Absences from Training: Parental/Medical/Caregiver Leave Details and Frequently Asked Questions

Read the full Absences from Training Policy

The ABP’s current Absences from Training Policy states that all trainees, regardless of training pathway, are permitted one month of absence each year, which includes, vacation, sick, or family leave. The ABP’s long-standing policy is that, additionally, up to eight weeks of elective training may be waived for general pediatrics residents and fellows in three-year core programs who required a medical or family leave, are deemed competent by the Clinical Competency Committee, and have met all mandatory (non-elective) training requirements, except elective training. This policy remains in effect for all general pediatrics residents and fellows in three-year core programs.

In addition, beginning July 1, 2021, the ABP will revise the waiver policy to also include trainees in Medicine-Pediatrics, Pediatrics-Medical Genetics, Pediatrics-Psychiatry/Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, nonstandard training pathways and fellows in two-year programs. Program directors of Medicine-Pediatrics, Pediatrics-Medical Genetics, Pediatrics-Psychiatry/Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, nonstandard pathways and two-year fellowships will be permitted to waive additional elective training or research over the entire duration of training as outlined below if the trainee required a medical or family leave, is deemed competent by the Clinical Competency Committee, and has met all mandatory (non-elective) training requirements, except elective training.

The total amount of leave time offered to the trainee is at the discretion of the institution. Programs have the flexibility to grant longer periods of leave time, but training must be extended to make up any absences greater than the allowable amount of time.

Waiving training time is at the discretion of the program director and should not be considered until the final three months of training to ensure there is ample opportunity to observe a trainee’s competence in all domains.

Combined Training and Nonstandard Pathways for Residents

The following training areas are combined programs that can lead to certification by the ABP. Program directors may waive up to six weeks of elective training, equally divided between the two specialties, for parental, medical, or caregiver leave for residents training in these areas:

- Medicine-Pediatrics
- Pediatrics-Medical Genetics
- Pediatrics-Psychohiatry/Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Please note, the ABP is currently working with other ABMS Boards to finalize the leave policy for trainees in Pediatrics-Anesthesiology, Pediatrics-Emergency Medicine, and Pediatrics-Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation programs and an update will be provided in the coming months.

The following pathways are considered to be nonstandard pathways by the ABP. Program directors may waive up to six weeks of general pediatrics elective training for parental, medical, or caregiver leave for residents training in these pathways:
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- Pediatrics-Neurology
- Pediatrics-Neurodevelopmental Disabilities
- Waiver of Accredited Training due to prior non-accredited pediatric training
- Non-Pediatric Credited Training
- Accelerated Research Pathway (ARP)

The following pathway also is considered to be a nonstandard pathway by the ABP. However, because the training is three years in length, program directors may waive up to eight weeks of time for parental, medical, or caregiver leave for residents training in this pathway. The ABP suggests that time should be equally divided between the elective clinical and research blocks.

- Integrated Research Pathway (IRP)

**Combined Training and Nonstandard Pathways for Fellows**

The following pathways are considered subspecialty nonstandard pathways that lead to subspecialty certification by the ABP. Program directors may waive up to six additional weeks of elective training over the full duration of training (in excess of the allowable one month per year of training) for parental, medical, or caregiver leave. For combined adult and pediatric subspecialties and for dual, integrated pediatric subspecialty training, waived time should be equally divided between adult and pediatric elective training for the two subspecialties:

- Combined Adult and Pediatric Subspecialty Fellowship
- Dual Integrated Pediatric Subspecialty Fellowship
- The second subspecialty fellowship of Dual Sequential Subspecialty Fellowship
- Subspecialty Fasttracking

The following subspecialties require two years of fellowship. Program directors may waive of up to six weeks of elective training over the full duration of training (in excess of the allowable one month per year of training) for parental, medical, or caregiver leave.

- Pediatric Hospital Medicine
- Medical Toxicology

**Frequently Asked Questions About Leave for Residents**

Do I need to submit a request for a waiver to the ABP for review?

- No, the ABP will no longer require waivers to be submitted for review and approval. The ABP will collect data on the use of parental leave policies after implementation to study
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their effect. Details about reporting the data to the ABP will be provided at a later date.

My categorical general pediatrics trainee took four weeks of parental leave in excess of the allowable three months, three weeks of which were during elective training and one week was during a required rotation. How much time can be waived?
- The ABP will allow for elective time only to be waived. Training must be extended for one week to make up the time missed during the required rotation.

My categorical general pediatrics trainee took two weeks of medical leave and eight weeks of parental leave in excess of the allowable three months. How much time can be waived?
- The waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of eight weeks for general pediatrics residents for the entire duration of training, and not per event. If the time missed is all elective time, the ABP will allow eight weeks to be waived for the trainee. The trainee must extend training for two weeks to make up for the remaining time absent from training regardless of whether this additional two weeks was from elective or required rotations.

My pediatrics/neurology trainee took two weeks of medical leave and eight weeks of parental leave in excess of the allowable two months. How much time can be waived?
- The waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of six weeks for residents in a special training pathway for the entire duration of training, and not per event. The ABP will allow a waiver of six weeks of elective time for the trainee. The trainee must extend general pediatrics training for four weeks to make up for the remaining time absent from training.

My medicine/pediatrics trainee took ten weeks of parental leave in excess of the allowable four months over the four-year residency. How much time can be waived?
- The waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of six weeks for residents in combined residency programs, to be shared equitably between the two specialties. Therefore, three weeks of pediatrics and three weeks of internal medicine may be waived. In this case, the trainee must extend general pediatrics training for two weeks and internal medicine training for two weeks to make up for the remaining time absent from training.

My trainee in the accelerated research pathway took eight weeks of parental leave in excess of the allowable two months during general pediatrics training. How much time can be waived?
- The waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of six weeks for residents in a nonstandard training pathway. The general pediatrics training must be extended for two weeks to make up for the remaining time absent from training.

My trainee received three months credit for prior family medicine training toward the residency requirements for general pediatrics certification. Can time be waived for parental or medical leave?
- Yes, the waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of six weeks for residents who were
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granted credit for prior non-pediatric training.

My trainee received a one-year waiver of accredited training due to a prior general pediatrics residency abroad. Can time be waived for parental or medical leave?

- Yes, the waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of six weeks for residents who were granted a waiver for non-accredited pediatric training.

Can my trainee have training waived to complete training early to start a job or begin fellowship?

- No, training may not be waived for the convenience of the trainee.

Does the ABP require that the trainee be paid for waived time?

- The ABP Absences from Training policy does not address salary or benefits provided by the program or institution as we do not have a role in these decisions. This policy also does not supersede institutional or program policies and applicable laws.

My trainee took medical leave during the 2020–2021 academic year and will graduate during the 2021–2022 academic year on August 31, 2021. Can the trainee receive a waiver?

- The revised ABP policy will be effective July 2021 and affect trainees who graduate in 2022 or later. If the trainee is a general pediatrics resident, the ABP’s prior, long-standing waiver policy will apply, and the program director may request a waiver of up to eight weeks of elective time (in addition to the allowable three months), providing the absence is due to parental, medical or caregiver leave, the trainee is deemed competent by the Program Director and Clinical Competency Committee, and all training requirements will be met except for elective training or research time as determined by the pathway. If the trainee is in a nonstandard pathway or combined training program, a waiver may not be requested, as this was not permitted under the policy in effect at the time of training.

My trainee had issues obtaining a visa and was not able to start training on time. Can I waive training so that the trainee can finish training on schedule with class peers?

- No, the ABP will not consider waiving time for convenience and in this case the individual was not yet an active member of the training program due to the late start. Waivers may only be considered for parental, medical, or caregiver leave.

My trainee wants me to waive training for parental leave, but I am not comfortable with the trainee’s performance and have concerns about the level of competence. Am I required to waive training?

- No, waivers are at the discretion of the program director and should be based on competency of the trainee.

My trainee had performance issues earlier in training and received a marginal with extension clinical evaluation. The issues have been remediated and the trainee’s performance has
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improved. The trainee has taken a parental leave. Can I waive training?

- You, as program director, must confirm that the trainee has been deemed competent by yourself and the Clinical Competency Committee, and has met all training requirements, except elective training. If all issues have been addressed and the trainee is now successful in all competencies and the trainee will be evaluated as satisfactory, the training time may be waived.

My trainee wishes to take 6 months of parental leave. Is this allowed by the ABP?

- Yes, the ABP gives programs the flexibility to grant extended periods of leave, at the discretion of the program director. However, training must be extended to make up any absences greater than the allowable amount of time.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT LEAVE FOR FELLOWS

Do I need to submit a request for a waiver to the ABP for review?

- No, the ABP will no longer require waivers to be submitted for review and approval. The ABP will collect data on the use of parental leave policies after implementation to study their effect. Details about reporting the data to the ABP will be provided at a later date.

My three-year, core pediatric subspecialty fellow took four weeks of parental leave in excess of the allowable three months, three weeks of which were during elective/research training and one week was during a required clinical experience. How much time can be waived?

- The ABP will allow for elective time only to be waived. Training must be extended for one week to make up the time missed during the required rotation.

My three-year, core pediatric subspecialty fellow took two weeks of medical leave and eight weeks of parental leave in excess of the allowable three months. How much time can be waived?

- The waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of eight weeks for three-year, core fellows for the entire duration of training, and not per event. The ABP will allow eight weeks of elective time or research to be waived for the trainee. The trainee must extend training for two weeks to make up for the remaining time absent from training.

My combined adult-pediatrics subspecialty fellow took ten weeks of parental leave in excess of the allowable four months over the four-year fellowship. How much time can be waived?

- The waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of six weeks for fellows in combined subspecialty training, to be shared equally between the two subspecialties. Therefore, three weeks of pediatric subspecialty and three weeks of adult subspecialty may be waived. Training must be extended to make up for the additional four weeks of leave, divided equally between the two specialties.
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My fellow who is completing dual subspecialty fellowship took eight weeks of parental leave in excess of the allowable four months over the four-year training period. How much time can be waived?

- The waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of six weeks for fellows in dual subspecialty training, to be shared equally between the two subspecialties. Therefore, three weeks may be waived from each pediatric subspecialty to total six weeks of waived time. Training must be extended to make up for the additional leave.

How much time may a pediatric hospital medicine (PHM) fellow or a medical toxicology fellow waive in excess of the allowable two months over the two years of required fellowship?

- The waiver policy permits a waiver of a maximum of six weeks for PHM or medical toxicology fellows.

Can sports medicine, hospice and palliative medicine, sleep medicine, and pediatric transplant hepatology fellows waive additional leave time?

- No, fellows in one-year fellowships may not waive time in excess of the usual allowed one month for vacation or leave.

Can my trainee have training time waived in order to start a job early?

- No, training may not be waived for the convenience of the trainee.

Does the ABP require that the trainee be paid for waived time?

- The ABP Absences from Training policy does not address salary or benefits provided by the program or institution because we do not have a role in these decisions. This policy also does not supersede institutional or program policies and applicable laws.

My fellow took medical leave during the 2020–2021 academic year and will graduate during the 2021–2022 academic year on August 31, 2021. Can the trainee receive a waiver?

- The revised ABP policy will be effective July 2021 and affect trainees who graduate in 2022 or later. If the trainee is a core pediatric fellow, the ABP’s prior, long-standing waiver policy will apply, and the program director may request a waiver of up to eight weeks, providing the absence is due to parental, medical or caregiver leave, the trainee is deemed competent by the Program Director and Clinical Competency Committee, all training requirements will be met except for elective training or research time as determined by the pathway, and the scholarly activity requirement will be met. If the fellow is in a nonstandard pathway or combined training program, a waiver may not be requested, because this was not permitted under the policy in effect at the time of training.

My trainee had issues obtaining a visa and was not able to start training on time. Can I waive training so that the trainee can finish training on schedule with class peers?

- No, the ABP will not consider waiving time for convenience and in this case the individual
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My trainee had performance issues earlier in training and received a marginal clinical evaluation. The issues have been remediated and the trainee’s performance has improved. The trainee has taken a parental leave. Can I waive training?

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