

SECTION ONE: BENEFITS AND AMENITIES

POLICY NO: 1.4

SUBJECT: HOUSE STAFF LEAVE OF ABSENCE

I. PURPOSE

To identify the circumstances under which a leave of absence will be granted to a member of the house staff and the process for requesting a leave.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES/REQUIREMENTS

- A. The hospital will grant a house staff leave of absence to house officers who are unable to work for a temporary period of time. A house staff leave of absence must be requested for any absence that exceeds 14 calendar days. Leaves of absence are classified as follows: family/parental, medical, hardship and military.
- B. A house staff leave of absence is a privilege that may be granted to a house officer for personal reasons at the discretion of the Program Director.
- C. Eligibility
All medical leaves must be substantiated by a physician's certification and/or appropriate documentation. The house officer must be employed by the hospital for at least six months at the time of the extended absence to be eligible for a leave of absence with the exception of maternity and military leaves and worker's compensation.
- D. While on medical leave, a house officer may be eligible for payment of sick time benefit hours to supplement disability payments. Vacation and holiday time may be requested after sick time is exhausted.
- E. A house officer may request an unpaid hardship leave of absence of 30 days. Hardship leaves may be granted due to personal emergencies with the exception of situations covered under the Leave of Absence Policy. If a house officer requests a hardship leave, all vacation benefit hours must be used prior to the leave becoming effective.
- F. A unpaid military leave will be granted if a house officer is called to active duty in the Armed Forces. The leave will last the duration of the enlistment period. Military orders must accompany the request.
- G. Benefits
 - 1. Hospital paid group health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance and long term disability coverage will be continued. The house officer's monthly contributions will continue to be his/her responsibility during the house staff leave of absence.

H. Process for Requesting a House Staff Leave of Absence

1. A “House Staff Leave of Absence Request Form” must be completed no less than 30 days prior to the beginning date of the leave stating the effective date of the leave, the expected date of return, and the reason for the leave. Forms are available in the Office of Medical Education. The Program Director of the house officer’s program will review the request and forward the form to the Office of Medical Education. In the event of an emergency, the 30-day time period may be waived.
 2. The Program Director will notify the house officer in writing when the request is approved and provide a written policy outlining the program requirements concerning the affect of leaves of absence on satisfying the criteria for completion of the residency program.
 3. The Program Director and the house officer will work out any coverage issues during the leave of absence.
 4. The original “House Staff Leave of Absence Request Form” will be kept in the Office of Medical Education with a copy in the house officer’s file within their department and a copy in the Human Resources Department.
 5. A house officer is assured of his/her position at the conclusion of the approved leave. The Program Director should be appraised of his/her plans periodically in a timely fashion that does not interrupt the scheduling of rotation assignments. When a date of return is known, the house officer must notify the Program Director to confirm arrangements for return to active status. Required length of notice may vary widely by program. It is the responsibility of the house officer to provide notice in accordance with individual program requirements. A minimum notice of one month is desirable and is requested if feasible. A house officer who fails to return to work at the expiration of the leave of absence will be considered to have voluntarily resigned from the program.
 6. Upon returning from a medical leave of absence, the house officer must provide a medical certificate indicating fitness to return to work and must be cleared through the Employee Health Services Department.
- I. It is up to each individual Program Director to determine if any portion of an extended leave of absence must be made up, either in accordance with the requirements of that discipline or at the Program Director’s discretion. Should the house officer be required to make up all or part of a leave, he/she will continue to be paid by the program at the salary level commensurate with the PGY appointment and job description.

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