

Resident Duty Hours

UTRGV Graduate Medical Education Policy	Effective: August, 2014
General Policies and Procedures	Responsibility: Associate Dean for GME/DIO

Purpose: It is the policy of the UTRGV Graduate Medical Education Committee to follow requirements established by the ACGME regarding duty hours for residents in accredited training programs. Specific details and FAQs can be found at the ACGME website, www.acgme.org and are subject to change without notice.

Definitions:

- *Duty hours:* all clinical and academic activities related to the residency program, i.e., patient care (both inpatient and outpatient), administrative duties related to patient care, the provision for transfer of patient care, time spent in-house during call activities, and scheduled academic activities such as conferences. Duty hours do not include reading and preparation time spent away from the work site.
- *Moonlighting:* Voluntary, compensated, medically-related work performed at any institution. Time spent moonlighting must be counted toward all duty hours rules.
- *Home call (pager call):* Call taken from outside the assigned institution. This call is not subject to the every third night limitation. If the residents are called into the hospital from home, those duty hours are counted toward the 80-hour limit.

Policy: The Institution recognizes that a sound academic and clinical education should be carefully planned and balanced with concerns for patient safety and resident well-being. Learning objectives of the program will not be compromised by excessive reliance on residents to fulfill service obligations.

Each GME program must have written policies and procedures consistent with the Institutional and Program Requirements for resident duty hours and the working environment. These policies must be distributed to the residents and the faculty. All residency programs must monitor resident duty hours, on an ongoing basis. Monitoring of duty hours is required with sufficient frequency to ensure an appropriate balance between education and service.

Duty Hours Requirements

Maximum hours per week

- Duty hours must be limited to 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house call activities and all moonlighting.

Moonlighting

- Must not interfere with the ability of the resident to achieve the goals and objectives of the educational program.
- Time spent in Internal and External moonlighting must be counted towards the maximum 80-hour weekly limit.
- PGY-1 residents are not allowed to moonlight

Mandatory time free of duty

- One day free of duty every week (when averaged over 4 weeks). At home call cannot be assigned on those free days.

Maximum duty period length

- Duty periods of PGY-1 residents must not exceed 16 hours of duration
- Duty periods of PGY-2 and above may be scheduled to a maximum of 24 hours of continuous duty in the hospital.

Minimum time off between scheduled periods

- PGY-1 residents should have 10 hours, must have eight hours free of duty.
- Intermediate level, as defined by individual RRC's, should have 10 hours, must have 8 hours free of duty.
- Intermediate levels must have at least 14 hours free of duty after 24 hours of in-house call
- Residents in final years, as defined by individual RRC's, must be prepared to enter the unsupervised practice of medicine and care for patients over irregular or extended periods.

Maximum frequency of in-house night float

- Residents must not be scheduled for more than six consecutive nights of night float.

Maximum in-house on-call frequency

- PGY-2's and above must be scheduled for in-house on-call no more frequently than every third night.

At-home call

- Time spent in the hospital on at-home calls count toward the 80 hour maximum weekly hour limit.

Duty Hours Reporting/Monitoring

Program Directors are responsible for monitoring the effects of duty hours responsibilities and making necessary modifications to scheduling in order to mitigate excessive service demands or fatigue.

Monitoring of duty hours is required with frequency sufficient to ensure an appropriate balance between education and service. Each resident is responsible for direct entry of their own duty hours information. Each resident should complete each month's entry within 7 days of the month end. Programs will have 7 days immediately after the 7 days provided to residents, to audit and confirm duty hours as reported. Program Directors are responsible for reviewing all duty hour violations reported. The Institutional GME office reviews duty hour reporting for each program monthly. The GME office will send an email to all residents who have not completed their duty hour reporting for the calendar specified period of time.

Professionalism, Personal Responsibility, and Patient Safety

All programs must educate residents and faculty members concerning the professional responsibilities of physicians to appear for duty appropriately rested and fit to provide the services required by their patients and promote patient safety and resident well-being in a supportive educational environment.

All Program Directors must ensure a culture of professionalism that supports patient safety and personal responsibility. Residents and faculty demonstrate an understanding and acceptance of their personal role in:

- assurance of the safety and welfare of patients entrusted to their care;
- assurance of their fitness for duty;
- management of their time before, during, and after clinical assignments;
- recognition of impairment, including illness and fatigue, in themselves and in their peers.
- honest and accurate reporting of duty hours.

All residents and faculty members demonstrate responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest. Our physicians recognize that, under certain circumstances, the best interests of the patient may be served by transitioning that patient's care to another qualified and rested provider.

Duty Hour Exceptions

Programs may petition the GMEC for permission to request approval from their RRC for waiver of one or more aspects of duty hours compliance, for sound educational purposes (and only if the particular Review Committee accepts such requests).

Minimum information to be included in the request includes:

1. All circumstances under which residents may be expected to work more than 80 hours per week, averaged over 4 weeks (and/or other deviations from ACGME duty hour standards). Include the specific rotations and the year of training for which the request is being made.
2. Why the program cannot maintain the 80-hour limit.
3. The specific improvements in educational experience that are anticipated to result from this increase in duty hours. This may include RC requirements the program will not meet if residents work 80 or fewer hours per week
4. How the program will monitor resident hours to assure compliance with the duty hour rules.
5. Statement of support by the Department Chairman.