

Postgraduate Medical Education
**Waiver of Training Requirements After a Leave of Absence
from Residency Training**

Approved PGEC: November 2021
Next Review: November 2023



Preamble

Residents are required to complete their entire training program and demonstrate achievement of all requisite learning objectives and competencies. In certain circumstances, a waiver of training may be appropriate for residents who have taken a Leave of Absence during their training. A Leave of Absence will be approved by the Program Director, and consideration will be given to the resident's status in the program. Resident's training lines in MedSIS will be adjusted to reflect the approved leave in accordance with the [PGME Leaves Policy](#) found on the PGME policy webpage. A Waiver of Training request is usually submitted at the beginning of the final year of a resident's training regardless of when the resident's Leave of Absence was taken.

Consideration of waiver requests is at the individual program's discretion and decisions regarding waivers must be standardised and consistent amongst the residents within the program. Residents must discuss their eligibility to waive training requirements with their Program Director. The Program Director, in collaboration with the Residency Program Committee (RPC) as appropriate, will determine if the resident has achieved the required competencies of training. The recommendation from the program for the waiver of training must be approved by the Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME).

Requirements and Process of Requesting a Waiver of Training

There are differences in the process for time-based programs and Royal College programs that have transitioned to Competence by Design (CBD). These are outlined in this policy.

Submission Timeline

1. For Royal College time-based programs and College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) programs, a resident will request a waiver of training from their Program Director for approval. The waiver of training request is usually submitted to PGME by the program at the beginning of the final year of a resident's training and may also be submitted along with the program's recommendation for exam readiness (i.e., when the program submits the Confirmation of Training (CCT) documents to PGME). If the learner takes a planned leave in their final year of training, they can submit the waiver of training request after their leave (contact pgmedean@mcmaster.ca for specific instructions). The waiver of training approval cannot be granted after the resident has taken the certification exam in time-based programs.
2. Waivers of training for residents in CBD programs should be submitted to PGME during the last 12 months of training (and no later than 4 weeks prior to the revised recommended end-date)

regardless of the resident's stage of training. Exam eligibility will be determined by the program during the third stage of training, *Core of Discipline*. Since exams are situated earlier in CBD programs, requests for waivers can be submitted after the certification exam. In programs where the oral examination is in the last 6 months of the final year of training, new waiver requests cannot be submitted after completion of the oral examination.

The RCPSC has provided a [CBD Technical Guide for Exam Readiness](#)

Request for Waiver of Training Form Submission

3. For Royal College time-based, CBD and CFPC programs, the Program Director will submit the [Request for Waiver of Training Form](#) found on the PGME policy webpage, outlining their support for a resident's waiver of training to PGME Administrator for the Associate Dean's approval. The program's request will include an explanation of circumstances for the Leave of Absence. In addition, the program must specify that their recommendation is based on the resident's progress to date, confirm that the resident is on track to complete the objectives of training, and the resident will achieve the required competencies with the recommended waiver of time.

Approval Process

4. For CFPC programs, the Associate Dean, PGME will review and approve the waiver request submitted by the Program Director. If approved, PGME will provide a letter to the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) notifying the Board of Examinations and Certification that a waiver of training has been granted. The PGME office will also forward the response to the program and update the resident's MedSIS account to reflect the revised end date.
5. For time-based and CBD programs, the Royal College is not required to approve Waiver of Training requests. Final approval is determined by the Associate Dean, PGME. If the Associate Dean, PGME approves the request, the PGME office will update the resident's MedSIS account to reflect the revised end date of the program.

Communications Process

6. Once the approval process is complete the PGME office will notify the program and it will be the program's responsibility to update and inform the resident.

College Maximum Allowable Times for Waivers

The below maximum times have traditionally been permitted for residents in time-based programs. However, McMaster University has adopted the maximum waived times for residents in both time-based and CBD programs to maintain consistency across all residents and programs.

College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC)

CFPC Leave of Absence Information

- i) Family Medicine – maximum of four weeks
- ii) Enhanced Skills Programs of one year or less – no waiver permitted

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RSPSC)

RCPSPC Policies and procedures for certification and fellowship see item 4.3.2

- i. One-year programs – no waiver permitted
- ii. Less than one-year enhanced skills – no waiver permitted
- iii. Two years – 6 weeks
- iv. Three years – 6 weeks
- v. Four years – 12 weeks
- vi. Five years – 12 weeks
- vii. Six years or greater– 12 weeks
- viii. Internal Medicine and Pediatrics specialty and subspecialty training will be treated separately for waiver of training purposes. The maximum time waived for a three-year specialty training program is six weeks. The maximum time waived for a two-year subspecialty program is six weeks of training.