MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA, DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY
HOUSE OFFICER VACATION POLICY, 2014-2015

Annual leave (i.e., vacation) of three weeks, consisting of a maximum of fifteen (15) “working days” (Monday-Friday) plus six (6) “weekend days” (Saturday-Sunday) with pay shall be granted at the discretion of the Program Director or designee per twelve months of employment, excluding holidays, meetings and conferences, unless specifically limited as required for specialty board certification.

1.1. Total vacation time granted by the hospital is three (3) weeks.

1.2. Vacations must be distributed throughout the year and not concentrated in the second half of the year. One week must be taken in the first six months and the second week taken in the final six months of the contract year. The third week can be in either half of the year.

2.1. Vacation preference will be given by seniority.

2.2. Vacation requests for the year must be submitted no later than June 1. Individuals not requesting specific vacation time will be assigned vacation time by the administrative chief resident. The vacation schedule will be finalized by July 1.

3. Individuals not listing vacation preferences will be assigned time.

4. **No vacations will be granted during the month of July or the last two weeks of December.** Only those residents who choose to use week of their vacation time to facilitate their move to another residency program (Preliminary residents or graduating residents starting fellowship) may request vacation during the last week of June, which is subject to approval. In addition, no vacations will be granted during the annual meetings of the American College of Surgeons in October and the Southeastern Surgical Congress in February.

5. Specific Vacation Time Limitations: Limited to two (2) weeks at any given time and one (1) week on any single service unless specifically approved by the Program Director.

6. Residents participating in a program as an author, presenter, or panelist will not have vacation time charged to them. They will be permitted to use up to a maximum of 7 administrative days per year for meeting presentations. Travel days to and from the meetings will be used as time off from duty for the 1:7 time off requirement. Should the resident wish to and get approval from the Program Director to take additional time off surrounding a meeting but not directly related to it, this would be counted against their vacation time. The length of their absence at the meeting is subject to the approval of the Chairman of the Department and the Program Director.

7. Vacation may not be permitted on certain services/rotations at the discretion of the Chairman of the Department of Surgery. These most recently have included Night Ashley River Tower (NART) and NET (Night Emergency Trauma). This list will be updated at the time of schedule finalization for the 2013-2014 academic year.

8. Changes in scheduled vacation time must be approved in writing by: (a) Chief Administrative Resident or Program Director in the absence of the Chief Administrative Resident, and b) must be submitted at least four weeks before the planned vacation.

9. **RESIDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO LEAVE FOR VACATIONS OR MEETINGS UNLESS ALL MEDICAL RECORD DICTATIONS (OP NOTES, DISCHARGES, ETC.) AND SIGNATURES ARE COMPLETED.**

10. Pgy-4 & -5 house officers may be offered the opportunity to attend a major surgical meeting, at the discretion of the Chairman.
   a. Prior to the travel the resident will discuss his planned attendance with the Program Director first then have approval by the Department Chairman before any commitment is made.
   b. All travel arrangements will be made by the Department and state reimbursement policies will be followed. Travel and housing will be by the most economical means.
   c. Information gained will be shared with other house officers at one of the conferences held shortly after the trip is completed.
d. Residents on academic probation will be given an opportunity to attend a review course in place of attending a major meeting; said review course having been selected for them by the Program Director with the Chairman’s approval.

11. It is a requirement of the American Board of Surgery that Chief Residents must be on duty for a minimum of 48 weeks (46 weeks if on duty for 48 weeks during the PGY4 year). Time spent on vacation, interviewing for jobs or fellowships, or at meetings or courses DOES NOT count toward the 48-week minimum.

12. Administrative Time: residents are allowed to utilize up to 7 days of administrative leave pending approval of the Program Director for the purposes of poster or manuscript presentation, fellowship or job interviews, or continuing education seminars. Any additional time away for these purposes will be counted against your allotted vacation time only after being approved by the Program Director.

13. As per the Medical University Graduate Medical Education Policy, up to 6 weeks of paid maternity or paternity leave may be taken. However, this time must first come from vacation time (3 weeks) and sick leave (3 weeks). An additional 6 weeks may be taken as per the Medical and Family Leave Act (FMLA) with benefits intact and a position held for the resident. However, this additional 6 weeks constitutes unpaid leave. Please see the MUSC GME website for information regarding requirements for advance notification.

14. Resident contracts require that residents remain on duty through June 30 of each year. Residents who would like to leave early in order to attend orientation for subsequent positions will not be permitted to do so without the written approval of the Program Director and the attending chief of the surgical service to which they are assigned during the month of June. Early departure constitutes a hardship for the surgical services affected and will not be approved automatically.

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