

Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME)

Title:	Waiver of Training Policy	Number:	020
Approved By:	PGME Committee		
Approval Date:	Feb. 21, 2023		
Contact:	postgrad@postgrad.med.ubc.ca		

Executive Summary

In exceptional circumstances, a waiver of training may be granted following a leave of absence from residency. This policy is based on standards outlined in the current Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and The College of Family Physicians of Canada.

Following return from a leave of absence, a resident's length of training will typically be extended by the equivalent amount of time that was granted for the leave. Under exceptional circumstances, the Office of Postgraduate Medical Education ("PGME") at the University of British Columbia will consider applications for waiver of training following a leave of absence from residency.

The following criteria must be met in order for a waiver to be considered:

1. At the time of application, the resident must be expected to achieve the required level of competence to commence independent practice by the end of the final year of training.
2. A [written application](#) must be submitted to the Office of PGME
3. The application must be made:
 - o during the resident's final year of training.
 - o prior to the scheduled date of program completion in the absence of the waiver (at least three months for Family Medicine or at least six months for Royal College programs).
 - o before certification examinations are taken.
4. The amount of time requested to be waived must be within the following limits:

College of Family Physicians of Canada Programs:

 - o Family Medicine program – four weeks
 - o Family Medicine Enhanced Skills program (1 year or less in duration) – no waiver permitted

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada Programs:

 - o One year program – no waiver permitted
 - o Two year program – six weeks
 - o Three year program – six weeks
 - o Four year program – three months
 - o Five year program – three months
 - o Six year program – three months
 - o In Internal Medicine and Pediatrics, where residents are undertaking three years* of training with an Internal Medicine or Pediatrics Program Director, a maximum of six weeks may be waived for these three years* of training. Subsequently, a maximum of



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six weeks of training may be waived in the following two or three years of training under the Subspecialty Program Director.

Procedure

1. Prior to submitting an application, the resident's Program Director will review all criteria listed above.
2. The resident's Program Director will complete the [application form](#) and submit to the Office of PGME (postgrad@postgrad.med.ubc.ca) within the timeframe outlined in Criteria #3 above.
3. The decision as to whether a resident will be granted a waiver of training will then be made by the Associate and/or Assistant Dean for Postgraduate Medical Education. The decision will subsequently be communicated to the resident's Program Director.
4. A decision not to grant a waiver of training cannot be appealed.

Preliminary Assessment

It is recognized that for applications to subspecialty programs, clinical fellowship programs and staff positions, it may be helpful for the resident to determine if they will be granted the waiver of training prior to the last year of the residency program. In such cases, the PGME office will review the merits of the application and may offer a "prognostication", but this will not be binding on the decision rendered above during the final year of the residency program.

Preamble

Waiver of Training Requirements after a Leave of Absence from Residency: A joint policy of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) and the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC)

October 2020

Policy

The current policy regarding waiver of training requirements after a leave of absence from residency in the Faculty of Medicine at UBC is based on the following standards:

I. **[College of Family Physicians of Canada Requirements for Residency Eligibility: Waivers of training](#)**

A leave may result in a waiver of training requirement, but only in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances will be determined by the Postgraduate Director of the Department of Family Medicine with the approval of the Postgraduate Dean. The Board of Examiners of the College of Family Physicians of Canada must be notified that a waiver of training was granted under these circumstances, if the candidate wishes to maintain their residency eligibility for certification. Such notification must be

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provided prior to the submission of completion of training for each individual.

To be eligible for the certification examination in Family Medicine and for being granted Certification in The College of Family Physicians (CCFP), the maximum length of a waiver of training for residents in Family Medicine residency training programs will be **four weeks**.

Family Medicine residents registered in Enhanced Skills programs of one year or less in duration must complete the entire duration of training (that is, no waiver allowed) to be eligible for CFPC examinations leading to certificates of special competence and/or attestations of completion of training.

II. [Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship](#) [\(Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada\)](#)

Section IV: Postgraduate Medical Education

4.3.2 Waiver of Training after a Leave of Absence from Residency

Accommodation

The policy detailed in this section 4.3.2 is subject to the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) commitment to accommodate residents with personal characteristics enumerated under applicable human rights legislation, as provided in Section 6.12 of this guide.

Policy on Granting a Leave of Absence

The Royal College expects that all residents must have achieved the goals and objectives of the training program and be competent to commence independent practice by the completion of their training program. It is understood by the RCPSC that residents may require leaves of absence from training. The circumstances that would qualify residents for leaves of absence are determined by the university. It is anticipated that any time lost during a leave will be made up upon the resident's return.

Policy on Granting a Waiver of Training

The Postgraduate office may allow a waiver of training following a leave of absence, in accordance with university policy and within the maximum time for a waiver determined by the RCPSC. A decision to grant a waiver of training can only be taken in the final year of the program and will not be granted after the resident has taken the certification examinations. Similarly, the end-of-training date for a resident cannot be changed to an earlier date after the resident has taken the certification examinations.

Each university will develop its own policy on whether or not it is willing to grant a waiver of training for time taken as a leave of absence; however, in the case where waivers of training are acceptable to the university, they must be within the acceptable times listed below. In addition, regardless of any waived blocks of training, the decision to grant a waiver of training must be based on the assumptions that the resident will have achieved the required level of competence by the end of the final year of training. A waiver of training can only be granted by the Postgraduate Dean on the recommendation of the resident's Program Director.

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RCPSC Maximum Allowable Times for Waivers

It is the responsibility of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) to set maximum allowable times for waivers of training that would maintain eligibility for certification. The following are the maximum allowable times for waivers **for RCPSC Programs only**:

1. One year program – no waiver allowed
2. Less than one year for remediation or enhanced skills – no waiver allowed
3. Two year program – six weeks
4. Three year program – six weeks
5. Four year program – three months
6. Five year program – three months
7. Six year program – three months
8. In Internal Medicine and Pediatrics, where residents are undertaking three years* of training with an Internal Medicine or Pediatrics Program Director, a maximum of six weeks may be waived for these three years* of training. Subsequently, a maximum of six weeks of training may be waived in the following two years of training under the Subspecialty Program Director.

The process for these programs is as follows:

- i. Three years of training completed with an Internal Medicine or Pediatrics Program Director followed by two or three years of subspecialty training with a different Program Director are treated separately for the purpose of the waiver of training.
- ii. A waiver must be recommended by the Internal Medicine or Pediatrics Program Director and approved by the Postgraduate Dean on the Core In-Training Evaluation Report (CITER). A decision to grant a waiver is made in the PGY3 for a maximum duration of six weeks.
- iii. In the subspecialty years, a decision to grant a waiver is recommended in the final year by the Subspecialty Program Director and approved by the Postgraduate Dean. A maximum six week waiver of training can only be taken in the final year of training.
- iv. If the resident undertakes three years of Internal Medicine or Pediatrics training with an Internal Medicine or Pediatrics Program Director at one university and switches to another university for subspecialty training, it is the responsibility of the Postgraduate Dean at the corresponding institution to approve the waiver of training. For example, if a resident does Pediatrics training at the University of Toronto and switches to Pediatric Nephrology at McGill, the Postgraduate Dean from Toronto would approve the six week waiver in Pediatrics and the Postgraduate Dean from McGill would approve the six week waiver in Pediatric Nephrology.

*As details of training programs change as per Specialty Committees, the number of weeks and/or years reflected in this policy may be adjusted without formal vote by PGME committee.

UBC Application of this Policy

Residents in Competence by Design programs whose progress has been given the status 'Progress is Accelerated' are required to complete their time-based contract in the absence of an approved Leave of Absence. Additional time may be devoted to pursuit of additional electives, or research interests.

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The Office of PGME at the University of British Columbia will consider applications for waiver of training following a leave of absence. This policy will comply with all standards outlined in the current Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and The College of Family Physicians of Canada.

In order to standardize the process across all UBC residency programs for considering applications for waiver of training following a leave of absence, we will require the residency Program Director to complete and submit the application form to the PGME office for any resident whom the Program is recommending a waiver of training.

The resident and the residency Program Director must review the relevant CFPC or RCPSC Policies noted above and confirm that the resident fulfills all of the requirements. In addition, to satisfy the specific UBC requirement that the resident's performance be deemed exceptional, the Program Director will have to demonstrate that based on the evaluations throughout the program the resident's performance is exceptional – i.e. that in the majority of rotations the resident's performance was considered to be exceptional (within the top ten percentile of residents in that program).

Timing and Deadlines for Application

To be considered for the waiver of training, a resident must ensure that their Program Director submits a completed application for waiver of training to the Office of PGME ***during the final year of training at least three months for Family Medicine or six months for Royal College programs prior to the scheduled date of program completion in the absence of the waiver. The application must be made before certification examinations are taken.***

The decision as to whether a resident will be granted a waiver of training will be made by the Associate and/or Assistant Dean for Postgraduate Medical Education. A decision not to grant a waiver of training cannot be appealed.

Preliminary Assessment

It is recognized that for applications to subspecialty programs, clinical fellowship programs and staff positions, it may be helpful for the resident to determine if they will be granted the waiver of training prior to the last year of the residency program. In such cases, the PGME office will review the merits of the application and may offer a "prognostication", but this will not be binding on the decision rendered above during the final year of the residency program.

Waiver of Training Application Form for Residency Programs

Please note: In order to complete this form, the residency Program will need some measure of whether a resident meets the standard of "exceptional" While this is difficult to define precisely, "consistent performance within the top tenth percentile" will be the minimum expectation of an exceptional resident. To assist residency programs in identifying exceptional residents, it is recommended that programs include at the end of their In-Training Evaluation Reports (ITERs) the following section for rotation supervisors to complete:

"Overall I consider this resident to be exceptional (in the top ten percentile of residents at this level of training) (YES/NO). If yes, please support this statement citing specific performance measures based on the CanMEDS/CanMEDS-FM criteria."

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Related Policies and Resources

[UBC PGME Leave of Absence Policy](#)

[Application-for-Waiver-of-Training-after-Absence-from-Residency.pdf \(ubc.ca\)](#)

[College of Family Physicians of Canada Requirements for Residency Eligibility: Waivers of Training](#)

[Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship: 4.3.2 Waiver of Training after a Leave of Absence from Residency](#)

Action	Committee	Date	Status
Approved	PGME Policy Working Group	Oct. 12 2022	Recommended to PGME Executive
Approved	PGME Executive	Jan. 24, 2023	Recommended to PGMEC
Final Approval	PGME Committee	Feb. 21, 2023	Approved