



General Psychiatry Residency Program Waivers of Training (WOT) Guidelines

Background: Adapted from University of Toronto, PGME [Guidelines for Residency Leaves of Absence and Training Waivers](#)

The RCPSC state that **residents must complete all of a program's training requirements** including duration and competence. However, the University is free to set policies regarding granting leaves of absence and the criteria by which waivers of training time (if any) may be granted. Where a resident in a RCPSC program will have achieved the required level of competence by the end of the **final year of training**, *a waiver of 4-12 weeks* may be granted at the Program Director's discretion, referring to the maximum allowable time for waivers outlined in *section 4.3.2 in the [RCPSC Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship, October 2020](#). **Completion of training includes not only meeting all specialty training requirements of the RCPSC, but also all of the program's required rotations and items** such as in training examinations, research and/or quality improvement projects, case logs, portfolios and other assessments.

Guiding Principles:

1. The reasons for the leave of absence are not considered in assessing a waiver of training, except in cases when the resident was placed on a mandatory leave due to serious professionalism or academic performance concerns (see principle 6 below). All leaves of absence are granted according to RCPSC and UofT PGME policies and thus have previously met an approved standard. In the instance where the UofT PGME Office has approved a leave of absence, a waiver of training may be granted as long as there are no concerns regarding the trainee's ability to meet the required level of competence and complete program requirements.
2. The total training eligible for a waiver is the lesser of the Royal College's maximum waiver of 3 months or the total length of all leaves taken by a resident during training.
3. Residents who have completed a portion or all of their training on a part-time basis may be eligible for a waiver of training. The total time away from training is considered equivalent to a contiguous leave of equal length (e.g. a resident training at 0.8 full-time equivalent who works 4 out of 5 business days weekly over 10 weeks is eligible for a maximum of 10 days waived).

4. The resident's privacy in terms of personal or health information will be maintained at all times. Residents are not required to, and are discouraged from, disclosing details of their leave. Moreover, the reasons for the leave, if known, should not influence the decision made with regards to the WOT.
5. The resident may wish, but is not required, to disclose additional circumstances relevant to their application, such as fellowship or job offers. Such circumstances may be taken into consideration when determining the length of training waived, but are not required for a waiver to be granted.
6. Those whose residency are extended either due to formal (via Board of Examiners) or informal (within program) remediation do not qualify for WOT.

Process:

****N.B.:** A waiver can only be granted in the final year of training and must be submitted before the Royal College Examination.

1. Residents must notify the Program Director and Associate Program Director of their intention to apply for a WOT at the beginning of the academic year. Residents are encouraged to meet with the PD or APD prior to submitting an application for a WOT.
2. WOT's will be reviewed *once per academic year, prior to the RC Exam* by the RASC (Resident Assessment and Support Committee) to ensure that residents have met the articulated requirements for a WOT. Late submissions will not be accepted.
3. Following review by the RASC, a recommendation will be made to the Program Director with regards to the WOT.
4. The Program Director will submit the proposal for a WOT to UofT PGME Office.
5. Residents must inform the following individuals of their intent to apply for a WOT (including the anticipated end date for residency) in order for sites, supervisors, and call pools to make appropriate adjustments to patient care responsibilities:
 - a. Call pool – PRAT, Site Director, and Chief Resident(s)
 - b. Rotations(s) – Primary supervisor(s)

* Relevant portions of 4.3.2 Waiver of training after a leave of absence from residency

Accommodation

The policy detailed in this Section 4.3.2 is subject to the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (Royal College) commitment to accommodate residents with personal circumstances enumerated under applicable human rights legislation, as provided in Section 6.12 of this guide.

Policy on granting a leave of absence

The Royal College expects that all residents must have achieved the goals and objectives of the training program and be competent to commence independent practice by the completion of their training program. It is understood by the Royal College that residents may require leaves of absence from training. The circumstances that would qualify residents for leaves of absence are determined by the university. It is expected that any time lost during a leave will be made up upon the resident's return.

Policy on granting a waiver of training:

The postgraduate office may allow a waiver of training following a leave of absence, in accordance with university policy and within the maximum time for a waiver determined by the Royal College. A decision to grant a waiver of training **can only be taken in the final year of the program but cannot be granted after the resident has taken the certification examinations**. Similarly, the end-of-training date for a resident cannot be changed to an earlier date after the resident has taken the certification examinations.

Each university will develop its own policy on whether or not it is willing to grant a waiver of training for time taken as a leave of absence. However, in the case where waivers of training are acceptable to the university, they must be **within the acceptable times listed below**. In addition, **regardless of any waived blocks of training, the decision to grant a waiver of training must be based on the assumption that the resident will have achieved the required level of competence by the end of the final year of training**.

The following are the maximum allowable times for waivers:

1. One year program – no waiver allowed
2. Less than one year for remediation or enhanced skills – no waiver allowed
3. Two year program – six weeks
4. Three year program – six weeks
5. Four year program – three months
6. Five year program – three months

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