

University of Colorado School of Medicine

Graduate Medical Education

Policy: Disaster Plan: Continuation of GME Financial and Administrative Program Support Policy		
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In this document, “Resident” refers to both specialty Residents and subspecialty Fellows.

Policy:

To provide procedures for the Residents, Program Directors and Office of Graduate Medical Education in the event of a disaster.

Definitions:

Disaster (also referred to by ACGME as *Extraordinary Circumstances*): Circumstances that significantly alter the ability of the sponsor and its programs to support resident education. Examples of extraordinary circumstances include, but are not limited to, abrupt closure of a hospital or other essential clinical site resulting from a natural disaster (including inclement weather); a catastrophic loss of funding; acts of terrorism or cyberterrorism; and loss of infrastructure or acute and prolonged health system disruption during epidemics or pandemics.¹

1. Within the CU SOM campus, a formal disaster declaration will be made only by the Chancellor of the CU Anschutz Medical Campus.
2. For disasters pertaining to ACGME programs, when warranted and after consultation with the GMEC, the DIO may ask the ACGME Executive Director for the invocation of the Extraordinary Circumstances Policy for a particular program or the entire institution according to ACGME policies and procedures. This information will be posted on the ACGME website.² This formal declaration under ACGME policies creates significant flexibility for trainees to transfer to other institutions.

Residents:

As essential personnel, Residents should report to their training site as scheduled unless their Program Director (in consultation with the Supervising Faculty at the training site) authorizes dismissal. If authorized by the Program Director (and in case of clinic closures), Residents may be dismissed from reporting to their training sites for the duration of time specific by the Program Director.

Residents should develop a personal/home disaster plan so that if the Resident cannot get home to take care of personal obligations, there is a plan in place regarding child care, pet care, etc.

Program Directors: Program Directors must inform their Residents of the program-specific disaster plan. All attempts should be made to provide supervision during a disaster. Program Directors are responsible for providing instructions to the Residents regarding service obligations and patient safety during a disaster.

The Office of Graduate Medical Education Administrative Staff: GME staff will follow the dedicated planning system at www.ContinuityCU.com and within a reasonable time after the disaster to review the available information regarding continuation of essential office functions. GME staff will continue to provide administrative support to all affected programs during this period.

¹ ACGME Policies and Procedures, Subject 25.00

² ACGME Policies and Procedures, Subject 25.10

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Accreditation Council For Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Procedure:

If an event or set of events causes significant alteration to the residency experience in one or more residency programs, the CU SOM Designated Institutional Official (DIO) and/or GME Committee (GMEC) will follow this procedure:

As soon as possible, the DIO will:

1. Gather data and information from the affected Program Directors to determine the short-term (days/weeks) and long-term (weeks/months) impact on program functions and/or clinical operations at training sites affected by the disaster and provide information to the GMEC.
2. If ACGME programs are affected, the DIO will promptly contact the ACGME after the initial GMEC meeting to provide an update on the disaster and initial steps taken by the institution and the GMEC.
3. The ACGME may invoke the Extraordinary Circumstances Policy if it is determined that the Sponsoring Institution's ability to support resident education has been significantly altered.³

Within 10 days of the invocation of the Extraordinary Circumstances Policy, the DIO will contact the ACGME to receive deadlines for the Sponsoring Institution to:⁴

1. Submit program reconfiguration to ACGME; and,
2. Inform each program's residents of the decision to reconstitute the program and/or transfer the residents either temporarily or permanently.

Within 30 days of the invocation of the Extraordinary Circumstances Policy, the DIO will revise the Sponsoring Institution's educational program to comply with common, specialty-specific, institutional, and program requirements.⁵

1. The DIO Continue to communicate with the ACGME regularly, as needed, to provide updates on any additional program or institutional issues.
2. The DIO will ensure that residents and fellows are prospectively informed of the estimated duration of any temporary transfer to another ACGME-accredited program; and, ensure that residents/fellows continually receive timely information regarding reassignments, transfer arrangements, and/or major changes to the Sponsoring Institution or its programs.⁶

The GMEC will meet regularly, as necessary, to continue its assessment of the situation and to make decisions regarding CU SOM training programs. Issues to be reviewed, assessed, or acted upon by the GMEC include:

- Patient safety
- Safety of Residents, Faculty, and Staff
- Supply of available Faculty and Residents for clinical and educational duties
- Extent/impact of damage to the physical plant/facilities
- Extent/impact of damage to clinical technology and clinical information systems
- Extent/impact of damage to communication technology (e.g., phones, pagers, intra/internet)
- Changes in the volume of patient activity in the short-term and long-term

If the GMEC determines that a program or the institution cannot provide an adequate educational experience for a Resident because of the disaster, both individual programs and the institution will work toward the following options:⁷

1. Temporarily relocate a Resident to a site of training within the current local affiliate training sites.

³ ACGME Policies and Procedures, Subject 25.00

⁴ ACGME Policies and Procedures, Subject 25.20 (b)

⁵ ACGME Policies and Procedures, Subject 25.20 (a)

⁶ ACGME Policies and Procedures, Subject 25.20 (d-e)

⁷ ACGME Policies and Procedures, Subject 25.20 (c)

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2. Arrange a temporary transfer for a Resident to another ACGME program until the institution can provide an adequate educational experience for the Resident. As best possible at the time of the transfer, the program will inform the Resident being transferred regarding the minimum duration of the transfer and the anticipated total duration of the transfer.
3. Assist the Resident in a permanent transfer to another program/institution.
4. The preferences of the Resident will be considered by the transferring institution or program whenever possible.

Continuation of financial support in the event of a disaster will be dependent on the short-term and long-term impact on each program and the institution overall. In addition, it will be dependent on current policies related to reimbursement.⁸

1. For Residents temporarily relocated to an affiliated training site, CU SOM* will continue to pay Resident salary, benefits, and professional liability coverage.
2. For Residents temporarily assigned to a program at another institution:
 - CU SOM will provide funding for the Resident's salary, benefits, and professional liability coverage during the dates of the temporary assignment at that training site.
3. For Residents permanently transferring to another institution, CU SOM will not provide salary, benefits, or professional liability coverage.

*Refers to the Resident's CU SOM academic department or the GME office/affiliated teaching hospitals, depending on the nature of the disaster and the impacted training site/s.

⁸ ACGME Institutional Requirements, Section IV.N. and IV.N.1