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ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT STATUS:

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITMENT (PAC) PLANS:

Performance and Accountability Commitment Plans (PAC Plans) are initiated when House Staff's performance has not responded to Coaching or not met expectations on an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP, see [Section IV.A. Coaching and Individualized Learning Plans](#)) and, if patterns continue, may result in non-renewal or non-promotion. There may also be concerns regarding the performance of a House Staff which have not been remedied or should not be addressed solely with feedback or Coaching.

Performance issues subject to PAC Plans include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Insufficient medical knowledge.
- Inability to apply medical knowledge effectively, whether in patient care, research, or performance of technical skills.
- Failure to progress or perform at the expected level of training.
- Other performance issues that fail to demonstrate expected competency

1. Initiating a Performance and Accountability Commitment Plan (PAC)

In those situations, one of the actions listed below (Initial PAC, Final PAC, Non-Promotion, or Non-Renewal) is initiated, depending on the nature and/or severity of the deficiency. In determining which level of intervention is appropriate, the Program Director should consider the House Staff's overall performance, including previous evaluations, Coaching, Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs), and Corrective Actions such as those initiated under the Corrective Action Policy (see [Section IV.C. Corrective Action](#))

a. Performance and Accountability Commitment Plan (PAC Plan)

An Initial PAC Plan is appropriate if concerns arise or continue regarding the performance of a House Staff which are not appropriate to be dealt with by Coaching or an Individualized Learning Plan. Examples include those listed above. An Initial PAC Plan will be given in writing to the House Staff

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explaining why the performance is unacceptable, expectations for improvement of the deficiency as well as a time frame in which to meet these expectations and for re-evaluation. This Initial PAC plan and meeting must be documented. A copy of the Initial PAC Plan must be given to the House Staff, the Program Director, the Department Chair, and the DIO.

During or at the end of an Initial or a PAC Plan that has been continued, the House Staff will meet with the Program Director or designee and the Program Director or designee will advise the House Staff whether the deficiency has been corrected or whether further action will be taken. At the end of an Initial or a PAC Plan that has been continued, dependent on whether the House Staff has corrected the noted deficiency or if the House Staff does not correct or improve the deficiency within the period of time, or if the same or additional deficiency occurs within that period, then the Program Director may take one or more of the following actions:

- i. Lift the PAC Plan,
- ii. Continuation of the PAC Plan,
- iii. Immediately place the House Staff on a Final PAC Plan,
- iv. Recommend non-renewal, or
- v. Recommend non-promotion.
- vi. At any time, whether before or after a PAC Plan has expired, the Chair, Program Director, and/or DIO may recommend further action.

A House Staff member on a PAC Plan (Initial, a PAC Plan that has been continued, or Final) is not considered an employee in good standing. Moonlighting is not permitted while House Staff is subject to a PAC Plan.

If the House Staff wishes a review of the PAC Plan, they must follow the process and procedures in Section V. of the House Staff Manual ([V. House Staff Grievance Procedure](#)).

b. Final Performance and Accountability Commitment (PAC) Plan

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If a House Staff's performance, including but not limited to, performance of duties, or interpersonal or communication skills, such as those listed above, falls below acceptable standards or other deficiencies exist which are not corrected by Informal Counseling, an Initial PAC Plan, a continued PAC Plan or are of a serious nature such that Informal Counseling or PAC Plan, is not appropriate, the House Staff is placed on a Final PAC Plan by the Department Chair, Program Director, or DIO. The House Staff will be informed in writing by the Department Chair, Program Director, or DIO that they are being placed on a Final PAC Plan. The notification should include an explanation of the deficiencies or performance giving rise to the Final PAC Plan, expectations for improvement and the time period of the Final PAC Plan. The length and conditions of the Final PAC Plan are determined by the Department Chair and/or Program Director, after consultation with the DIO for GME. This letter of Final PAC Plan must be documented. This will also be shared verbally with the House Staff whenever possible and the meeting documented. A copy must be given to the House Staff, the Program Director, the Department Chair, and the DIO.

The effective date of the Final PAC Plan Period will be the date of the written notification unless stated otherwise in the written notification.

During the Final PAC Plan Period, efforts are made to advise and assist the House Staff to address the performance issues and/or correct deficiencies with the goal of the House Staff successfully completing the program.

If at any time during the Final PAC Plan Period additional performance or conduct issues arise, or if the issues which resulted in the Final PAC Plan continue, the Program Director may extend the Final PAC Plan, recommend Non-Promotion or move to Non-Renewal.

At the end of the Final PAC Plan Period, the Department Chair or Program Director determines which one or more of the following actions will be taken and notifies the House Staff and DIO:

- i. Remove the House Staff from Final PAC Plan status,
- ii. Extend the Final PAC Plan,
- iii. Notify the House Staff of non-promotion, or

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- iv. Notify the House Staff of nonrenewal of their appointment.

At any time, whether before or after the Final PAC Plan Period has expired, the Department Chair, Program Director, and/or DIO may recommend further action.

If the House Staff wishes a review of the Final PAC Plan, they must follow the process and procedures in Section V. of the House Staff Manual ([V. House Staff Grievance Procedure](#)).

c. *Other Actions: Non-promotion or Non-renewal*

Non-promotion or non-renewal of a House Staff's contract may be appropriate for a number of reasons, including but not limited to one of the reasons related to Performance above.

Written notice of non-renewal of a House Staff's contract or non-promotion of a House Staff to the next level of training generally shall be given as soon as practicable prior to the end of the House Staff's current contract. The Program Director, the Department Chair, and the DIO should also receive a copy of the Notice of Non-renewal or Non-promotion.

House Staff with questions about their promotion status should contact their program director.

If the House Staff wishes a review of the non-renewal or non-promotion, they must follow the process and procedures in Section V. of the House Staff Manual ([V. House Staff Grievance Procedure](#)).

d. *Summary Suspension*

If at any time a House Staff's conduct requires that immediate action be taken to protect the health or safety of patients or others, or to reduce the substantial likelihood of immediate injury or damage to the health or safety of patients or others, any member of the Medical Staff, the Hospital Administrator on Call shall have the authority to summarily suspend the House Staff after consulting with the DIO.

The Department Chair, Program Director or DIO may also summarily suspend a House Staff who exhibits performance or conduct that the Department Chair,

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Program Director or DIO deems too serious to warrant a Warning or Probation.

The Summary Suspension will be reported immediately in writing to the DIO and the House Staff's Program Director and Department Chair, with a copy to the House Staff. The House Staff will remain in paid status while on Summary Suspension.

The DIO, after review of the circumstances giving rise to the Summary Suspension and after consultation with the Department Chair and Program Director, determines a course of action which includes one or more of the following:

- i. Lifting, modifying or extending the Summary Suspension;
- ii. Coaching;
- iii. Warning (see [Section IV.C. Corrective Action](#));
- iv. Probation (see [Section IV.C. Corrective Action](#));
- v. Initial Performance and Accountability Commitment Plan;
- vi. Continuation of a Performance and Accountability Commitment Plan;
- vii. Final Performance and Accountability Commitment Plan
- viii. Non-promotion,
- ix. Notification of non-renewal of their appointment;
- x. Immediate Dismissal.

The House Staff is notified in writing, with copies to the House Staff's Program Director and Chair, of the action taken, and that they may not be present in the clinical areas or otherwise participate in work-related activities unless specifically instructed, with the exception of personal medical care and/or engagement with the Employee Assistance Program.

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If the House Staff wishes a review of the Summary Suspension, they must follow the process and procedures in Section V. of the House Staff Manual ([V. House Staff Grievance Procedure](#)).

e. Immediate Dismissal

Performance issues not resolved by an Initial Performance and Accountability Commitment Plan, a Final Performance and Accountability Commitment Plan, or Summary Suspension, or other serious behavior may result in Immediate Dismissal. If, at any time, the Department Chair, Program Director or DIO determines that Immediate Dismissal is warranted, the Department Chair or Program Director will consult with the DIO to determine the appropriate action and the effective date of dismissal, which serves as termination of employment with VUMC. Upon notification of the Immediate Dismissal, the House Staff is relieved of all clinical duties.

The House Staff will be notified in writing of the action taken, and they may not be present in the clinical areas or otherwise participate in work-related activities unless specifically instructed, with the exception of personal medical care and/or engagement with the Employee Assistance Program.

Any VUMC equipment including, but not limited to, pagers, ID badges, keys, parking cards, phones, laptops must be immediately returned upon dismissal. In addition, all access to VUMC systems and email is terminated.

If the House Staff wishes a review of the Immediate Dismissal, they must follow the process and procedures in Section V. of the House Staff Manual ([V. House Staff Grievance Procedure](#)).

A Performance and Accountability Commitment Plan may run concurrently with a Corrective Action (see [Section IV.C. Corrective Action](#)). The classifications of Warning and Probation refer only to Corrective Action effective on July 1, 2024.

For House Staff placed on Correction Action Status prior to July 1, 2024 for reasons secondary to academic performance deficiencies only who does not have significant professionalism or misconduct components, the DIO may submit additional information to parties explaining the pre-July 1, 2024 distinction. The statement may include a statement similar to the following: "Please note that in July 2024 VUMC created a House Staff

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Academic Improvement policy to distinguish academic performance issues from other performance issues that fail to meet VUMC standards or expectations (such as professionalism issues or misconduct) that would fall under the Corrective Action policy. On review of the GME file for Dr. [NAME] in response to this request for information, it has been determined that the status for Dr. [NAME] would have had the same outcome of [non-renewal, non-promotion, completion in good standing] but would have been classified as [IPAC Plan, Continued PAC Plan, Final PAC Plan] rather than as [Warning, Probation]. Thus, the actions taken were related primarily to Academic Improvement and would not be considered Corrective Action.

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