



<b>TITLE: Pharmacy Resident Time Off and Leave of Absence</b>	
<b>SECTION: Pharmacy</b>	<b>POLICY NUMBER: PHAR-35</b>
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2016</b>	<b>REVIEWED/REVISED DATE(S): January-2017; June-2017; May-2019; October-2020; April-2023</b>
<b><u>AFFECTED AREAS</u></b> All TriHealth pharmacy residency programs	
<b>POLICY OWNER: Residency Program Coordinator(s)</b>	
<b>APPROVED BY: VP of Pharmacy Services</b>	

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a TriHealth procedure for pharmacy residents requiring medical or non-medical leave during residency training. This policy is applicable to GSH PGY1 and PGY2 Internal Medicine Pharmacy Residency Programs, as well as Bethesda North PGY1 and PGY2 Cardiology Pharmacy Residency Programs.

**BACKGROUND**

**The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) requires sponsoring institutions such as TriHealth to have a policy for vacation and other leaves of absence consistent with TriHealth Human Resources policies and procedures, specifically ASHP Accreditation Standard sections 2.2, 2.2.a, 2.2.a.1, 2.2b, 2.2.b.1, and 2.2.b.2:**

- 2.2** Policies define the amount of time residents are allowed to be away from the program.
  - 2.2.a** Time away from the residency program does not exceed a combined total of the greater of (a) 37 days per 52-week training period, or (b) the minimum number of days allowed by applicable federal and/or state laws (allotted time), without requiring extension of the program.
    - 2.2.a.1** Training is extended to make up any absences that exceed the allotted time and extension beyond the allotted time is equivalent in competencies and time missed.
  - 2.2.b** Policies define whether extension of the program is permitted (subject to the requirements of any applicable federal and/or state laws).
    - 2.2.b.1** Programs that permit extension of the program must specify the maximum duration allowed and the status of salary and benefits during the extension.
    - 2.2.b.2** For programs that do not permit extensions, policies state that residents taking leave in excess of the allotted time will not receive a certificate of completion.

**POLICY**

**Time away from the residency program is defined as time away from scheduled training days and may not exceed an excess of 37 days over the course of the residency year. Examples of time away from the program include vacation time, sick time, religious time, personal time, holidays, personal interview time, jury duty, bereavement leave, military leave, parental leave, leave of absence, extended leave, and conference attendance. Of note, time away from the residency to complete requirements of the Teaching Certificate Program will not be included in the 37-day limit.**

**Paid Time off:** Residents accrue Paid Time Off (PTO) at the baseline rate of all new-hire, non-management positions. Residents are permitted to utilize all accrued PTO during the course of the residency year. However, use of PTO within scheduled learning experiences shall not exceed two days for any four-week/month-long learning experience or three days for any six-week learning experience. Use of PTO includes pre-scheduled or unscheduled absences. Attendance at sanctioned, off-site professional meetings or conferences will not require use of PTO but will count towards time away from the residency program.

Regarding requirements for staffing of the inpatient pharmacy, PGY1 residents will work one major and one minor holiday as determined by the department scheduler. PGY2 residents are required to staff one major and one minor holiday providing clinical pharmacy coverage for their primary service line.

Major Holidays

Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas Day  
New Year’s Day

Minor Holidays

Martin Luther King Jr Day  
Memorial Day  
July 4<sup>th</sup>  
Labor Day

Denial of pre-planned paid time off may be at the discretion of the Program Director/Coordinator to remediate documented deficiencies (e.g., if a resident is within a formal remediation plan). The Program Director/Coordinator or the Pharmacy Manager may deny paid time off requests in order to maintain department staffing structure.

In the case of a declared hospital or regional emergency, urgent professional responsibilities may cancel previously arranged paid time off.

**Vacation Time:** Residents will not be permitted to request more days off than PTO accrued over the residency year. Residents may use all accrued PTO during the residency year. However, extended use of personal time off (in excess of two days per four-week/month-long learning experience or three days per six-week learning experience) must be approved by and scheduled with the Program Director/Coordinator so the time away preferably falls between learning experiences. Exceptional circumstances will be addressed by the RPD/RPC on a case-by-case basis. All vacation time must be approved by the RPD/RPC, rotation preceptor, and Pharmacy Manager. Vacation time is not to be used for longitudinal weekend staffing coverage.

**Sick/Personal Time:** Residents may take up to two sick days per four-week/month-long learning experience or up to three days per six-week learning experience. All sick days must be reported by the resident to the current rotation preceptor, RPD/RPC, and the Pharmacy Manager, and must be documented within the resident’s duty hour tracking log. Any days beyond two/three must be discussed

with the rotation preceptor and Program Director/Coordinator to ensure completion of all goals, objectives, and activities for the learning experience. Time off in excess of three consecutive calendar days requires a Leave of Absence application and is addressed in the Leave of Absence section. In the event of a resident needing sick leave during a longitudinal staffing weekend, the resident is encouraged to arrange coverage with another resident by way of a trade of weekends.

**Combined Vacation/Sick Time per month:** If a resident is to miss more than two combined days due to illness and/or vacation per four-week/month-long learning experience or more than three days per six-week learning experience, the resident, rotation preceptor and Program Director/Coordinator must document a plan to ensure successful completion of all goals, objectives, and activities for the rotation. Extension of the rotation may be deemed necessary by the Program Director/Coordinator. If a rotation is extended, it will be at the expense of a planned project time and/or require additional training hours outside of the typical rotation workday/week.

**Leave of Absence:** If a resident is unable to work due to their own medical condition or other eligible reason for more than three consecutive calendar days, the resident is required to apply for a leave of absence. In the event a leave of absence is granted, an action plan will be created by the Program Director/Coordinator to establish how the resident will make up missed time and complete all residency program requirements, if the resident desires to complete the program following the leave.

- If approved leave duration is less than or equal to accrued PTO: the Program Director will adjust the learning experience schedule as necessary. Residents remain responsible for all requirements for successful completion of the program.
- If approved leave duration is in excess of accrued PTO but will not result in more than 37 total days away from the program, the program will not need to be extended if the resident is able to fulfill all requirements for successful completion of the program. This must include feasible schedule adjustment to allow for completion of all required learning experiences.
- If approved leave duration is in excess of accrued PTO and would result in more than 37 total days away from the program, the program will be extended in an amount equal to the time of the leave up to a maximum of 12 weeks. Residents remain responsible for all requirements for successful completion of the program in order to receive a certificate.
  - For PGY1 residents early committed to a TriHealth PGY2 program, program extension is only allowed for a maximum for 30 days so as to minimize delayed start of the PGY2 program, if the resident intends to pursue the PGY2 training after the LOA. If an extension is necessary for longer than 30 days, the resident would forfeit the early commit agreement.
  - PGY1 residents matched to an external PGY2 program must maintain communication with the PGY2 RPD. PGY2 training programs require successful completion of PGY1 training. TriHealth residency programs will not issue a certificate of completion until all requirements of the PGY1 program are fulfilled. TriHealth residency programs cannot guarantee external PGY2 programs will honor the extension of PGY1 training and delay the beginning of PGY2 training.
- If leave duration is in excess of 12 weeks, program extension will not be permitted, and therefore, the resident will not be eligible for a certificate of completion.
- If the resident does not intend to return to the program after the leave, this must be communicated to the RPD in writing as soon as possible, but no later than 7 calendar days from the start of the approved LOA.

To obtain additional information regarding how a leave of absence could affect successful completion of the program, the resident should first speak with the program director/coordinator. Leave of absence requests are to be submitted using approved forms from TriHealth Human Resources. Residents are referred to TriHealth Corporate Policy #B21.00, Leave of Absence.

**Key Provisions contained within the Leave of Absence Corporate Policy:**

**Process to Apply**

- Employees unable to work due to their own medical condition or other eligible reason for more than three consecutive calendar days, are required to apply for a LOA and notify their one-up leader (Pharmacy Manager & RPD) this action has been completed per the policy.
- Generally, employees must give at least 30 days advance notice when he or she knows about the need for the leave in advance, and it is possible and practical to do so. If the employee does not provide at least 30 days advance notice, and it was possible and practical to do so, the employer can delay the leave until 30 days after the date that the employee provides the notice. Paperwork for the leave should be returned to the appointed person at least thirty (30) days prior to start of the leave, unless the reason for leave is life-threatening or represents an emergent medical or personal need. If the need for leave is emergent, the paperwork should be returned as soon as possible, usually the same day or the next business day.

**Types of Leave**

Type	Approval Based Upon	Max Length	Job Protection	Pay
Federal Required Leave (Self Injury or Illness)	Protected leave based on applicable regulations	Typically, 12 weeks but vary based on FMLA or leave type	Yes	PTO for elimination period. Short Term Disability (STD) or benefits as applies &/or then unpaid
Federal Required Leave (Other)	Protected leave based on applicable regulations	Typically, 12 weeks but vary based on FMLA or leave type	Yes	PTO only or Unpaid
Personal Leave	Unprotected leave based on Non FMLA qualifying reason, as approved	60 days	No	PTO until exhausted & then unpaid
Medical Leave	Unprotected leave based on medical condition as approved	60 days	No	PTO for elimination period. STD benefits as applies &/or then unpaid

## Pay While on Leave

### Protected Federal Required Leave

- **Family Medical Leave:** Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for qualified reasons as stated in the corporate policy (#13 B21.00).
  - Benefits with a Short-Term Disability Plan are available for employees based on the corporate policy (#13\_B11.02). Prior to accessing the STD benefit, team members must satisfy a 7- calendar day elimination period (satisfied with PTO, or unpaid hours as available). It will be necessary to provide additional information and medical documentation in order to receive benefits under the Short-Term Disability Policy.
  - Employees not eligible for the Short-Term Disability Plan may be eligible for Vacation Hours Donation (corporate policy #13\_B06.00). Standard full-time and standard part-time employees with a hardship are eligible to receive a donation.

### TriHealth-Sponsored Unprotected Leave

- **Personal Leave:** Employees who need time away for work in excess of three consecutive calendar days for personal reasons can apply for a personal leave. This is available only when the employee does not meet eligibility requirements for FMLA leave.
  - Payment will occur through available PTO hours (or unpaid if not available).
- **Medical Leave:** Employees who need time away from work in excess of three calendar days for his or her own medical need can apply for medical leave. This is available only when the employee does not meet eligibility requirements for FMLA leave and has RN Case Manager approval.
  - Benefits with a Short-Term Disability Plan are available for employees based on the corporate policy (#13\_B11.02). Prior to accessing the STD benefit, team members must satisfy a 7- calendar day elimination period (satisfied with PTO, or unpaid hours as available). It will be necessary to provide additional information and medical documentation in order to receive benefits under the Short-Term Disability Policy.
  - Employees not eligible for the Short-Term Disability Plan may be eligible for Vacation Hours Donation (corporate policy #13\_B06.00). Standard full-time and standard part-time employees with a hardship are eligible to receive a donation.

## Benefits While on Leave

During the leave, TriHealth will maintain group health benefits as if the employee continues to be actively employed for approved leave to a maximum of 12 weeks, subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable benefits plan. After that time, the employee may continue the group health benefit, subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable plan, or with a qualifying COBRA election, at the employee's sole expense. Once in unpaid status, employees are responsible for making arrangements through the benefits vendor or Human Resources benefits department for the timely payment of any applicable benefit premiums.

**Make-Up Time:** For a LOA exceeding 7 days, the resident must declare their intention to return to the program to the RPD in writing so that accommodations can be made, including rotation and assignment schedule adjustment. Any makeup time required will be scheduled by the Program Director/Coordinator based on the ASHP requirements at the end of the training year in which the absence occurred. This makeup time will necessarily delay the beginning of each of the resident's subsequent training or employment years by an amount equal to the makeup time. Any required makeup time will be paid, and all fringe benefits provided. Residents required to make up time extending beyond the standard

residency completion date shall be responsible for notifying their future employer or residency program directors.

#### **PROCEDURE**

1. Residents must submit their request for use of personal time off to the Program Director/Coordinator and the Pharmacy Manager per the policy established by the pharmacy department. Emergencies out of the resident's control (including sick days) are to be communicated in writing through email to the Program Director/Coordinator, Pharmacy Manager, and current rotation preceptor, if applicable
2. Residents must meet with their Program Director/Coordinator to discuss any leave of absence at least 30 days in advance (or as early as possible for emergent events), and how it will impact the completion date of the residency; specifically detailing how time missed due to the Leave of Absence (LOA) will be made up.
3. For an approved leave lasting longer than 7 days, but not to exceed 12 weeks, the intention of the resident to return to the residency program to pursue a certificate of completion must be declared in writing to the Program Director either prior to or within the first 7 days of the LOA. If the resident returns to the program and satisfies all requirements for graduation, a certificate will be awarded. If the decision to return to the program changes at any point during a LOA, this must be communicated in writing to the RPD as soon as reasonably possible.
4. Residents must complete all paperwork and abide by all requirements related to a leave of absence per corporate policy. The Program Director/Coordinator, Pharmacy Manager, and an HR representative must approve the leave of absence.

#### **OTHER AREAS/POLICIES OR PROCEDURES OF REFERENCE**

- Paid Time Off Policy (#13\_B11.00)
- Leaves of Absence Policy (#13\_B21.00)
- Short Term Disability (#13\_B11.02)
- PTO Donation Policy (#13\_B06.00)
- American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Inc. ASHP Accreditation Standard for Postgraduate Residency Programs (Published August 2022, Effective July 1, 2023).