POLICY & PROCEDURE: ABSENCE FROM THE RESIDENCY PROGRAM

POLICY SUMMARY/INTENT:
Residents are expected to be assigned to one Family Medicine Practice (FMP) site for all 3 years, but at least throughout the second and third years of training. The total patient visits in the FMP site must be met, and residents must be scheduled to see patients in the FMP site for a minimum of 40 weeks during each year of training.

Residents are expected to perform their duties as resident physicians for a minimum period of eleven months each calendar year. Therefore, absence from the program for vacation, illness, personal business, leave, etc., must not exceed a combined total of one (1) month per academic year. The ABFM defines one month as 21 working days or 30 calendar days.

DEFINITIONS:
1. ABFM – American Board of Family Medicine
2. ACGME - Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education

AFFECTED DEPARTMENTS/SERVICES:
1. Graduate Medical Education
2. Family Medicine Residency Program
3. Residency Clinic Faculty and Attending Physicians

REFERENCE: ABFM

POLICY: COMPLIANCE – KEY ELEMENTS

A. Vacation, Illness, and Other Short-Term Absences
   1. Residents are expected to perform their duties as resident physicians for a minimum period of eleven months each calendar year.
a. Absence from the program for vacation, illness, personal business, leave, etc., must not exceed a combined total of one (1) month per academic year.

b. One month is defined as 21 working days or 30 calendar days.

c. Vacation periods may not accumulate from one year to another.

d. No two vacation periods may be concurrent (e.g., last month of the G-2 year and first month of the G-3 year in sequence)

e. Resident does not have the option of reducing the total time required for residency (36 calendar months) by relinquishing vacation time.

f. Vacation/leave policies are the prerogative of the Program Director so long as they do not exceed the ABFM’s time restriction.

B. Workshops or continuing medical education activities

a. Workshops or continuing medical education activities, are not counted in the general limitation on absences but should not exceed 5 days annually.

C. Long-Term Absence

1. In cases where a resident is granted a leave of absence by the program, or must be away because of illness or injury, the Program Director is expected to inform the ABFM promptly by electronic mail of the date of departure and expected return date.

   a. Absence from residency education, in excess of one month within the academic year (G-1, G-2 or G-3 year) must be made up before the resident advances to the next training level.

   b. Time must be added to the projected date of completion of the required 36 months of training.

   c. Leave time may be interspersed throughout the year or taken as a three-month block in year G-2 and G-3.

   d. Following a leave of absence of less than three months the resident is expected to return to the program and maintain care of his or her panel of patients for a minimum of two months before any subsequent leave.

   e. Leave time must be made up before the resident advances to the next training level and the time must be added to the projected date of completion of the required 36 months of training.

   f. The resident may not return to the program at a level beyond that which was attained at the time of departure.

2. Leaves of absence in excess of 3 months are considered a violation of the continuity of care requirement. ABFM may require the resident to complete additional continuity of care time requirements beyond what is normally required to be eligible for certification.

D. Waiver of Continuity of Care Requirement for Hardship

1. A waiver of the continuity of care requirement or an extension of the leave of absence policy may be granted when a residency training program closes or when there is evidence of the presence of a hardship involving a resident.
2. A hardship is defined as a debilitating illness or injury of an acute but temporary nature, or the existence of a threat to the integrity of the resident’s family, which impedes or prohibits the resident from making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the requirements of the residency program.

3. A request for a waiver of the continuity of care requirement or an extension of the leave of absence policy on the basis of hardship must demonstrate:
   a. that the absence from continuity of care does not exceed 12 months;
   b. the nature and extent of the hardship;
   c. that excused absence time (vacation/sick time) permissible by the ABFM and the program for the academic year has been reasonably exhausted by the resident;
   d. that a medical condition causing absence from training is within the Americans with Disabilities act (ADA) definition of disability.

4. For absences from training of less than 12 months, the amount of the 24-month continuity of care requirement completed prior to the absence will be considered a significant factor in the consideration of the request.

5. When the break in continuity exceeds 12 months, it is highly unlikely that waivers of the continuity of care requirement will be granted.

E. Communicating with ABFM

1. When Communicating with ABFM, the program should indicate the criteria it will use, if any, to judge the point at which the resident is expected to reenter.

2. The resident may NOT be readmitted to the program at a level beyond that which was attained at the time of departure, but the resident may reenter the program pending a final decision by the ABFM on the amount of additional training, if any, to be required of the resident.

 ATTACHMENTS:
 (REFERENCED BY THIS DOCUMENT)

 OTHER DOCUMENTS:
 (WHICH REFERENCE THIS DOCUMENT)

 FEDERAL REGULATIONS:

 ACCREDITATION:
 CALIFORNIA:
 HAWAII: Not applicable
 OREGON: Not applicable
 WASHINGTON: Not applicable

 REFERENCES:

 ADVENTIST HEALTH SYSTEM/WEST POLICY OWNER:
 ADVENTIST HEALTH SYSTEM/WEST INDIVIDUAL:

 ENTITY POLICY OWNER: Residency Administrator

 APPROVED BY:
 ADVENTIST HEALTH SYSTEM/WEST: Not applicable
 ENTITY:  

ENTITY INDIVIDUAL:

REVIEW DATE:  

REVISION DATE: 08/29/2017

NEXT REVIEW DATE: 08/28/2020

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