

University at Buffalo

Office of Graduate Medical Education

Contracts, Visas & Rotation Schedules: Frequently Asked Questions

Contract Dates

1. What are the standard dates for contracts?

PGY 1 Start Date: Monday of Incoming Resident Week; Date supplied by GME;

PGY 1 End Date: June 30 of the following year

PGY 2 and 3 Start/End Dates: July 1 – June 30

2. How do I handle residents who must begin after July 1st (i.e. “off sync”)? For example, how should the contract be written for a resident starting on July 17th?

Contracts are written for a 12-month period beginning on the GME-approved start date.

Physicals and orientation dates are arranged with GME to ensure they occur on or prior to the resident start date. (see “Resident/Fellow Orientation” section of the Resident Update System (RUS); Overview and procedure details on thumb drive distributed at annual February Program Administrators meeting..

Contracts for “off-sync” residents will remain off-sync for the remainder of their training unless credit is accepted for prior work.

Contract- Related Visa Issues

1. Are J visa holders restricted to a 12-month contract?

No.

Contracts and J1 visa applications must have consistent dates. For a PGY 1, these documents should begin on the IRW start date and continue through June 30 of the following year.

2. Are there any limitations to the training period for J1 visa holders?

Yes.

J1 visa holders are strictly limited to 7 years in J status (inclusive of time employed by past and future employers). Contact Donna Cummiskey no later than the beginning of the last year of training regarding individuals who are anticipated to exceed this time frame. Strategies for addressing this issue and writing a contract compliant with the terms of the J visa sponsorship program will be discussed.

3. Are H visa holders restricted to a 12-month contract?

No.

4. Are there limitations to the training period for H visa holders?

Yes.

Each H 1-B application cannot exceed three years. H visa holders are limited to a *total* of 6 years in H1-B status (inclusive of time employed by past and future employers). H1-B visa holders cannot have gaps in their employment. Contact Donna Cummiskey regarding anticipated gaps no later than the beginning of the last year of training. Gaps will be addressed on an individual basis. In general, options for addressing gaps in employment are:

- Apply for an H1-B extension;
- Early Graduation upon completion of accreditation and board requirements **at the discretion of the Program Director;**
- Recovery of previous days spent out of country during the visa status.

Details and selection of the most appropriate option will be determined in consultation with immigration counsel. UB will fulfill its obligation to provide all training requirements for board certification for residents in good academic standing.

5. What if my applicant holds a different visa such as an F-1 Student visa?

Contact Donna Cummiskey. Donna Cummiskey is the GME institutional liaison with ECFMG and UB's immigration attorney, Oscar Budde.

Contract-related Rotation Scheduling Issues

Programs should design resident schedules to meet specialty-specific RRC and Board requirements and department needs. There is no prescribed institutional GME rotation calendar. Many programs prefer using a modular (i.e. 4-week block) calendar, while others do not.

1. a. Must promotion dates align with contract dates?

Yes

b. Must promotion dates align with the beginning of modules?

No

2. May residents who complete all required modules for a given year assume duties and responsibilities of the next level of training prior to beginning the next contract year (e.g. during the "gap" after the last module and the next contract start date)?

No.

Defer supervisory duties until the beginning of the next contract year which is the official promotion date.

3. How do programs using a modular calendar manage the gap between completion of the last module and beginning of the next contract year?

The program may select the option that best meets the needs of their program and trainees. Options include, but are not limited to:

- a. Continuous, uninterrupted modular scheduling in which the first module begins immediately following completion of the last module
- b. Extend last module through June 30th
- c. Assign activities such as independent study, research, vacation, or scheduled days off

4. How are scheduled days off at the end of employment reported on time sheets?

Scheduled days off are not separately reported on rotation sheets.