Effects of Leave of Absence upon Completion of Training and Board Eligibility
Policy & Procedures

Internal Medicine Residency
Department of Medicine

Background:
According to the General Requirements for Residencies of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), each training program must provide residents with a policy statement concerning the effect of leaves of absence, for any reason, on satisfying the criteria for completion of a residency program. For training programs in Internal Medicine, such a policy must be consistent with the policies and procedures established by the American Board of Internal Medicine for certification in Internal Medicine.

Policy:
When the need/desire for a leave of absence is foreseeable, a resident must finalize a request at least 30 days prior to the first leave date. When the need for the leave is unforeseeable, residents should submit a request as soon as practical.

American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) policy on leaves of absence (www.abim.org):
“Up to one month per academic year is permitted for time away from training, which includes vacation, illness, parental or family leave, or pregnancy-related disabilities. Training must be extended to make up any absences exceeding one month per year of training. Vacation leave is essential and should not be forfeited or postponed in any year of training and cannot be used to reduce the total required training period. To be admitted to the Certification Examination in Internal Medicine, physicians must have satisfactorily completed, by August 31 of the year of examination, 36 calendar months, including vacation time, of U.S. graduate medical education accredited by ACGME.”

Except for educational meetings, all leaves of absence as described in Articles 10-16 of the UWHA Contract (http://hr.uw.edu/labor/unions/uw-housestaff-association/uwha-contract) count as time away from training and are subject to the ABIM leave policy.

Procedures:
The Internal Medicine Residency Program has interpreted the ABIM leave policy to equate to 91 days. Each resident receives three weeks of vacation annually per Article 16 of the UWHA Contract (http://hr.uw.edu/labor/unions/uw-housestaff-association/uwha-contract); 21 days a year, totaling 63 days in three years. Thus, residents may take an additional 28 days of other leaves, excluding educational leave, without extending training. The program will waive additional training that does not extend beyond July 4.

The University of Washington Internal Medicine Residency Program will provide a resident the opportunity for additional training necessary to complete the training period of the resident's existing appointment (i.e. to complete the year of training which is shortened by leaves of absence which exceed the maximum amount allowed by the ABIM). During such additional training, the resident will continue to receive salary and fringe benefits at the level of the year of training the resident is completing. The Internal Medicine Residency Program has final authority in determining the types, locations, and dates of the educational experiences provided to the resident, to allow the make-up time necessary for ABIM certification eligibility.