

American Board of Emergency Medicine

## Policy on Parental, Caregiver, and Medical Leave

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

- 1. What is the effective date of the policy?** July 1, 2020.
- 2. Why did ABEM create the policy?** ABEM approved the new policy to allow residents two additional weeks per year to accommodate leaves of absence for parental, caregiver, or personal medical leave or to preserve vacation time in instances where the maximum of six weeks absence has been reached for purposes of family or medical leave. The new policy will offer residents more flexibility, reduce stress, and increase autonomy in making life decisions, especially with respect to family and parental leave.
- 3. How do the new policy requirements coincide with the current [Policy on EM Residency Requirements](#), which states 46 weeks per academic level must be completed?** Under the new policy, two weeks of additional leave time per year can be provided if ABEM's traditionally allowed six weeks of absence have already been used for parental, caregiver, and/or personal medical leave within an academic year. The program director must attest that the resident's competency has been achieved without an extension of training.
- 4. The new policy states that residents must have a minimum of two weeks away from training each academic year; can the resident forgo the vacation to be promoted or graduated sooner?** No. The maximum training time per academic year must not exceed 50 weeks to ensure that the resident receives at least two weeks away from training per academic year. Additionally, in a resident's final year of residency, 30 weeks of the total weeks of successfully completed training must be dedicated EM training.
- 5. I am confused about the minimum 46-weeks requirement per academic year within the [Policy on EM Residency Training Requirements](#) and the 44-week minimum requirement in the new leave policy; what is the minimum number weeks of training required?** The additional two weeks may be granted for vacation only if the resident has already used up his/her six weeks of leave time, within an academic year, for the purpose of a family medical leave, as stated in the new policy (parental, personal, family). It should not be interpreted as reducing the threshold for training to 44 weeks in general, but rather, it should be used only in unique circumstances to allow greater flexibility and still meet ABEM board eligibility requirements. The discretion still lies with the program director as to whether to offer the two weeks based on the resident's achievement of competencies.
- 6. ABEM never used to track vacation time; the new policy includes vacation time. Does this mean that programs must report all residents' vacation time?** No. ABEM anticipates that each academic year is recorded as a 52-week segment, with an assumed maximum leave time of six weeks. If ABEM is notified that a resident would incur a leave time greater than the six weeks allowed within an academic year, resulting in an extension to a resident's graduation date, ABEM will seek confirmation from the program director that

the resident's weeks of training meet minimum training requirements. The new policy allows the program director latitude to offer two additional weeks of leave based on the resident's achievement of competencies and if he/she had used the six given weeks for reasons pertaining to parental, caregiver, and/or personal medical leave.

- 7. Can this policy be utilized for subspecialty fellowship training?** Possibly. Medical Toxicology program staff and fellows should refer to the Policy on Parental Caregiver and Medical Leave for Medical Toxicology Leave. All other Fellowship Directors and staff should contact ABEM to determine if the Policy is applicable.

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