

Days Off Policy: Required Clinical Clerkships [Third and Fourth Year]

EPC approved: May 20, 2009

Revised: June 2009

Effective date: June 27, 2009

Note: This policy replaces both the “Residency Interviews, Step 2 CS, ACLS” policy (approved by the EPC September 20, 2006; revised December 6, 2006), and the “Days Off” policy (approved by the EPC May 21, 2008; revised August 18, 2008)

Introduction & Rationale:

One of the goals of the third and fourth years of medical school is to prepare students for their work as residents. One strategy for achieving this goal is to provide students with experiences that mimic as closely as possible the everyday life of a practicing physician. This “Days Off” policy introduces students to the realities of the almost 24/7 schedule of the physician, including the reality that patients do not choose when to get sick and illness occurs often on weekends and holidays. It also a) provides appropriately for the time away from clinical responsibilities for study and relaxation that all learners need; and b) creates a uniform standard for student absence from required and elective clerkships so that the number of permitted absences allows for adequate opportunities for interviews and Step 2 CS, both important for successful matching, but does not compromise opportunities for achieving clerkship educational goals.

Policy

Average of 4 days off for a 4 week rotation (average of 1 day off per week)

- The number of days off students have in each rotation will be determined at the discretion of the Clerkship Director
- The schedule for days off will be prepared by the Clerkship Director, Clerkship Coordinator or another individual designated by the Clerkship Director
- Weekends and holidays that occur during a clerkship should not be presumed as “automatic” days off
- Total 4 days off, whether used for Step 2 CS, ACLS, or residency interviews

Procedures

Clerkship Director Responsibilities

- This policy should be discussed at the clerkship orientation and included in the clerkship syllabus, along with any clerkship-specific procedures related to the policy.
- A clerkship director has the authority to approve additional days off on a case-by-case basis.
- If a clerkship director approves excused absences beyond the limits outlined in this policy, he or she may require that the student complete an educational project or experience to compensate for the extra time missed.

Student responsibilities continued on reverse side

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Student Responsibilities

- **Students are encouraged to plan their schedule for interviews, ACLS, and Step 2 CS carefully, so that their attendance at these fourth year activities is spread across their fourth year rotations and does not create situations where the number of days off needed in a single rotation exceeds the number approved in this policy.**
- If a student seeks an “excused absence,” he or she must request permission in advance of the time away.
- Students may be asked to submit documentation that authenticates/verifies reason for absence (e.g. verification of interview, Step 2 CS, ACLS--email or snail mail and/or copy of offer—or doctor’s note).