

Title: Extraordinary Circumstance Policy for GME

Reference: [ACGME Policies and Procedures](#) (effective June 13, 2020); [Institutional Requirements](#) (focused revision effective July 1, 2018); [ACGME's framework for Emergency and Non-Emergency categorization of SIs](#)

I. Purpose

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requires that every Sponsoring Institution (SI) have a written policy consistent with ACGME Policies and Procedures to address support for Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs and residents (where "Residents" refers to both residents and fellows) participating in the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine (UTRGV SOM) GME programs in the event of a disaster or interruption in patient care. This policy includes information about assistance for continuation of salary, benefits, and resident/fellow assignments.

II. Background

This policy will address specific actions and timelines for response, given the occurrence of an extraordinary circumstance, as outlined in ACGME Policy and Procedures Manual (section 21.00).

III. Definitions

- A. **Disaster:** An event or set of events causing significant alteration to the residency experience at one or more residency programs.
- i. **Extreme emergent situation:** A local event (such as hospital-declared disaster for an epidemic) that affects Resident education or the work environment but *does not* rise to the level of an ACGME-declared disaster as defined in the ACGME Policies and Procedures to Address Extraordinary Circumstances (section 21.00). *The present policy does not specifically address extreme emergent situations, which should be handled on a case-by-case basis by the UTRGV SOM Designated Institutional Official ("DIO") in collaboration with the Graduate Medical Education Committee ("GMEC") and relevant participating site leadership.*
 - ii. **Extraordinary Circumstance:** An event or set of events causing significant alteration to the residency experience in one or more UTRGV SOM GME programs. An extraordinary circumstance may or may not result in disruption in the provision of patient care within a residency program or throughout multiple residency programs and hospital departments. Examples of extraordinary circumstances include abrupt hospital closures, natural disasters, or a catastrophic loss of funding.

- B. Temporary Transfer: A time-limited placement of a UTRGV SOM Resident into another program/institution until such time as the UTRGV SOM program is able to return to the provision of an adequate educational experience for its Residents.
- C. Permanent Transfer: The transfer and enrollment of a UTRGV SOM Resident into another program/institution where they can complete their residency.

IV. Policy:

If an event, or set of events, causes significant alteration to the residency experience in one or more residency programs, the UTRGV SOM DIO and the GMEC will abide by the Institutional and ACGME Policy and Procedures for extraordinary circumstances.

If the GMEC and DIO believe that an Extraordinary Circumstance has occurred, then the DIO will contact the ACGME to report this event or set of events.

The UTRGV Extraordinary Circumstance policy may be invoked once the Chief Executive Officer of the ACGME, in consultation with the Chair of the ACGME Board and the UTRGV SOM Designated Institutional Official ("DIO"), determine that the ability to support Resident education at a UTRGV site has been significantly altered.

The GMEC will meet regularly, as necessary, to continue its assessment of the situation and to make decisions regarding the UTRGV SOM training programs. If the GMEC determines that a program or the institution cannot provide an adequate educational experience for a Resident because of the disaster, both individual programs and the institution will work toward either temporary or permanent transfer of residents.

ACGME Requirements: When an Extraordinary Circumstance is identified, the DIO will be the primary contact with the ACGME to provide information to be posted on the ACGME website. UTRGV SOM, as the sponsoring institution, will:

1. Revise its educational programs within thirty (30) days to comply with the applicable common and specialty specific Program Requirements, as well as the Institutional Requirements.
2. Arrange temporary transfers for each of its Residents to other programs or institutions until such time as the program(s) can provide an adequate educational experience; or
3. Assist the Residents in permanent transfers to other ACGME-accredited programs in which they can continue their education.

If more than one program or institution is available for temporary or permanent transfer of a particular Resident, the preferences of the Resident will be considered by the transferring program. Programs will expeditiously make the decision to reconstitute the program and/or arrange for temporary or permanent transfers of the Residents so as to maximize the likelihood that each Resident will complete the academic year with the least disruption to her or his education.

Within 10 days of the invocation of the Extraordinary Circumstances policy, the DIO or designee will contact the ACGME to receive the timeline the ACGME establishes for the program(s). UTRGV SOM, as the sponsoring institution, will:

1. Submit program reconfigurations to the ACGME and inform the program's Residents of the decision to reconstitute the program and/or transfer the Residents either temporarily or permanently.
2. If the program is transferring Residents, each transferred Resident will be informed of the estimated duration of his or her temporary transfer. When a program determines that a temporary transfer will continue through the end of the academic year, each transferred Resident will be notified.

Plans will be submitted no later than thirty (30) days after the invocation of the Extraordinary Circumstances policy unless other due dates are approved by the ACGME. The DIO will coordinate temporary or permanent transfers through the ACGME.

The DIO will work with the receiving programs in submitting the request for processing through the Accreditation Data System (ADS).

Compensation and Benefits: In the event of a prolonged hospital closure, UTRGV SOM will strive to provide continuing support for Residents until the hospital returns to normal operations or the Residents are reassigned. Every effort will be made to continue benefits for Residents while they are employed by UTRGV. Continuation of salary will be dependent upon the availability of funds and the current work status of the Residents.

Procedures

Responsible Party

Action

DIO:

Notify members of the GMEC, the UTRGV SOM Dean, appropriate members of UTRGV SOM leadership, and affiliate leadership, of the Extraordinary Circumstance and the impact on residency education.

Contact the ACGME (Institutional Review Committee Executive Director) with information and/or requests for information concerning the Extraordinary Circumstance.

Contact the ACGME (Institutional Review Committee Executive Director) within ten (10) days of the ACGME declared Extraordinary Circumstance to receive timelines the ACGME has established for the affected program(s).

Program Director(s):

Following consultation with the DIO, contact the Review Committee Executive Director for their specific residency to provide Extraordinary Circumstance related information to the RRC and to respond to RRC requests for information.

Contact all core and participating clinical faculty and Residents in the program(s) as soon as possible after the declaration of an Extraordinary Circumstance.

Notify as soon as possible the emergency contacts of injured or ill Residents or Residents who are missing during an Extraordinary Circumstance. In the event of a Resident death, follow the protocols outlined in the Resident Death Postvention toolkit.

If possible, revise their educational program to comply with the applicable common, specialty specific Program, and Institutional Requirements within 30 days of the invocation of the policy.

Residents:

After the Program Director has made contact with the Review Committee Executive Director, residents may e-mail or call the Review Committee Executive Director or the Office of Resident Services (residentservices@acgme.org; or 312-755-5000) with requests for information.

Sign on to the ACGME website to review instructions on changing their e-mail address in the ACGME Web Accreditation Data System (Web ADS) if needed.

Review the ACGME website as needed to obtain updates on Extraordinary Circumstance related information