

**COOPER UNIVERSITY HEALTH CARE
DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE
INTERNAL MEDICINE RESIDENCY PROGRAM**

**POLICY ON ALL MEDICAL, PARENTAL, CAREGIVER,
PERSONAL, EDUCATIONAL, MILITARY, JURY DUTY, and
BEREAVEMENT LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

Cooper University Health Care recognizes that a resident may need to be away from work due to medical or certain family reasons. Leaves of absence are defined as approved time away from work duties, other than regularly scheduled days off as reflected in a rotation schedule. All leaves will be scheduled with prior approval by the Program Director, with the exception of emergencies or unexpected illnesses. In unexpected/emergency situations, the resident should contact the Program Director or Chief Resident/Fellow & Program Administrator at the earliest possible time.

The amount of time a resident can be away from work duties and still meet Board requirements varies among the specialties. It is the resident/fellow responsibility to be aware of his/her specialty requirement. If leave time is taken beyond what is allowable for the specialty board and the resident/fellow is required to extend his/her period of activity in the training program, the resident/ should request permission to extend and should establish a schedule for doing so in consultation with the Program Director.

Leave time under any of these categories will not be counted toward Board eligibility. When the need/request for leave is foreseeable, the request must be submitted at least thirty (30) days prior to the leave. When the need for the leave is unforeseeable, the request should be submitted as soon as practical.

There are three separate entities involved when approaching leave: 1. **IM Residency Program**, 2. **GME Office**, and 3. **Human Resources**

All three entities need to be notified about leave.

In regard to the IM Residency program (and Board Eligibility):

1. Parental/Caregiver/Personal Leave

Parental/caregiver/personal leave via FMLA is available to eligible residents/fellows for childbirth and care for the child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care; care for the spouse, son or daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition; or a

serious health condition. If certain conditions are met, a resident may be eligible for parental (or other) leave related to adoption, pregnancy, childbirth, and/or nursing an infant for a period of up to four months. Time off under the FMLA runs concurrently. A minimum of 6 weeks away from training at least once during training will not extend a resident's training nor prevent them from being eligible for the boards. Two weeks of vacation in addition to leave will be preserved in addition to the leave time.

The program director will provide written confirmation prior to leave by using the Cooper GMEC Request for Leave form. If the resident will be required to extend their training, the program director must clearly state as such.

The resident must receive medical clearance prior to returning to work from a medical leave.

The July 2021 ABMS (American Board of Medical Specialties) Policy on Parental, Caregiver and Medical Leave During Training can be found here:

<https://www.abms.org/policies/parental-leave/>

2. Medical Leave

Medical leave which is not FMLA eligible is available at the discretion of the Program Director in 30-day increments up to a maximum of 52 weeks. Medical documentation is required if the resident is away from work for more than 5 calendar days. If paid sick or vacation time is available, it must be used prior to going into unpaid status.

The resident must receive medical clearance prior to returning to work from a medical leave.

3. Education Leave

Education leave may be granted at the discretion of the Program Director.

4. Military Leave/Jury Duty

Residents/Fellows will be granted military leave or leave for jury duty as required by applicable law. Please contact the Cooper Human Resources Department for specific questions about such leave.

5. Bereavement Leave

If there is a death in your family, you may take up to 3 working days off as leave with pay. For this purpose, "family" is defined as spouse, child, mother, father, mother-in-law,

father-in-law, sister, brother, grandparent or grandchild. Except in very unusual circumstances, Bereavement leave must be utilized within 14 days of the date of death.

In regard to GME:

The resident must fill out a form and submit it to the GME department via [Request for Leave of Absence \(cooperhealth.org\)](#). This will be signed by the DIO for approval to keep the residency in compliancy with ACGME policies.

In regard to Human Resources:

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

As required by the FMLA, Cooper allows eligible residents to take up to twelve weeks paid or unpaid leave in a rolling twelve month period for certain family or medical reasons. These reasons include childbirth and care for the child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care; care for the spouse, son or daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition; or a serious health condition that makes the resident/fellow unable to perform his/her job.

Residents are eligible for FMLA leave (if they meet the defined family or medical reasons) if they have:

- been employed by Cooper for at least 12 months and
- been employed for at least 1250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave.

If a resident/ is on FMLA leave, his/her health insurance continues. More information on FMLA leave can be obtained through the Cooper Human Resources Department. **A resident must apply for FMLA via the Human Resources department in order to maintain their employee status prior to leave. The IM residents can use the following personnel to discuss leave questions: Nichole Pyle (pyle-nichole@cooperhealth.edu).**