



Tufts-New England Medical Center

GME 01-G: GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION SICK DAYS AND LEAVE POLICY

I. Introduction

This Policy establishes hospital-wide sick day standards for all House Officers (interns, residents and clinical fellows, hereinafter “Trainees”) appointed to GME programs sponsored by the Tufts-New England Medical Center Hospitals, Inc. (“T-NEMC”). For all leaves of absence, the T-NEMC Human Resources “Leave of Absence” policy applies.

The sick day benefits described in this Policy relate to absences from work due to non-work-related illness or injury. Trainees absent from work due to work-related illness or injury are eligible for benefits under Worker’s Compensation (see T-NEMC Human Resources Policy D8).

II. Sick Days

Annual Accrual

On an annual basis, ordinarily commencing July 1st, each Trainee shall accrue twelve (12) paid sick days, or on a monthly basis, the Trainee accrues one (1) sick day per month. Trainees may use sick days in advance of accrual only with specific approval by the Program Director.

Prompt Notification and Appropriate Use of Sick Days:

The Trainee must notify his/her Program Director or designee prior to or within the first three hours of any absence due to illness or injury, or in extenuating situations as soon thereafter as practical, in order to be entitled to use the sick day benefit.

Sick days may not be used to provide paid personal time off for a Trainee (see GME Vacation and Personal Days Policy).

Sick days may be used for absences to care for a seriously ill member of the Trainee’s immediate family, or for maternity-related illness or disability.

Trainees who misuse sick days may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of the GME policy 01-C “Discipline and Dismissal of House Officers and Appeals Process.”

Termination of Appointment

Upon the Trainee’s completion or termination of appointment, any unused accrued sick days are not reimbursable.

Annual Carryover

All unused accrued sick days may be carried over from one appointment year to the next, up to a limit of 36 days.

III. **Leaves of Absence:**

T-NEMC Human Resources Leave of Absence Policy Provisions

The T-NEMC HR Leave of Absence Policy applies to all Trainees and is referenced and summarized here. A Leave of Absence is defined as a paid or unpaid period of more than two consecutive workweeks away from a Trainee's assigned duties, which has been approved by the Program Director under the terms of the T-NEMC policy. The full T-NEMC policy should be read before a Trainee applies for, or is granted a Leave.

The Family Medical Leave Act of 1993

The Family Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") of 1993 states that eligible individuals are entitled to a total of 12 workweeks in a 12 month period of paid or unpaid, job-protected leave taken for 4 specific medical reasons. This federally mandated job-protected leave means that Trainees will be entitled to be restored to the position of training they held when the leave began, with equivalent benefits, pay, or other terms and conditions of pre-leave employment of training.

It is T-NEMC's policy that Trainees are eligible for such Leave under the Act. The provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act cover most situations relating to leaves taken for maternity, paternity, personal illness, or family illness.

For individuals who work part time or those who work variable hours, the FMLA entitlement is calculated on a pro rata or proportional basis.

The 12-month period in which an individual may take up to 12 workweeks of FMLA begins the date the Trainee first takes FMLA leave.

Any leave taken for one of the following four reasons will be subtracted from the individual's annual allotment of FMLA leave:

1. For the birth of a son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child.
2. A son or daughter adopted by, or placed for foster care, with the Trainee.
3. To care for the trainee's spouse, son, daughter or parent who has a *serious health condition*.*
4. For a *serious health condition* that makes the trainee unable to perform their job.

*A *serious health condition* is an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves: (1) Inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential medical facility; (2) A period of incapacity requiring an absence from work of more than three days and involves continuing treatment by a health care provider; or (3) Continuing treatment by a health care provider for prenatal care.

Bereavement Leave:

A Trainee may take up to four weeks of bereavement leave for the death of his/her spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, brother, sister, grandparent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, any relative living in the Trainee's household or other equivalent relationship. Bereavement leave may be extended for an additional 4 weeks, if necessary, and with the prior approval of the Program Director.

IV. Effect of Leave of Absence on Training Program Completion:

Depending on the length of leave, the particular specialty or subspecialty Board certification requirements, or the requirements of T-NEMC or its training programs, Trainees may be required to extend their appointment to make up for time lost from their training program while on leave. These situations will be subject to the provisions of the GME policy "Extension of Training Period."

There is no guarantee that after a Leave of Absence a Trainee will complete their training program as originally planned.

Approval: Graduate Medical Education Committee
Approval: Medical Board
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