

Time Away Policy

The policies for sick leave, maternity or paternity leaves, bereavement leaves or any other leave that might be covered by FMLA legislation are found on the website <https://gme.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/policies/gme-policies>.

Explanations of Time Away Types:

- **Vacation Days** – 20 paid Vacation Days per academic year (20 weekdays, 8 weekend days). Unused Vacation Days do not carry over to the following academic year nor are they reimbursed if not used.
- **CME (Conference) Days** – Up to 5 days/year – does not roll over
 - CME time away is at discretion of the program. Additional days are at the discretion of the Program Director for third-year residents when the resident is presenting. Requests for approval **must** be submitted to the Program Director in advance of submitting abstracts or making definite plans.
 - CME requests must be submitted at least 90 days in advance.
 - **Maximum meeting numbers and approved meetings:**
 - 1st Years – One meeting per year from pre-approved list. Cannot attend AAD during 1st year due to coverage needs.
 - Pre-approved meetings: PEDRA, ASDS, ACMS, SOCU, Atlantic Derm, ACDS, Dermoscopy Academy
 - 2nd Years – Two meetings per year (includes AAD).
 - 3rd Years – Two meeting per year (Includes AAD).

Residents may attend the Skin of Color Update (<https://skinofcolorupdate.com>) once in their training as an additional meeting that does not count towards their meeting counts, but still counts against CME day counts.

Residents should attend different meetings across their training years. Repeat meetings will not be approved unless the resident is presenting. Meetings like ASDP and ASDS for fellowship interviews will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Program Director.

Industry heavy meetings like Fall/Winter Clinical and Derm Foundation may be approved for chiefs only, who are accepted for Rising Stars or equivalent.

- **Flex Days** – Up to 5 paid Flex Days per academic year. Flex Days cannot be used in increments of less than one full day, nor can they be carried over to the next academic year or reimbursed if not used. Flex days are intended to assist a Resident in dealing with brief and unexpected life and personal issues (such as health or family emergencies). Flex days are not intended to extend vacation time or holidays, to substitute for unapproved vacation time or holiday requests or to replace the use of any other leave covered in this policy.
 - Flex Days may be used for events like sick days, extended medical appts, bereavement for a non-immediate family member, urgent appointments.
 - Note: Brief medical appointments (1-2 hrs. needed) that can be scheduled during administrative time do not count as time away. If you need to miss >2 hours, that would count as a flex day.
 - Resident health is a priority. For any brief appointments that cannot be scheduled during administrative time, please work with the Program Director and chief residents to accommodate.
 - Given that flex days are how sick days are accommodated, residents are strongly encouraged to reserve these for unexpected illnesses or events which may occur without warning during the year.
- **Family and Medical Leave of Absence** – Please see the GME Time Away from Training Policy located here: [Time Away from Training Policy](#) for details about:
 - Paid Medical, Parental and Caregiver Leave
 - Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Leave
 - Parental leave – new baby (birth or adoption) either parent
 - Military Leave
 - Personal Leave
 - Bereavement
 - Other type of leave
- **Interview Days for job or fellowship**
 - No Interview Days are required to be provided to Residents, per GME and the ACGME. Any Interview Days allotted are at the discretion of the program.
 - Dermatology will allow up to 5 days away for interviews total, for all years in Dermatology training. Residents will need to use Flex or Vacation Days for additional interview days.
 - Interviews days are only to be used during third year (or second year for those interviewing for dermatopathology fellowship) for the purposes of attending interviews for job or fellowship positions for the year immediately

following the final year of residency, for which the resident is currently being considered.

- Unused days are not paid or allowed to be used for any other purpose.

Vacation Request Process:

DHMC residents are allowed **four weeks** (20 weekdays, 8 weekend days) of vacation per year per GME guidelines.

These four weeks of vacation must be taken as follows:

- Three (one week) blocks
- No more than 5 single days (can be taken as single days, groups of days or a full week)

Weeks that include a holiday need to add the extra 5th day as the Monday or Friday immediately following or preceding the week, so they are attached. The extra day may not be used as an additional single day. The assignment of this day is up to the discretion of the chief resident depending on coverage needs.

Residents should avoid vacation during the following times:

- Consult block
- Basic exam (Usually in March or April) and CORE exams (occur in February, July and November)
- The entire month of July - exceptional circumstances will be reviewed by the program director, subject to coverage needs.
- During Patient Access Weeks (ask for the list annually)

The one-week vacation blocks must be scheduled in advance of the academic year (i.e., spring of the year preceding the academic year in which the vacation weeks will be taken).

Requests for time away, such as CME days, received less than 90 days away from the time requested may not be honored, except in cases of emergency, and the requesting resident is responsible for arranging coverage. Residents must insure that prior to their vacation request, both duty hour and surgical logs are up-to-date. All vacation/time away requests forms should be completed with appropriate coverage for required clinics, overnight call coverage, lecture sessions the resident is scheduled to present,

and any other pre-scheduled duties, and submitted to the Scheduling Chief Resident for initial approval, then will be overseen and approved by the program director.

In general, **no more than two residents should be away at a given time**. Regular exceptions to this rule include AAD annual meeting and holidays. This will ensure adequate coverage of necessary services and that enough residents are present to make teaching sessions meaningful. Special requests will be considered by the program director.

Time Away During Rotations at VA (when active):

VA coverage will be assigned for residents taking vacation while assigned to the VA. **3 months or longer lead time of requests or any known time away is required.**

In general, the amount of time expected to be used for vacation/away during a resident's rotation at VA should not exceed an amount proportionate to the resident's total vacation time and VA rotation duration.

Urgent Time Away Notification

Please alert your program directors and chief residents as soon as possible if you need support dealing with urgent issues or may need to use any of the above leave options.

If you are out urgently, notify the following people **as soon as possible via e-mail**:

1. The DHMC Dermatology Administrative Supervisor (Jean Henry)
 - a) should get a phone call as well if urgent patient rescheduling is going to be needed at DHMC
2. The VAMC Site Director if you are scheduled to be at the VAMC.
3. Attending(s) you are working with during the time you are urgently out.
4. Nurse Manager (Katelyn Ackerman, Dakota Wood, Gabi Sapp)
5. Your co-resident team (if you are scheduled in team situation like at the VA or lectures).
6. Program Directors
7. Program Coordinator
8. Chief residents

Unique Circumstances:

- **Fellowships that start July 1st when the last scheduled day of training is after 7/1?**

- The program encourages residents to pursue additional fellowship training. In the event of an overlap, the PD will request from the board that the resident “term early” to start fellowship on 7/1. (Last day of residency will be 6/30). Residents cannot use terminal vacation during this overlapping period. They are not allowed to be employed at D-H and at the fellowship site simultaneously.
- **Need to move to another city at end of training?**
 - Residents are expected to work up until their final day of training based on their contract (usually through second week of July).
 - Flex Days may not be used as “vacation” days at the end of training.
 - Terminal Vacation is strongly discouraged by GME, but may be approved at the discretion of the Program Director.
 - Up to 5 terminal vacation days (during the final two weeks of training) may be allowed for trainees pursuing a fellowship that requires a move for a start date of July 1.
 - 1 additional day may be allowed if the 5-day policy would require the resident to stay for a Monday only and they have a >4-hour drive to new fellowship training location.
 - Other circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- **COVID related illness or quarantine/isolation?**
 - If the resident can work from home during the quarantine/isolation, then no absence needs to be logged.
 - If the resident is too sick to work, flex (sick/personal) days must be used.
- **What impact does taking a leave have on eligibility to sit for boards certification?**
 - To sit for Dermatology board exams a resident cannot have absence >8 weeks in one year or >16 weeks over 3 years. This is an ABD policy, not a DH policy.
 - Total absence = vacation + flex (sick/personal) + medical leave + bereavement + interviews
 - (4 weeks of vacation + 1 week of flex) *3 years = 15 weeks during the course of your residency if you use all flex days
 - Therefore, any additional time away (i.e. parental leave) may impact the ability to sit for boards on time
 - Residents may need to make up additional time away at the end of their residency.
 - For residents in good standing: Up to 6 weeks may be excused at the discretion of the program director, in conjunction with CCC
 - <https://www.abderm.org/residents-and-fellows/residency-training/leave-of-absence-guidelines>