



American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc.

A Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)

The ABPN Training and Leave of Absence policy can be [found here](#).

ABPN Leave of Absence Policy FAQs

What is the purpose of the ABPN policy?

Consistent with policy of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the ABPN policy is intended to ensure that trainees in our fields who receive a reasonable amount of time away from training, for purposes including vacation, sick time, and parental or caregiver leave, remain eligible for specialty certification.

Can a trainee ‘bank’ vacation time toward their 6-week parental leave time?

This is allowable at program discretion, as long as the other requirements of the policy are met. We say “at program discretion” because we recognize that scheduling or other exigencies may limit or prevent such ‘banking’ of vacation time.

Can a trainee combine other vacation time with six-week parental leave time to take a longer parental leave?

This too is allowable, but not required, at program discretion. Again, we recognize that scheduling or other exigencies may limit or prevent combining time in this manner.

How should my program handle rotation time missed due to leave time away?

It is up to the program to decide, within ABPN and ACGME guidelines, whether or how much of missed time on specific rotations needs to be made up when the trainee returns from leave. For example, the program can decide whether missed rotation time must be made up out of other subsequent rotation times, or if the leave ‘counts’ in part or in whole toward the required rotation time (i.e., does not need to be made up), or if the decision is individualized based on a particular trainee’s demonstrated performance in that area.

Please note that the policy requires that training not be extended solely due to a trainee using the allowed leave time. However, as always, the program director and program clinical competency committee have the authority and responsibility to extend training if needed to achieve training requirements.

Why doesn’t the ABPN simply specify exactly how to handle missed rotation time and other implementation details of the leave policy?

There are several reasons that the ABPN does not (and in many ways cannot) specify such important details:

- Leave policies for individual programs may be subject to institutional policies and/or to applicable federal, state, or local laws. Thus, the implementation details will necessarily vary across institutions and jurisdictions.
- There are wide variations in institutional and program-specific practices; these, too, necessarily mean there will be variation in the implementation details.
- In general, the ABPN recognizes the value of fostering the authority and responsibilities of program directors and faculty. The ABPN obviously should and does set specific requirements for certification eligibility, but beyond those requirements we believe in the importance of program discretion in implementing policies such as the leave policy.

What about salary support during leave time?

The ABPN policy does not mention salary support. We recognize the impact of providing, or not providing, leave-time salary support on both institutions and trainees. However, the ABPN role is not and has never been to issue mandates regarding salary or other financial benefits. We recognize, too, that such financial requirements may come from ACGME or institutional policies as well as from any applicable laws. Therefore, practices regarding salary support are left to program and institutional discretion.

Complying with the ABPN policy at my program (or in my state or local jurisdiction) would violate my institution's policy (or applicable laws). What do we do?

As noted in the policy, the ABPN policy does not supersede institutional policies or applicable laws.

Posted: 04/13/2023