



GRADUATE MEDICAL
EDUCATION

POLICIES
AND PROCEDURES

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**Graduate Medical Education Policy for
Trainee Work Hours
at Texas Health Resources:**

PURPOSE:

To provide residents and fellows (hereafter all will be referred to as trainees) with a sound academic and clinical education while ensuring patient safety and trainee well-being. The graduate medical education department has adopted the clinical and educational work hours policy consistent with the most up-to-date institutional, common, and program specific ACGME requirements.

As the Sponsoring Institution, Texas Health Resources will ensure effective oversight of institutional and program-level compliance with ACGME clinical and educational work hour requirements.

SCOPE:

All residents and fellows participating in a Texas Health Resources sponsored ACGME accredited training program (hereafter all will be referred to as trainees) employed by Texas Health Resources.

DEFINITIONS:

*(ACGME Glossary
of Terms)*

Clinical and educational work hours: All clinical and academic activities related to the program: patient care (inpatient and outpatient); administrative duties relative to patient care; the provision for transfer of patient care; time spent on in-house call; time spent on clinical work done from home; and other scheduled activities, such as conferences. These hours do not include reading, studying, research done from home, and preparation for future cases.

Night float: A rotation or other structured educational experience designed either to eliminate in-house call or to assist other residents/fellows during the night. Residents/fellows assigned to night float are assigned on-site duty during evening/night shifts, are responsible for admitting or cross-covering patients until morning, and do not have daytime assignments. Such a rotation must have an educational focus.

In-house call: Clinical and educational work hours, beyond the scheduled workday, when residents are required to be immediately available within an assigned site, as needed, for clinical responsibilities. In-house call does not include night float, being on call from home, or regularly scheduled overnight duties.

At-home call (pager call): Call taken from outside the assigned site. Clinical work done while on at-home call, including time spent in the hospital and work done at home, such as taking calls or entering notes in an electronic health

record (EHR), counts against the 80-hour-perweek limit but does not restart the clock for time off between scheduled in-house clinical and educational work periods. The remaining time, free of clinical work, does not count. At-home call may not be scheduled on a resident's or fellow's one free day per week (averaged over four weeks).

One day off: One continuous 24-hour period free from all administrative, clinical, and educational activities.

PROVISIONS:

In partnership with its Sponsoring Institution, programs sponsored by Texas Health Resources, must design an effective program structure that is configured to provide residents with educational and clinical experience opportunities, as well as reasonable opportunities for rest and personal activities.

Maximum Hours of Clinical and Educational Work per Week

1. Clinical and educational work hours must be limited to no more than 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house clinical and educational activities, clinical work done from home, and all moonlighting.

Mandatory Time Free of Clinical Work and Education

1. Trainees must have eight hours off between scheduled clinical work and education periods.
2. There may be circumstances when trainees choose to stay to care for their patients or return to the program with fewer than eight hours free of clinical experience and education. This must occur within the context of the 80-hour and the one-day-off-in-seven requirements.
3. Trainees must have at least 14 hours free of clinical work and education after 24 hours of in-house call.
4. Trainees must be scheduled for a minimum of one day in seven free of clinical work and required education (when averaged over four weeks). At-home call cannot be assigned on these free days.

Maximum Clinical Work and Education Period Length

1. Clinical and educational work periods for trainees must not exceed 24 hours of continuous scheduled assignments.
2. Up to four hours of additional time may be used for activities related to patient safety, such as providing effective transitions of care and/or trainee education. Additional patient care responsibilities must not be assigned to a trainee during this time.

Clinical and Educational Work Hours Exceptions

1. In rare circumstances, after handing off all other responsibilities, a trainee, on their own initiative, may elect to remain or return to the clinical site in the following circumstances:
 - To continue to provide care to a single severely ill or unstable patient;
 - Humanistic attention to the needs of a patient or family; or

- To attend unique educational events.
- 2. These additional hours of care or education will be counted toward the 80-hour weekly limit.
- 3. A Review Committee may grant rotation-specific exceptions for up to 10 percent or a maximum of 88 clinical and educational work hours to individual programs based on a sound educational rationale.
 - In preparing a request for an exception, the Program Director must follow the clinical and educational work hour exception policy from the ACGME Manual of Policies and Procedures.
 - Prior to submitting the request to the Review Committee, the Program Director must obtain approval from the Sponsoring Institution's GMEC and DIO.

Moonlighting

1. Moonlighting must not interfere with the ability of the trainee to achieve the goals and objectives of the educational program and must not interfere with the trainee's fitness for work nor compromise patient safety.
2. Time spent by trainees in internal and external moonlighting must be counted toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.
3. PGY-1 trainees are not permitted to moonlight.

In-House Night Float

1. Night float must occur within the context of the 80-hour and one day-off-in-seven requirements.

Maximum In-House On-Call Frequency

1. Trainees must be scheduled for in-house call no more frequently than every third night (when averaged over a four-week period).

At-Home Call

1. Time spent on patient care activities by trainees on at-home call must count toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.
2. The frequency of at-home call is not subject to the every-third-night limitation but must satisfy the requirement for one day in seven free of clinical work and education, when averaged over four weeks.
 - At-home call must not be so frequent or taxing as to preclude rest or reasonable personal time for each trainee.
3. Trainees are permitted to return to the program while on at-home call to provide direct care for new or established patients. These hours of inpatient patient care must be included in the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.