

2019 APDIM Spring Survey of Internal Medicine Residency Program Directors

Note: The information provided in this document is for informational purposes and is based on American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) policies. The Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (the "Alliance") is a 501 c(3) nonprofit organization that fosters the advancement of learning, discovery, and caring by enhancing the professional growth of academic internal medicine faculty, administrators, and physicians-in-training.

ANSWER KEY: Section on ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time

Please refer to your survey responses report to compare your answers to the following items.

Question: For board eligibility, ABIM permits up to one month per academic year for vacation, illness, parental or family leave, or pregnancy. How do you think the ABIM defines one month?

Answer: 5 weeks (35 days)

The ABIM considers one month as 5 weeks (35 days). Residents are allowed 35 days away per academic year over 3 years. This time is cumulative per training program; in other words, the total time allowed per the *ABIM Leave of Absence and Vacation policy* for vacation, illness, or leave is 105 days over the 36 months.

Question: The ABIM states: "Training must be extended to make up any absences exceeding one month per year of training unless the Deficits in Required Training policy is used and approved." Do you need to apply the Deficits in Required Training Policy to a PGY-3 resident who has taken their scheduled four weeks of vacation time during all three years, and now interrupts their training for an additional two weeks that year due to a medical issue?

Answer: NO

The resident has taken 4 weeks (28 days) of vacation per academic year, so the resident will have been absent 84 days (28 days x 3) over the 3 years. Per the *ABIM Leave of Absence and Vacation policy*, which is one month per academic year (one month defined as 5 weeks or 35 days), residents can be absent up to 105 days over their 36 month residency (e.g., 35 days per year x 3). Therefore, the additional 14 days of illness **would put this resident at a total of 98 days of absence (84 days of vacation plus 14 days of illness), well within the ABIM Leave of Absence and Vacation policy of 105 days and would NOT require the ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy to be applied.**

Question: The ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy states (for a resident who must interrupt training beyond the one month per year allowed for leave) "if the trainee's program director and clinical competency committee attest to the ABIM that the trainee has achieved required competence with a deficit of less than one [additional] month [over the three years], extended training may not be required." How do you think the ABIM defines this one additional month?

Answer: 5 weeks (35 days)

The *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* allows a resident to miss up to one additional month (35 days) over the 3 years and still graduate on time provided the resident is deemed competent by the CCC to do so. When combined with the *ABIM Leave of Absence and Vacation policy*, residents may be absent for up to 140 days during the 3 years of residency if the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* is implemented. This is determined by the total allowed cumulative vacation/away time (35 days per year x 3 years = 105 days) plus an additional 35 days for the deficits in training (105 + 35 = 140 days).

Question: A resident in your program (the program provides four weeks of vacation each year) requires additional time off during their PGY-3 year (i.e., four weeks of vacation time and eight weeks of additional time). Are you required by ABIM to extend their training if the reason for the interruption is...?

Answer: No (for all options)

The answer for all of these examples is NO. The resident does NOT need to extend their training if the program director implements the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* and the CCC deems the resident competent to graduate on time. Per the ABIM, residents are allowed to be away for 140 days before they need to extend their training. Per the ABIM, residents are allowed up to 35 days per year for vacation/illness/leave (a total of 105 days) and an additional 35 days if the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* is invoked. This totals 140 days. In this scenario, the resident had 4 weeks of vacation per year (28 days x 3 = 84 days) plus 8 weeks (56 days) of additional time off, which totals 140 days (84 days + 56 days). This is within the 140 days the ABIM allows if the *Deficits in Required Training Time policy* is used.

Question: A resident in your program requires additional time off during their PGY-3 year for a family or medical issue, beyond their four weeks of vacation per academic year. Note: You may require them to extend their training at any time for competency reasons, but for the purpose of this question assume you are trying not to extend their training. Per the ABIM Deficits in Required Training policy, are you required to extend their training if they needed an additional...?

Answer: You are required to extend training if they need an additional 9 or 10 weeks off.

The *ABIM Leave of Absence and Vacation policy* allows one month (defined as 5 weeks, or 35 days) per year away for a total of 105 days. The *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* allows residents to have an additional 5 weeks (35 days) away before requiring training to be extended, as long as the CCC deems the resident competent. This allows a resident to be away for up to 140 days in total before being required to extend training (105 days + 35 days = 140 days). In this scenario, the resident has taken 4 weeks of vacation per year for 3 years, or 84 days. If the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* is applied, the resident is allowed up to 140 days away. Applying the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training time policy*, 140 days minus 84 vacation days equals 56 days or 8 weeks that this resident may be away without being required to extend training (140 days – 84 days = 56 days). Any period of leave longer than 8 weeks requires an extension of training. For absences of 8 weeks or fewer, the resident would not be required by the ABIM to extend training.

See table:

If they needed an additional...	Total Days absent	Potential days of leave still available if ABIM Deficits in Required Training Applied	Required by ABIM to Extend Training
<i>Resident's vacation time</i>	84	56	
4 weeks off	112	28	No
5 weeks off	119	21	No
6 weeks off	126	14	No
7 weeks off	133	7	No
8 weeks off	140	0	No
9 weeks off	147	-7	Yes, 7 days
10 weeks off	154	-14	Yes, 14 days

Question: Would you extend training in the following scenario?: A resident takes maternity leave including four weeks of vacation and eight weeks of additional time off in a single year without decreasing vacation time in other years.

Answer: No

The *ABIM Leave of Absence and Vacation policy* allows one month (defined as 5 weeks, or 35 days) per year away for a total of 105 days. The *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* allows residents to have an additional 5 weeks (35 days) away before requiring training to be extended, as long as the CCC deems the resident competent. This allows a resident to be away for up to 140 days in total before being required to extend training. In this scenario, the resident has taken 84 days of vacation time (28 days x 3 years = 84 days) over her 3 years and an additional 8 weeks (56 days) for maternity leave. This totals 140 days (84 days + 56 days = 140 days). This falls within the 140 days allowed by the ABIM if the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* is applied. If the CCC deems the resident competent, she would NOT be required to extend her training.

Question: A PGY-3 resident tells you their fellowship orientation is starting early on June 15 and they need to leave early. They have already taken their one month per year vacation time in all three years. Per your CCC, they are competent in all six competencies. Do you agree with the following statement?: I can apply the ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy and let them leave early.

Answer: NO

The *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* may NOT be used to allow residents to finish their residency training program early. The policy seeks to allow residents flexibility to take leave for life events that occur during the course of training without necessarily changing their planned residency end date. Starting a program “off-cycle” is not the same as time away during the course of residency, and the ABIM does not permit training to be shortened for this.

Question: A resident with a chronic recurring medical condition requires an additional 11 days off per academic year – every year for three years for health reasons (33 days total) – in addition to his/her four weeks of vacation time per academic year. How would you manage this leave?

Answer: Apply the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training* and if the CCC approves, allow them to graduate on time. Between the *ABIM Leave of Absence and Vacation policy* of one month per year time away (35 days x 3 = 105 days) and the one month *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* (35 days) the resident may be absent for up to 140 days over his/her 3 years before being required to extend his/her training. (105 days + 35 days = 140 days)

The residents will have taken 84 days of vacation time (28 days x 3 years = 84 days).

The additional 11 days per year (33 days total) the resident requires for health reasons yields a total of 117 days (84 days + 33 days).

The 117 days the resident needs are above the 105 days allowed for vacation over the three years, but within the 140 allowed by the ABIM with the *Deficits in Required Training Time policy*. So, if you apply the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* and the CCC approves, the resident may graduate on time.

Question: A PGY-3 resident interrupts training for six weeks to fly home to help his/her family while a parent is dying. This is in addition to his/her four weeks of scheduled vacation time per academic year. How would you manage this leave?

Answer: *Apply the ABIM Deficits in Required Training*, and if the CCC approves, allow them to graduate on time. For a full explanation of ABIM policies please see the answer to question 35. Per ABIM policies, the resident may be absent for up to 140 days before being required to extend his/her training. If you combine the resident's 4 weeks of vacation per year (28 days x 3 = 84 days), and the 6 weeks of leave (42 days) that totals 126 days away from the program (84 days plus 42 days).

The resident needs 126 days, which is above the 105 days allowed for vacation, but is within the 140 allowed by the ABIM if you apply the Deficits in Required Training Time Policy. So, if you apply the *ABIM deficits in Required Training Time policy* and the CCC approves, the resident may graduate on time.

Question: A PGY-3 resident interrupts training for 10 weeks for depression. These 10 weeks (70 days) do not include their four weeks of vacation time, which they also took in their PGY-1 and PGY-2 year. Per the ABIM Deficits in Training policy you are required to extend their training but would like to minimize the number of days they need to extend. What are the minimum number of days they need to extend?

Answer: 2 weeks (14 days)

For a full explanation of ABIM policies please see the answer to question 35. The resident is required to extend his/her training by 14 days. The resident is allowed up to 140 days away from training if the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* is applied. The 4 weeks of vacation taken per year (28 days x 3 = 84 days) and the 10 weeks (70 days) needed for health reasons totals 154 days away. (84 days + 70 days = 154 days.) The 154 days is 14 days **above** the 140 days away allowed by the ABIM. (154 days – 140 days = 14 days.) The resident will need to extend his/her training by only 2 weeks (14 days) if the *ABIM Deficits in Required Time policy* is applied and the CCC approves.

Question: A PGY-3 resident interrupts training for 14 weeks (98 days) after a motor vehicle accident requiring multiple surgeries. These 14 weeks are in addition to their four weeks of vacation time (taken all three years). You plan to extend their training. For how many days does their training need to be extended?

Answer: 6 weeks (42 days)

The resident required 14 weeks (98 days) away from training for his/her illness.

The resident took 4 weeks of vacation per year for 3 years (84 days total). The *ABIM Leave of Absence and Vacation policy* allows 105 days total over 3 years for vacation/away. The *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* allows an additional 35 days prior to extending training, for a total of 140 days (105 + 35 = 140 days). So, the resident is allowed to take 140 days total over the 3 years.

In this scenario, the resident has taken 84 days of vacation time and 98 days leave for illness for a total of 182 days away from training. (84 days + 98 days = 182 days.)

The 182 days is 42 days **above** the 140 days away allowed by the ABIM. (182 days – 140 days = 42 days.)

The resident will need to extend training only by 6 weeks (42 days) if the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* is applied and the CCC approves.

Question: A PGY-1 resident had to interrupt training for 16 weeks due to a medical illness which did include their one month of vacation time. In order not to extend their training, they request giving up their one month off during their PGY-2 and PGY-3 years. How do you respond?

Answer: No, this is not allowed by the ABIM, and they will need to extend their training.

While vacation/illness time is cumulative (35 days per year), it is expected that residents will be given some vacation time each year. They cannot apply all their time away in one year.

The resident's vacation time for all 3 years will total 84 days. The resident also took an additional 12 weeks away due to the medical illness. This represents an additional 84 days (12 weeks x 7 days/week). Altogether, the resident will be away from work for 168 days (84 days of vacation + 84 days sick leave = 168 days). The resident is allowed up to 140 days away from training if the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* is applied. The resident will need to extend training by 28 days (168 days – 140 days = 28 days). The resident will need to extend training by 4 weeks (28 days).

Question: How does a program formally notify ABIM that they want to use the Deficits in Required Training policy for a trainee?

Answer: Notate this decision in the trainee's final year FasTrack Evaluation

The method by which a PD formally notifies ABIM of the use of the *ABIM Deficits in Required Training Time policy* is by selecting "Yes" to the question in FasTrack, "Will you be using Deficits in Required Training Time policy for this trainee?"

END
