

Graduate Medical Education Committee

Updated December, 2020

Appointment, Promotion, Resignation and Dismissal Policy

Appointment

This policy applies to residents and fellows in all STHC sponsored Graduate Medical Education programs.

Appointments are for twelve (12) months

Each residency/fellowship program provides clinical rotations of sufficient quality and duration so learners who successfully complete the program are qualified to sit for respective board certification (if applicable) and examinations. All program activities are conducted within the guidelines of external agencies that evaluate and accredit training programs and hospitals. The obligation to train physicians in the practice of their specialties includes the provision of inpatient and outpatient settings in which the specialty may be practiced; the provision of equipment and facilities for the care of patients; the provision of supervision, feedback and evaluation of professional work of the residents/fellows by faculty members; and the provision of didactic experiences to supplement practical clinical experiences.

Resident/fellow must be in attendance of all scheduled rotation duties and required trainings made explicit by their appropriate training program. Residents/fellows agree to comply with leave of absence protocols. A resident/fellow who fails to comply with these protocols or who takes an unapproved leave of absence is assumed to have resigned their appointment, unless extenuating circumstances apply. If a learner is considered to have resigned from their residency/fellowship, the Program Director will so notify the resident/fellow in writing.

Residents/fellows are expected to actively participate in the care of patients who present to the hospital or clinic to which the resident/fellow is assigned. Residents/fellows are expected to take an active role in teaching medical students, other learners, and staff.

The appointment of resident/fellow is conditioned upon compliance with the board certification requirements of their residency/fellowship program. Failure to do so will result in the rescission of the resident/fellow appointment and withdrawal of privileges, salaries, and benefits. Residents/fellows must comply with all GMEC and clinical site policies.

Each resident/fellow will have timely access to evaluations of their performance throughout their residency/fellowship. The Program Director (or his/her designee) shall discuss with each resident/fellow their overall progress toward the educational objectives and satisfactory completion of their program. Such discussions will occur at least semi-annually in compliance with the ACGME Institutional, Common and Specialty-specific Program Requirements.

Program appointment, advancement, and completion are not assured or guaranteed to the resident or fellow but are contingent upon the resident/fellow's satisfactory demonstration of progressive advancement in scholarship and continued professional growth.

Promotion

Each resident's performance will be evaluated at least twice in each academic year by the Clinical Competency Committee (CCC). The program specific milestones will be utilized, along with evaluations

from faculty, peers, administrative and clinical staff, to determine resident progress. When a resident achieves satisfactory performance in scholarship, patient care and professional growth, the CCC, in conjunction with the Program Director, will deem the resident ready for promotion and a contract for the next academic year will be issued by January 15th of the given academic year.

Delayed Promotion with Extension of Training Contract

The CCC, in conjunction with the Program Director, may decide to delay promotion for a learner and extend training when the learner is not progressing in a timely manner to meet criteria for advancement by the end of the contract period. The learner must be notified within 7 days of CCC if extension of training is required. The resident must be involved in the Program for Attaining Competency as Expected (PACE) process with written documentation.

Extension of training should not exceed 90 days, however, the extension may be renewed in additional 90 day increments if appropriate progress is being made toward completion of program requirements. Extension of training time will likely result in delayed graduation.

The learner will be issued a contract extension at the current PGY-level to cover the extension period.

Extension of training may be appealed (see Academic & Professional Conduct Policy). The learner must be informed of the right to appeal and given a copy of the due process policy at the time of notification. Delayed Promotion with Extension of Training is not considered a disciplinary action by the GMEC.

Non-Renewal of Contract with or without Non-Promotion

- A. Non-Promotion is a disciplinary action which states the learner has not demonstrated sufficient academic performance to be granted additional responsibilities at the next level of training or to graduate. Non-promotion as an academic decision by CCC and the Program Director is not appealable.
- B. A Non-Renewal may occur under the following circumstances:
 - a. The learner has not satisfactorily completed the requirements for completion of the current academic year by the end of the employment contract period. The specialty board and ACGME is notified that the Learner has not completed the year. This is non-renewal with non-promotion.
 - b. The learner will complete the requirements for the current academic year but the CCC with the approval of the Program Director has decided the learner has not demonstrated the skills needed to progress to the next academic year. The Learner is given academic credit for the year with the specialty board.
 - c. Non renewal action is appealable.
- C. A Learner will remain employed and in training after given notice of contract non-renewal for the remainder of the current contract. However, declining performance may result in additional disciplinary action. The decisions on academic credit may be delayed up to 30 days prior to the end of the contract period.
- D. Notice of non-renewal should be provided to the Learner no later than January 15th of the given academic year unless extenuating circumstances are present. This policy does not prohibit a Program from giving less notice for critical performance deficits.
- E. Non-renewal may be appealed. The Learner must be provided a copy to the Academic & Professional Conduct Policy and notified of the right to appeal. The learner will be paid in full for the remainder of their contract.

Resignation

Residents/fellows who desire to voluntarily leave their program prior to completion of the training are expected to discuss this action with the Program Director at the earliest possible time, preferably before January 15th of the given academic year. This may occur for a variety of reasons including personal health, family issues or personal and/or professional career preferences, etc.

If the resignation occurs prior to a recommendation by the CCC for contract non-renewal, dismissal, or non-promotion, it is not considered an adverse or disciplinary action unless the program was considering dismissal for professionalism reasons.

Suspension

Suspension is a status where the learner is relieved from all training duties and does not continue to accrue graduation credit during the suspension but continues to be employed. The terms suspension and involuntary leave of absence are synonymous.

- A. This action may be initiated in the following circumstances:
 - i. Pending investigation of egregious learner misconduct
 - ii. Substantive learner performance issues with patient safety concerns
 - iii. The program's CCC evaluates, documents, and determines that it is in the best interests of the safety, health, or welfare of patients, staff, or the program.
- B. The length of the suspension will be determined by the program.
- C. A suspension may result in an extension of training.
- D. A suspension may be appealed. The learner must be informed of this and given a copy of the Academic & Professional Conduct Policy

Dismissal

Dismissal is a disciplinary action resulting in termination from the Training Program and shall include termination of the Learner's employment contract.

- A. A Program may take an action of dismissal under the following circumstances:
 - i. The Learner has not made satisfactory progress towards promotion or graduation while on Probation with utilization of the PACE process; or
 - ii. A Critical Performance Deficit; or
 - iii. Contract violation; or
 - iv. Any other reason that the program's CCC warrants dismissal, considering the best interests of the safety, health, or welfare of patients, staff, or the Program.
- B. Dismissal may be appealed, and the Learner must be informed of the Program's action and given a copy of the Academic & Professional Conduct policy at the time of notification.
- C. If a dismissal appeal is requested, the Program may place the learner on a Program requested involuntary Leave of Absence until the dismissal appeal process is completed in the event of substantial patient safety risks, impairment, or misconduct that cannot be mitigated by modification of Learner duties.