Diagnostic Radiology Residency Leave/Absence and Professional Meeting Policy

1. PURPOSE
   a. To define and outline the specific amounts of leave allowed and the process for requesting and scheduling leave for vacation, sick leave, educational leave, parental leave, funeral leave, FMLA, personal preference or meeting attendance.
   b. To ensure coverage during absences for all institutions.
   c. To understand that taking more than allotted leave may negatively impact training and may indicate a professionalism issue.

2. POLICY
   a. For planned absences, residents are required to submit any absence requests through Qgenda no less than 45 days in advance of the rotation start date. The reason this time period exists is to allow appropriate planning for absences (arranging alternate coverage and adjusting procedure schedules if needed).
   b. Vacation
      i. All residents in GME programs shall receive three weeks (15 working days) of elective paid vacation annually. Additional assigned days are given as available around the Christmas and New Year’s holidays. Vacation may be assigned by the Program Director. Vacation is non-accruing. At the Program Director’s discretion, and with the resident’s permission, it is permissible to grant a resident only two weeks of vacation in one year, and four weeks in the following year.
         1. Residents must request leave in Qgenda no less than 45 days prior to rotation start.
         2. The Chief Residents will determine feasibility of leave.
         3. Once approved by Chief Residents, the resident must email the section chief to ask if the absence can be accommodated no less than 45 days prior to rotation start.
         4. The resident should notify the affected attending(s) of the day at rotation start/week start.
         5. The total number of leave days during a 4-week rotation should not exceed five (5). If a request is for more than
five (5) days it must be reviewed and approved by a Program Director via email (not in hallway discussion).

6. There are times in which leave may be restricted based on department business needs, such as in June or the first two weeks of July due to transition of residents and fellows.

7. Exceptions may be made by Chief Residents on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances if there is appropriate coverage of service.

8. If vacation is not planned by the last 45 days of the academic year, vacation may have to be forfeited so residents are encouraged to plan appropriately.
   
i. A certain amount of resident coverage is required at the VA. The Chief Residents will review requests and determine if there is enough coverage. In general, there should be at least 5 residents at the VA and VA-Chest and VA-Body should not be absent at the same time.

   iii. For rotations in which 2 residents are scheduled, no more than one person off at the same time unless extenuating circumstances requiring section chief or education lead approval.

   iv. Requests will be honored on a first come, first served basis except for June and July leave requests. A late Winter submission deadline for requests should be set by the Chief Residents prior to approving any requests.

   v. Any leave in excess of the approved leave must be made up through a dedicated remediation plan and may result in an extension of training.

   vi. Only under extenuating circumstances can changes be made in the above policy after approval by the Program Director.

c. Personal/Professional Development (PPD)

i. The purpose of professional days is to allow residents to engage in academic and career development activities, including presenting at educational and scientific meetings, interviews for fellowship training, and participation in university/hospital committees/development.

ii. Professional days are allotted to residents based on training year and are non-accruing. Additional professional time may be available for oral presentations at academic meetings as approved by the Program Director.
1. R1 – up to 5 days
2. R2 – up to 10 days
3. R3 – up to 10 days
4. R4 – up to 10 days

d. Meeting Requests

i. When planning to submit a presentation for which you plan to use professional days and/or department funds to attend, you should first email the education lead and Chief Residents to determine if your absence is feasible.

ii. Once it is known if absences can be accommodated, a meeting request must be submitted in Qgenda at the time of abstract/exhibit submission. This is typically well in advance of the meeting. Request should include:

1. Meeting dates requested (including day for travel if needed);
2. Meeting information including the title of what is being submitted, the type of presentation (e.g. poster, e-exhibit, oral presentation), and faculty sponsor if there is one;
3. Confirmation that the education lead and Chief Residents have approved days away from the respective clinical service;
4. Whether or not the resident requests financial support for the activity.
   a. If financial support is needed, include if the amount will exceed expenditure limits for meeting and/or residency.
   b. If financial support exceeds expenditure limits for one meeting and/or total of residency and you have not obtained other funding, you will need to discuss with the Program Director or Associate Program Director to determine if it warrants department financial support.
      i. If financial support is warranted, approval must come from department chair.

iii. Meeting expenses (see 4a) are reimbursable up to $2,000 per meeting. Residents are limited to a total expenditure of $6,000 during residency (3 meetings). The program will pay for R3 registration fees to attend AIRP and will reimburse up to $2,500 in related travel and housing costs separate from meeting expenses. The resident will cover expenses in excess of the maximum. Additional meeting presentation/participation is encouraged but requires Program Director and department
chair approval for additional time and potential expense reimbursement.

1. Covered Expenses
   a. Meeting registration
   b. Economy roundtrip airfare
      i. Reimbursement for one (1) departure and one (1) arrival flight. If extending time for personal travel will reimburse up to the contracted University rate.
   c. Transportation to/from airport
      i. Taxi, shuttle service, Uber, Lyft, etc.
   d. Meals
   e. Lodging
      i. Maximum lodging reimbursement per night up to the discounted rate available at hosting hotel/conference location.
   f. Printing fees for abstracts

2. Non-Covered Expenses
   a. Rental Car – Residents may not rent a car
      i. Due to liability issues and the numerous policies the residents would have to comply with the department does not allow car rentals.
   b. Alcohol

e. Sick Days
   i. Paid sick days are non-accruing. Up to twelve (12) days of paid sick leave is allowed per year. Sick days may be used for a resident’s own serious health condition, or for the serious health condition of a spouse, parent, or child.
      1. Up to twelve (12) days of paid sick leave may be used as part of an approved FMLA leave.
   ii. If greater than twelve (12) days of sick leave are used per year outside of approved leave, residents will need to use vacation days or makeup the required time at the end of his/her training program (see Makeup Time). Unusual circumstances will be reviewed by the Program Director and GME Office on a case-by-case basis.
      1. Residents must notify the Program Director, Chief Residents, faculty affected, and Program Manager when using sick leave.
      2. Residents must submit the sick leave request through Qgenda on their first day back to work.

f. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
   i. Eligibility, Requirement, and Process: Refer to GME Leave policy 4.1
ii. Paid time during FMLA:
   1. FMLA time is paid for up to eight (8) weeks.
      a. Includes use of remaining department sick days, previous FMLA in same year and one (1) week of accrued vacation.
   2. FMLA/sick leave taken beyond eight (8) weeks in one year is unpaid and will require use of remaining vacation days. Once vacation days have been exhausted, further absence will require makeup time.
      a. Makeup time must be arranged with the Program Director (see Makeup Time).
      b. There is a cap of sixteen (16) weeks of leave (FMLA and MLOA) over the course of 4-year residency.
   i. Approved leave greater than sixteen (16) weeks over 4 years will require use of remaining vacation days. Once vacation days have been exhausted, additional leave will result in extension of training at end of residency.

3. Benefits continue throughout the leave. The trainee is invoiced for the employee portion of the premium during any unpaid FMLA time taken beyond 8 weeks and the department covers departmental costs.

iii. Vacation Use During FMLA:
   1. Trainee is required to use one (1) week of accrued vacation time (if available) during the first week of approved FMLA.
   2. If one (1) week of accrued vacation time is not available, this week is unpaid and only seven (7) weeks of FMLA, medical leave of absence, or sick leave is paid.

   g. Department Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA)/Non-FMLA Medical Leave
   i. Medical leave when trainee does not qualify for FMLA (i.e. not employed for at least 12 months, or has already exhausted 12 weeks of FMLA in the year.)
   ii. Eligibility and Process: Refer to GME Leave policy 4.1
   iii. Paid Time During MLOA:
       1. MLOA time is generally paid for up to 8 weeks.
          a. Includes use of remaining department sick days, previous FMLA in same year and one (1) week of accrued vacation.
       2. MLOA time taken beyond 8 weeks in one year is unpaid and will require makeup time.
          a. Makeup time must be arranged with the Program Director (see Makeup Time)
   iv. Benefits continue throughout the leave. The trainee is invoiced for the employee portion of the premium during any unpaid MLOA time taken beyond 8 weeks.
v. Vacation Use During MLOA:
   1. Trainee is required to use one (1) week of accrued vacation time (if available) during the first week of approved MLOA.
   2. If one (1) week of accrued vacation time is not available, this week is unpaid and only seven (7) weeks of FMLA, MLOA, or sick leave is paid.

vi. Returning from MLOA:
   1. The GME office must be informed of the return from leave date beforehand so a Return from Leave ePAF may be completed.
   2. Trainee must provide a physician letter before being allowed to return to their training program for any MLOA leave (with the exception of a six week or longer maternity leave).

h. Department Leave of Absence (LOA) – Non-Medical Leave
   i. Eligibility and Process: Refer to GME Leave policy 4.1
   ii. Vacation Use During LOA:
      1. Trainee is required to use all accrued vacation (if available) during the LOA.
   iii. Paid Time During LOA:
      1. LOA time is unpaid.
      2. Benefits may continue throughout the leave. The trainee is responsible for all costs of the benefit premiums.
   iv. Returning from LOA:
      1. The GME office must be informed of the return from leave date beforehand so a Return From Leave ePAF may be completed.

i. Makeup Time
   i. The American Board of Radiology places the responsibility for assessment of adequate training on individual programs. FMLA/MLOA sick leave beyond eight (8) weeks in an academic year will require use of remaining vacation days. Once vacation days are exhausted additional leave will require extension of training at the end of residency.
   ii. There is a cap of sixteen (16) weeks of leave (FMLA and MLOA) over the course of 4-year residency.
      1. Approved leave greater than sixteen (16) weeks will require use of remaining vacation days. Once vacation days are exhausted additional leave will result in extension of training at end of residency.
   iii. Program must provide the GME office the estimated makeup time when requesting the leave. This ensures the GME office does not terminate the trainee prematurely.
iv. If the use of approved leave requires there be makeup time beyond the trainee’s original graduation date, benefits coverage will continue until graduation and makeup time is paid.

j. Holidays
   i. Holidays may be days off in addition to vacation days, however there are holiday coverage needs. VA holidays and UU holidays do not always align. Residents will have to cover some holidays over the course of residency based on coverage needs. Efforts will be made to try to ensure fairness and transparency.
   
   ii. The department has been gracious to provide residents with additional days free from clinical service as available around the Christmas and New Year’s holidays by maintaining a skeleton crew for service coverage. The details of coverage over the holidays will be organized by the Chief Residents and approved by the Program Directors.

k. Other – Funeral, Jury Duty, and Military Leave
   i. Refer to GME Policy 4.1 Leave for Trainees for additional information.

l. Required Exams & Trainings
   i. All residents are required to obtain a medical license, and meet ACLS and BLS requirements or obtain other certifications. Residents will be allowed time off with pay to sit for required exams and trainings, the ABR Core Exam and ACR in-service exam for example. Residents are responsible for scheduling any required exams or trainings to minimize disruption to patient care. As soon as the date is known, a resident must submit the scheduling information to the Chief Residents.

m. Resignation/Unscheduled Absences
   i. The Program Director will work directly with the Diagnostic Radiology Clinical Competency Committee (CCC) regarding resignations to ensure immediate revision of the rotation schedule as necessary.

       1. The CCC will determine the feasibility of whether or not to recruit a replacement. Recommendations will be complied and reviewed by the CCC in a timely fashion.

       2. The GME Office will be kept informed, updated and involved until this process is complete.
n. **Other Lengthy Unscheduled Absences**

i. The Chief Residents will notify all affected faculty and facility locations and revise the rotation schedules as appropriate.

ii. The program will make every effort to accommodate all justified absences.

iii. Unjustified absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis and may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to:

   1. Placement on academic remediation or academic probation;
   2. Loss of moonlighting opportunities;
   3. Lack of positive letter of reference/recommendation from residency program leadership.

iv. The GME Office will be kept informed, updated and involved until this process is completed.