

St. David's South Austin Medical Center

Practitioner Leave of Absence Policy

Approved:

Medical Executive Committee Meeting Date: 9/13/13, 5/12/17, 5/10/19

Board of Trustees Meeting Date: 9/19/13, 5/18/17, 5/16/19

A. Request for and Granting of Leave of Absence

1. All practitioners with clinical privileges may request a voluntary leave of absence from the Staff by submitting a written notice to the Chief Medical Officer, Chief Executive Officer, or Medical Executive Committee. The written request must state the proposed beginning date and proposed ending date for the period of leave desired, which may not exceed two years, and include the reasons for the request. The proposed length of LOA shall be appropriate and reasonable based on the reasons for the LOA.
2. An automatic leave of absence may be triggered when an individual is unable to request a leave of absence because of a health, physical, or psychological condition or because of absence due to a sudden military obligation. The Chief of the Medical Staff or Chairperson of the individual's department may submit the written notice on his/her behalf. The CEO, CMO, or Chief of Medical Staff have the authority to approve the leave of absence and their actions will be reported to the MEC and Board of Trustees. Special notice will be sent to the individual informing him/her of this action.
3. A leave of absence may be granted for the following reasons:
 - a. Medical Leave of Absence: Practitioners with clinical privileges must report to the Chief Executive Officer any time they are away from Medical Staff and/or patient care responsibilities for longer than 30 days when the reason for such absence is related to their physical or mental health or their ability to care for patients safely and competently. Individuals may request and be granted a leave of absence for the purpose of obtaining treatment for a medical or psychological condition, disability, or health issue.
 - b. Military Leave of Absence: Practitioners with clinical privileges may request and be granted a leave of absence to fulfill military service obligations. In addition to a written request for leave, a military reservist must submit a copy of deployment orders. Individuals who are on active military duty for more than one year will be afforded an automatic extension of their leave until their active duty is completed. Reinstatement of membership status and/or clinical privileges may be subject to certain monitoring and/or proctoring conditions as determined by the Medical Executive Committee, based on an evaluation of the nature of activities during the leave.
 - c. Educational Leave of Absence: Practitioners with clinical privileges may request and be granted a leave of absence to pursue additional education and training. Any additional clinical privileges that may be desired upon the successful conclusion of additional education and training must be requested in accordance with this policy.
 - d. Personal/Family Leave of Absence: Practitioners with clinical privileges may request and be granted a leave of absence for a variety of personal reasons (e.g., to pursue a

volunteer endeavor such as contributing work to “Doctors Without Borders/USA”) or family reasons (e.g., maternity leave, leave to care for a family member). Reinstatement of membership status and clinical privileges may be subject to certain monitoring and/or proctoring conditions as determined by the Medical Executive Committee, based on an evaluation of the nature of activities during the leave.

4. The Medical Executive Committee shall review and recommend leave of absence requests to the Board of Trustees.
5. During the period of leave, the individual must not exercise clinical privileges at the Hospital, and membership prerogatives and responsibilities (e.g., meeting attendance, committee service, and emergency service call obligations) will be in abeyance.
6. When the reasons for the leave of absence indicate that the leave is optional, the request will be granted at the discretion of the Medical Executive Committee based on their evaluation of the abilities of the Medical Staff to fulfill the patient care needs that may be created in the Hospital by the absence of the individual requesting the leave.
7. The granting of a leave of absence, or reinstatement, as appropriate, may be conditioned upon the individual's completion of all medical records. Exceptions shall be allowed only in the event that an individual has a physical or psychological condition that prevents him/her from completing records or concluding other Medical Staff or Hospital matters.

B. Reinstatement Following a Leave of Absence

8. The Practitioner with clinical privileges who is on leave of absence must request reinstatement of Medical Staff membership and/or clinical privileges by submitting a written notice to the Chief Medical Officer or Medical Executive Committee. This request must be received not less than 60 days prior to expiration of the leave of absence.
9. The written request for reinstatement must include an attestation that no changes have occurred in the status of any of required credentials, or if changes have occurred, a detailed description of the nature of the changes. The individual must submit a summary of relevant activities during the leave, which shall include, but is not limited to, the scope and nature of professional practice during the leave period and any professional training completed.
10. If the leave of absence was for health reasons, the request for reinstatement must be accompanied by a report from the individual's physician indicating that the individual is physically and/or mentally capable of resuming a hospital practice and safely exercising the clinical privileges requested. If the medical leave of absence was for purposes of treatment for a health issue, then the conditions of reinstatement shall require compliance with the Medical Staff policy addressing practitioner health issues.
11. If the leave of absence has extended past the individual's reappointment/privilege renewal time time, he/she will be required to submit an application for reappointment and/or renewal of clinical privileges. The request for reinstatement from LOA and the reappointment/renewal application will be submitted to the individual's Department Chairperson for a recommendation. The Department Chairperson shall forward his/her recommendation to the to the Medical Executive Committee. The Medical Executive

Committee will forward a recommendation to the Board for approval. In acting upon a request for reinstatement, the Board may approve reinstatement either to the same or a different staff category, and may approve full reinstatement of clinical privileges, or a limitation or modification of clinical privileges, or approve new clinical privileges.

12. An adverse decision regarding reinstatement of Medical Staff membership or renewal of any clinical privileges held prior to the leave will entitle the individual to a fair hearing and appeal as provided in the Medical Staff Bylaws. However, an untimely request for reinstatement shall not entitle the individual to the hearing and appeal rights.
13. Absence for longer than the approved period of the leave of absence will result in automatic relinquishment of Medical Staff appointment and clinical privileges unless the individual submits a written request for an extension of the leave of absence not less than 30 days before expiration of the leave of absence, and the extension is granted by the Chief of the Medical Staff and the Chief Executive Officer. Extensions will be considered only in extraordinary cases where the extension of a leave is in the best interest of the Hospital.
14. Leaves of absence are matters of courtesy, not of right. In the event that it is determined that an individual has not demonstrated good cause for a leave, or where a request for extension is not granted, the request for a leave of absence will result in automatic relinquishment of Medical Staff appointment and clinical privileges and the determination will be final, with no rights to a hearing and appeal as prescribed by the Medical Staff Bylaws.

C. Failure to Request Reinstatement

14. Failure, without good cause, to request reinstatement not less than 60 days prior to expiration of a leave of absence shall be deemed a voluntary resignation from the Medical Staff and/or voluntary relinquishment of clinical privileges. A request for Medical Staff membership or clinical privileges subsequently received from an individual deemed to have voluntarily resigned shall be submitted and processed in the manner specified for applications for reappointment.

Responsibilities and detailed processing guidelines for implementation of this policy addressing LOA requests, permissions and reinstatement following a period of leave will be managed in accordance with HCA CSG Medical Staff Services policy **MSS-019**.