

# The American Board of Plastic Surgery, Inc. ®



## Hand Fellowship Personal Leave Policy

To assist Hand Fellows who may encounter significant life events during their fellowship, the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS) has established an optional 4 weeks of Personal Leave to decrease the need of training extended beyond the usual graduation date. The 4 weeks of Personal Leave may be used by Hand fellows for maternity leave, paternity leave, medical leave, foster care, adoption, or family leave. Personal Leave is not required to be taken as a single block but can be distributed throughout the fellowship as the training program allows. To monitor fellow safety, all maternity leave, paternity leave, medical leave, foster care, adoption, or family leave must be approved by the Fellowship Director and the ABPS. Once the 4 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 fellow does not have to utilize all available non-clinical weeks before becoming eligible for this Personal Leave. Personal Leave is not to be used for travel and moving activities related to transition to a new practice. Fellows must use the 4 non-clinical weeks allotted per year for moving activities.

If any Personal Leave is taken, the Fellowship Director must provide details and explain how the combination of Personal Leave and non-clinical weeks still accomplishes the 48 clinical weeks per year that the Board requires. The 4 weeks of Personal Leave, (whether used for maternity, paternity, Medical, family leave, foster care, or adoption) *count towards* the 48 weeks required per year. The 4 non-clinical weeks per year *do not* count towards the 48 weeks per year. Leave taken beyond the combination of 4 weeks of personal leave and the 4 non-clinical weeks will result in extended hand fellowship training. Fellowship Directors are required to attest that the fellow satisfactorily completed all Hand Surgery Milestones. This attestation must be completed by the Fellowship Director at the time the Fellowship Graduation Form is requested by the Board and the Fellowship Director officially “signs off” on the graduating resident. Fellowship Directors (not fellows) must contact the Board in writing for approval of any Personal Leave. The Fellowship 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 Hand Fellow;
2. Reason for personal leave;
3. Exact dates of expected personal leave;
4. Number of weeks of personal leave requested.

To monitor fellow safety and completion of training, all international and individual domestic\* rotations, whether full clinical or observational, must be approved by the Fellowship 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.

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\*Domestic rotations that are a standard part of the program's curriculum (all fellows 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 all fellows will not complete that rotation during training.

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 or medical leave as determined by the local institution and/or program.