

# The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc. ®



## Personal Leave Policy

The American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS) (Board) has established an **optional** 12 weeks of Personal Leave that is available to residents in **Integrated, Independent and Competency-Based** plastic surgery residency training programs. The Personal Leave Policy went into effect beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year.

**The 12 weeks of Personal Leave may only be used for maternity leave, paternity leave, medical leave, foster care, adoption, family leave or elective rotations (both international and domestic\*).** Personal Leave can be used exclusively for leave as defined by the Board, exclusively for rotations or any combination of both. **These 12 weeks of Personal Leave replaced the previous 12-week block of elective rotations.** Personal Leave is not required to be taken as a single block, but can be distributed throughout the entire residency as the training program allows. Effective July 1, 2021, no more than 4 weeks of personal leave can be taken during the last 3 months of plastic surgery residency training. Personal Leave is not to be used for travel and moving activities related to transition to a new residency position, fellowship training or new practice. Residents must use the 4 non-clinical weeks allotted per year for moving activities.

To monitor resident safety, all international and individual domestic\* rotations, whether full clinical or observational, must be approved by the Program Director and the ABPS. In addition, all international rotations must be approved by the Plastic Surgery Residency Review Committee (RRC-PS). Refer to the Board's requirements for international rotations.

\*Domestic rotations that are a standard part of the program's curriculum (all residents in the program will complete that rotation and the training program has a Program Letter of Agreement (PLA) for that rotation) do not require Board approval. Domestic rotations that are specific to an individual will require Board approval under the Personal Leave Policy if not all residents will complete that rotation during training.

Once the 12 weeks of Personal Leave are exhausted, any additional leave must come from the 4 non-clinical weeks per year currently allowed by the Board. The 4 non-clinical weeks may be averaged over the length of the residency. The resident does not have to utilize all available non-clinical weeks before becoming eligible for this Personal Leave.

Personal Leave is considered independent of research time (6 weeks for Independent and 12 weeks for Integrated). **Residents may not use research time for Personal Leave.**

To receive approval for Personal Leave, the Program Director must provide details regarding the leave request and explain how the combination of Personal Leave and non-clinical weeks still allows the resident to accomplish the 48 clinical weeks per year that the Board requires. The 12 weeks of Personal

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Leave, whether used for maternity, paternity, medical, family, foster care, adoption or elective rotations will count towards the 48 clinical weeks required per year. The 4 non-clinical weeks per year **do not** count towards the 48 clinical weeks per year. The Board does not define the remaining 4 weeks per year beyond the 48 weeks of required clinical training and therefore those weeks may be used for vacation, medical leave, rotations or any activity as determined by the local institution and/or program. Personal Leave taken beyond the combination of 12 weeks of personal leave and the 4 non-clinical weeks per year, averaged over the residency, would result in extended plastic surgery residency training.

Program Directors are required to attest that the resident satisfactorily completed all Plastic Surgery Milestones. This attestation will be completed by the Program Director at the time the Residency Graduation Form is requested by the Board and the Program Director officially “signs off” on the graduating resident. Program Directors (**not residents**) must contact the Board in writing for approval of any Personal Leave. The Program Director must send a letter to the Board Office via email to [info@abplasticsurgery.org](mailto:info@abplasticsurgery.org) detailing the following:

1. Name of resident;
2. Reason for personal leave;
3. Exact dates of expected personal leave;
4. Number of weeks of any previously used and ABPS approved personal leave;
5. Number of clinical weeks worked and expected for each year of the resident’s training;
6. PSY level of training that personal leave will be taken.