



MEMORANDUM

TO: All Program Directors, Program Administrators and Residents

SUBJECT: COVID Reporting & Vacation Carryover Update

FROM: Dr. Anurag Saxena, Associate Dean, PGME

DATE: March 03, 2023

In response to questions raised both by the programs and residents, the following is intended to provide an update on COVID reporting and to clarify program vacation policies and vacation carryover.

COVID REPORTING:

The University of Saskatchewan is no longer tracking employees who test positive for COVID. Therefore, programs are no longer required to advise the PGME office of residents who test positive. Should a resident become positive with COVID and are away from training due to illness, they will not be required to use any available sick time to account for the time away. This time can continue to be classified as COVID leave. Details regarding COVID related illness can be found in the [December 22, 2022 PGME memo](#).

VACATION POLICY:

Blanket vacation policies that differ from the collective agreement are not permitted. In previous agreements, then article 12.6, stated that the vacation period was from July 1 through June 15, but that article was removed by the employer and RDoS in negotiations for the 2018-2022 contract and thus is no longer in effect. The 2018-2022 contract was implemented March 1, 2021 - so this blackout period should be removed from any program level policy. No blackout periods are permitted - all vacation requests must be considered on a case-by-case basis and cannot be unreasonably denied.

VACATION CARRY-OVER:

As per the [July 1, 2022 PGME memo](#), PGME has reverted to the pre-covid vacation carry-over process for all new incoming residents (maximum of 10 carry-over days per the Collective Agreement). Over the next year, all other residents should be strongly encouraged to use up any additional vacation carryover as all days must be used prior to the end of residency training.

The following points outline how residents may use vacation time available to them:

- Residents who began residency on or after July 1, 2022, can carry over a maximum of 10 unused vacation days per academic year or have the remaining unused days paid out at the end of each academic year, as per article 12.3.
- Residents who were training during the pandemic prior to July 1, 2022 (returning residents)

continue to be allowed to carryover up to 20 unused vacation days per academic year until the end of their residency.

- Every attempt should be made to utilize as much vacation as can be used within the current academic year (all residents) to ensure that residents are getting the benefits of earned time off for rest.
- Residents are both employees and students in our organization. If required, the employer does have the right to schedule vacation time with appropriate notice. This would be highly undesirable; because from a learner perspective, forcing vacations may interfere with the rotations/ learning experiences and robust assessments from which learners are being denied an opportunity to learn fully.
- Vacation days are earned benefits which must either be used, or if unable to be used, be paid out in full by the program. Residents who end their residency training (for any reason) and are unable to use up their vacation, will need to have their remaining unused vacation time paid out in full at the program's expense.

Programs and residents should work together on a one-on-one basis and determine what is possible in the current year and what needs to be carried over.

Our intent is that these issues are addressed at the program level, realizing that some rare situations may require consultations with the PGME office / RDoS.

Sincerely,



Anurag Saxena MD, M.Ed., MBA, FRCPC, CHE, CCPE
Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education
University of Saskatchewan