

VACATION AND LEAVE POLICY AND PAY DURING LEAVE

Vacation:

All House Staff on one-year appointments are eligible for three (3) weeks of vacation time, which is awarded, upon their start date. For appointments less than one year, vacation will be prorated accordingly. All time off, including holidays, is scheduled at the discretion of the Program Director. Official VUMC holidays are not automatically observed as time off for House Staff.

Other Types of Leave:

VUMC also recognizes that House Staff may need to be away from work due to medical or certain family reasons. Leaves of absence are defined as approved time away from residency 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 family emergencies or unexpected illnesses. When the need/request for leave is foreseeable, the request should be submitted at least thirty (30) days prior to the leave. When the need for the leave is unforeseeable or the thirty days' notice cannot be given, the request should be submitted to the Program Director at the earliest possible time.

1. Types of Leave: Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Tennessee Maternity (Parental) Leave Act (TMLA)

House Staff will be granted FMLA and TMLA Leave as required by applicable law and consistent with the [VUMC FMLA and TMLA Leave Policy](#). Please initiate the process through the GME Office and contact the Office of GME for specific questions about such leave. Please note that TMLA and FMLA run concurrently.

2. Military Leave Duty

House Staff will be granted military leave as required by applicable law and consistent with the [VUMC Military Leave of Absence Policy](#). Please contact the Office of GME for specific questions about such leave.

3. Jury Duty

House Staff will be granted leave for jury duty as required by applicable law and consistent with the [VUMC Administrative Leave policy](#). Please contact the Office of GME for specific questions about such leave.

4. Non-FMLA and Personal Leave

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Leave requested by House Staff that does not qualify for FMLA or TMLA or Personal Leave may be permitted as determined by the Program Director in consultation with the ACGME DIO and consistent with the [Non-FMLA Medical and Personal Leave of Absence Policy](#). House Staff should consult with their Program Director to understand how leave may impact their progression towards their specialty board.

5. Bereavement Leave

House Staff will be granted leave for bereavement as required by applicable law and consistent with the [VUMC Administrative Leave policy](#). Please contact the Office of GME for specific questions about such leave.

6. GME Administrative Leave

Administrative Leave is a general leave status, initiated by the Program Director, in consultation with the ACGME DIO, or initiated by the ACGME DIO. Administrative Leave is paid. Examples of when a House Staff member may be placed on administrative leave include but are not limited to: an internal review or investigation or for an investigation of an external event involving the House Staff, such as an arrest.

Pay During Leave:

Pay described below is concurrent with any of the Leave time described above.

1) Sick Days:

House Staff accumulate one (1) sick day per calendar month of employment except when they are on unpaid leave. Sick time can only be used for time off due to the House Staff's illness or the illness of an eligible family member. For the purpose of this policy, eligible family members are defined as: spouse, domestic partner, parent, grandparent, sibling, biological child, stepchild, adopted child, foster child and child (ren) of the staff member. Sick time must be utilized prior to going into unpaid status, if available. If the House Staff wants to continue receiving full salary for time off due to an injury or occupational disease which is compensable under the Tennessee Workers' Compensation Act, workers' compensation benefits may be supplemented by available sick or vacation time up to the House Staff's full weekly salary. House Staff on unpaid leave do not accrue sick time. House Staff are not paid for unused sick time. If a House Staff is reappointed and has unused and accrued sick time, that unused and accrued sick time will carry over to the next appointment year.

House Staff can now directly donate their sick leave to a House Staff colleague who is experiencing a hardship due to a qualifying serious personal or family medical

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situation and is not receiving short-term disability, long-term disability or worker's compensation payments. Information on that program can be found here <https://www.vumc.org/gme/hs-sick-leave-donate>.

2) Vacation:

As noted above, all House Staff will be allotted three (3) weeks of paid vacation time during each academic year, and this may be applied to all types of leave above if needed. Vacation time must be used in the appointment year in which it is accrued. Any unused time does not carry over and is not paid out at the appointment year-end.

3) Personal Days:

For purposes of personal needs (not covered by one of the other leave categories noted in the House Staff Manual), all House Staff may schedule two (2) days of paid personal days during each academic year. These must be in addition to the required four (4) days off per twenty-eight (28) day period required by ACGME and the House Staff manual, and they must be scheduled according to program policies. These will not carry over to the next appointment year.

4) Parental Pay

House Staff who become new parents, including birthing and non-birthing parents, adoptive/foster parents, and surrogates, will have six (6) weeks of parental pay which must be taken within 12 weeks of birth or adoption of the child. If multiple parents are within the same program, the pay will not be concurrent. Parental pay runs concurrently with leave taken pursuant to the FMLA/TMLA leave time. Note: Parental pay is paid as one block and cannot be split.

5) Short-Term Disability

For their own medical condition House Staff may be eligible for short term disability if elected as part of their benefits. To apply for short-term disability, House staff should contact their assigned benefits representative which can be found at: <https://hr.vumc.org/About/ContactHR>. Short term disability has a waiting period which House staff will cover through another paid program such as sick, vacation or parental pay before going into an unpaid status.

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In order to remain in a paid status during leave, the House Staff member will utilize parental pay (if applicable), then sick time first for a leave related to their (or a qualifying family member's) medical condition (if applicable), short term disability (if enrolled and eligible for coverage), then vacation time, and then any additional leave will be unpaid once all available paid leave has been exhausted. Short-Term Disability coverage may be available, to cover a House Staff's own illness, however, pursuant to the terms and conditions of such coverage. Note: House Staff can only receive pay through one program at a time and cannot be paid through two different programs for the same period.

If a House Staff member exhausts all possibilities of pay, but is still eligible for Leave, then the House Staff would go into unpaid status and would have the option of continuing to pay for benefits.

Returning from Leave:

House Staff on medical leave MUST obtain a *Return to Work/Physician Release* form and return it to the GME office, who will notify the Program Director or their designee BEFORE the House Staff may return to work. Once that has occurred, the manager must return the house staff from leave in the HR system. If the House Staff is released with restrictions that affect their duties, the House Staff should contact the Graduate Medical Education office. In addition, if the restrictions may necessitate an accommodation, the House Staff should make the GME Office aware of the request for accommodation and may also need to engage VUMC Employee Relations.

Leave and Program Requirements

Each residency or fellowship program will provide its House Staff with a written policy in compliance with its Program Requirements and Board requirements concerning the effect of leaves of absence, for any reason, on satisfying the criteria for completion of that residency or fellowship program and subsequent Board certification. The amount of time a House Staff can be away from residency or fellowship duties and still meet board requirements varies among the specialties. Information relating to access to eligibility for certification by the relevant certifying board is available upon request from the Program Director, but it is the House Staff's responsibility to be aware of their specialty board's requirement. If leave time is taken beyond what is allowable for the specialty board and the House Staff is required to extend their period of activity in the training program to meet board requirements, the House Staff should request permission to extend and should establish a schedule for doing so in consultation with the Program Director and DIO.

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