

GMEC policy on switching programs

Background

Sometimes referred to as “mid-year switching”, anytime a resident fails to complete a contract year poses a significant challenge for their program. In such cases, undesirable consequences often follow including program disruption, more stress and possible hardship for remaining residents. The switch is especially disruptive and apt to cause friction between departments if it is intra-institutional. The following GMEC policy addresses this problem.

GMEC Policy

- A. Regarded as relating to a sense of professionalism, post-graduate trainees are considered by JCESOM as having assumed a serious obligation to fulfill the terms of each year’s contract. It is expected that they will comply fully with all stipulations contained therein.
- B. Without exception, intra-institutional switching (between clinical departments) during a contract year is impermissible.
- C. With the exception of a resident in a preliminary PGY-I program, and in the absence of extenuating circumstances described below as well as in fairness to their program, residents are expected to notify their Training Program Director (TPD) of the intention to leave before completion of a contract year as soon as that decision is made; further it is expected that under ordinary circumstances the resident will provide the program with notification at least three months before the end of the contract year so that appropriate actions may be taken by the program to fill the unanticipated vacancy thus created.
- D. Failure to fulfill the terms of any contract year in the absence of extenuating circumstances as determined by the TPD will result in:
 - forfeiture of unused days of annual vacation time as well as remaining educational and sick leave
 - documentation of failure to complete contract requirements will be included in reference letters (which are mandatory under ACGME standards)
 - other penalties as deemed appropriate by the GMEC

Only if approved by the TPD and department chairperson may a trainee be relieved of his/her obligation to complete a contract year (without penalty) using the following criteria:

- unsatisfactory performance refractory to remediation as described in the JCESOM Due

Process Policy

- an approved Medical Leave of Absence
- family circumstances or other types of situations where a waiver of penalty appears warranted.

Intra-institutional switching from one program to a different one at the completion of a contract year is permitted but only with the knowledge and consent of the TPDs and the chairpersons involved.

If an individual leaves a department before completion of a contract year it is the resident's responsibility to obtain the Dean's approval before he/she is eligible to apply for a position in another JCESOM department

Approved by the Graduate Medical Education Committee on May 30, 2006