of Absence Policy.

Questions about available sick, wellness, and vacation day balances should be directed to your program coordinator.

Prior to approving the requested leave, the program director must notify the house staff member of the effect the leave will have on their training completion date and how the house staff member can meet the requirements for successful completion of the program.

Questions about leave benefits should be directed to Jennifer Hayes in GME (Jennifer.L.Hayes@Rush.edu).

House Staff Member _____ Program _____ PGY _____

Select type(s) of leave:

____ Parental Leave (Maternity/ Paternity/ Adoptive)

____ Caregiver Leave*

____ Salary Continuation Period (SCP)*

____ Medical Leave of Absence (MLA)

____ Armed Services Reserved Duty

____ Long Term Disability (LTD)*

____ Unpaid Leave of Absence

Dates of anticipated leave: ____/____/____ to ____/____/____ Total number of days: _____

Your Program Director/Coordinator and the GME Office must be notified of your **exact leave dates** and any **changes to the dates** as soon as possible. Please enter updated dates in MedHub and submit a REVISED leave form if necessary.

*Caregiver Leave, Salary Continuation Period, and Long-Term Disability require a treating physician's note with anticipated return date and any additional status reporting or changes.

Calculate Parental or Caregiver Leave:

Section A. Do you plan to use the full 6-week parental or caregiver leave benefit for this life event?

☐ Yes ☐ No: My parental or caregiver leave will be less than 6 weeks (42 calendar days). It will be _____ days.

Section B. Do you plan to extend parental or caregiver leave beyond 6 weeks using vacation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Additional vacation days to extend leave: _____

Section C. Do you plan to extend parental or caregiver leave with unpaid time off? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Additional unpaid days to extend leave: _____

Total time off

Section A _____ 42 days (6 weeks) or number of days entered for a leave less than 6 weeks

Section B + _____ Number of days leave is extended using available vacation, if applicable

Section C + _____ Number of days leave is extended with unpaid time off, if applicable

Total days off _____

Will this leave be taken consecutively or intermittently? ☐ Consecutively ☐ Intermittently: Please describe scheduling plans for the requested intermittent leave (*please see policy for details*): _____

Will training be extended? **(CHECK ONE)** ☐ YES (Enter new end date of PGY: ____/____/____) or ☐ NO or ☐ Unknown at this time.

(CHECK) ☐ This time off was requested in MedHub on ____/____/____ by (name) _____

House Staff Member's signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Program Director's pre-approval _____ Date ____/____/____

Email this form to Jen Hayes (Jennifer.L.Hayes@Rush.edu) with your Program Director's signature as soon as possible.