In this document, “Resident” refers to both specialty Residents and subspecialty Fellows.

The purpose of this policy is to describe various types of leaves of absence and the documentation related to leaves. These include: Family and Medical Leave of Absence, military leave, sick leave, vacation and other leaves of absence.

Family and Medical Leave of Absence

It is the policy of the University of Colorado School of Medicine Graduate Medical Education Committee to allow leave for maternity, paternity, adoption, illness/injury of a close relative that requires the trainee’s care, or illness/injury of the Resident. Residents may be granted up to 12 calendar weeks of leave during a 12-month period for certain family and medical reasons with the program holding the Resident’s position within the training program.

Leaves are granted at the discretion of the Program Director and with the prompt notification of the Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education, provided that the time away does not cause any undue hardship for the program as defined by the Program Director. The Program Director must provide the Resident with accurate information regarding the impact of a leave of absence as it applies to the resident’s satisfactory completion of the program and eligibility to participate in the relevant certifying board(s).

The only paid leave available to Residents is the 3-week vacation and/or 1-week educational leave (PGY II and above) per contract year. Once this time is exhausted, the Resident must go on unpaid leave. If leave is granted, the Resident must first use any time remaining from the current year’s vacation and/or educational leave as part of the leave in order to continue to receive their stipend. If the Resident is allowed to reserve a portion of paid leave to use at a later date in the contract year, the Program Director must state in the Leave Documentation (see below) that this exception has been made. Vacation and/or education leave cannot be used to extend the length of the leave beyond the 12 weeks.

Benefits during a Family and Medical Leave of Absence:

During the 12-week period of Family and Medical Leave of Absence, the funding source will continue to pay the cost of the Resident’s current benefit coverage through GME.

Benefits for leaves that exceed, or are not eligible for, the 12-week period of Family and Medical Leave:

Health and Dental: During this leave, the Resident must self-pay entire premium(s) to maintain coverage. If the Resident is eligible and decides to continue benefits through the COBRA continuation of the CU GME Health Benefits Plan, the Resident must follow the procedures detailed in the Plan Document posted at www.medschool.ucdenver.edu/gme/healthdental to obtain coverage.

Long-Term Disability: Premiums for long-term disability coverage are paid by the funding source during
the first 90 days of an approved Family and Medical Leave. Self-payment of the premium is not allowed. A Resident on Family and Medical Leave that involves personal (not family) disability should contact the GME Benefits Office as soon as it is realized that the leave may exceed 90 days. The Resident will be given information on how to file a long-term disability claim. Disability benefits may be available beginning the 91st day of a disability. When the resident returns from leave, the decision of whether or not long-term disability coverage can be reinstated and the terms of reinstatement will be subject to the provisions of the disability insurance policy.

**Life Insurance**: During an approved leave period when the funding source is not required to pay the life insurance premium, the Resident may elect to continue life insurance coverage through GME by payment of the monthly premium. If the Resident chooses to not pay the life insurance premium, coverage will be canceled until the Resident’s return.

**Other Leave of Absence**

Requests to take a leave of absence other than Family and Medical Leave or to extend a leave beyond the 12-week period of Family and Medical Leave must be made through the Program Director and with the notification of the Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education. Such requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis, with the program determining whether an unpaid leave will be granted (with the program holding the Resident’s position) or if the Resident would be required to resign in order to take such leave.

Benefits during this leave are the same as those above for leaves that exceed, or are not eligible for, the 12-week period of Family and Medical Leave. The Resident must be made aware that it is the Resident's responsibility to arrange for insurance coverage during this time, and be given information on how to contact the GME Office with inquiries.

**Leave Documentation**

Any time a leave of absence is granted; the Resident must receive a letter from the Program Director, co-sign the letter in acknowledgment, and return the letter to the Program Director who must promptly forward a copy to the Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education. Program Directors are encouraged to address leave plans and begin preparation of and submission of leave documentation to GME as soon as a potential leave is made known. Prior to circulation of the documentation for signatures of the Program Director and Resident, the Program Director must submit a draft to the GME Benefits Program Director for GME review. GME must be notified as soon as possible but no later than the start date of the leave in order to make certain the terms of the leave are accurate and are applied timely. GME will check with the Program Director when the leave is scheduled to begin. The documentation will be adjusted should the terms or conditions of the actual leave change. The documentation must address the following:

1) Reason(s) for the leave.
2) (Anticipated) start and end dates of the leave and date of expected return to training.
3) Dates of paid leave and dates of unpaid leave.
4) Plan for any time and/or rotations that the Resident will be required to make up in order to satisfactorily complete the program (consistent with the rules of the RRC) and/or to be eligible to participate in examinations by the relevant certifying board(s).
5) Period of time the funding source is required to pay benefit premiums (up to 12 weeks of Family and Medical Leave) and period of time the Resident is responsible for insurance coverage including information on how the Resident may contact the GME Benefits Office with questions.

**Definitions**
Educational Leave - PGY IIs and above may receive up to 7 calendar days per year for paid educational leave at the discretion of the Program Director. This leave should be primarily to attend major conferences and meetings. Educational leave generally cannot be accumulated from year to year.

Military Leave - Military leave will be considered the same as an approved (NON medical) leave of absence and requires the same leave documentation as stated above, with the exception of 5). In the case of a Military leave, the Resident must contact the GME Office regarding benefits while on Military Leave prior to the start of the leave. The Military Leave portion of this policy will adapt to comply with USERRA regulations.

Sick Leave - Residents do not accrue an annual sick leave allotment. However, leaves of absence are granted as needed when approved by the Program Director. Residents are encouraged to seek medical attention as necessary so that they may best serve their patients and attend to assigned duties. Sick leave may not be used in lieu of vacation and such substitution is strictly prohibited.

Vacation - Residents are granted 21 calendar days* for paid vacation. Vacation leave generally cannot be accumulated from year to year. Residents are expected to use vacation leave for interviews. Many programs require that all leaves be scheduled at the beginning of the academic year or far enough in advance to maintain compliance with duty hours.

Before starting leave, a Resident must have completed all patient medical records in the hospitals.

*7 days represents a calendar week. A calendar week is defined as consecutive weekdays and one attached weekend that a Resident is on vacation.