

POLICY

Department of Family Medicine Postgraduate Program

Rotation Schedule Change Request

All requests for schedule changes are subject to the approval of the Undergraduate or Postgraduate Offices of the Department of Family Medicine. Where appropriate, requests will first be processed by the Undergraduate/Postgraduate program managers/coordinators. If deemed necessary requests will be passed to a sub-committee. When more deliberation is required the request will be taken to the Undergraduate or Postgraduate committees for consideration.

It should be noted that requests **will only be considered** if the following procedures are followed. *(Please also see the additional requirements for each of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels below.)*

1. **Requests for changes must be received at least three (3) months in advance of the rotation change requested.**
2. All requests for schedule changes are required to be **submitted in writing** to the appropriate committee (Undergraduate or Postgraduate Committee) in the Department of Family Medicine, clearly stating the reason(s) for requesting the schedule change.
3. With less than 3 months notice only requests with exceptional/extenuating circumstances will be considered.

Although it is impossible to be comprehensive in this definition, the following principles and examples will assist in guiding decisions:

Circumstances that would be considered for a request for schedule change or leave:

- Sudden and unexpected family events (i.e. illness, death)
- Unpredictable requirements for care of children (i.e. resident is the sole or primary caregiver and other caregiving arrangements have suddenly fallen through)
- Undue stress or hardship for a close family member (i.e. child, spouse)
- Medical or maternity leave (must have letter from physician)

Examples of situations that would **not** be considered extenuating:

- Difficulty in housing pets
- Predictable needs of children for care
- Longstanding illness or difficult family situation that has not changed

- Spouse or family member living outside of province (this is not acceptable for change in core rotations)
- A resident asking to do core rotations and/or extra elective time outside of the Maritimes because they have a spouse who lives outside of the Maritimes

Additional Requirements

Undergraduate Medical Education

All requests for schedule changes are subject to the approval of the Undergraduate Committee of the Department of Family Medicine. It should be noted that requests **will only be considered** if the above procedures are adhered to as well as the following:

1. Rotation supervisors are **not** to be contacted directly re: schedule changes.
2. Only under exceptional circumstances will consideration be given to requests to carry out a family medicine rotation at a site or department outside the Dalhousie system if the experience is currently available within the Dalhousie system. Approval must first be obtained from the Undergraduate Medical Education Office, but are also subject to the approval of the Undergraduate Office in the Department of Family Medicine.

Postgraduate Year 1

Requests from PGY1s are considered not only by the Department of Family Medicine but also by the Faculty of Medicine Postgraduate Education Committee for the Postgraduate Dean's Office. The Faculty of Medicine Postgraduate Education Committee is obligated to provide educational experience once the original schedules are distributed in April. If you insist on requesting a change, the above procedures **must** be adhered to along with the following:

1. If the experience is available within the Dalhousie system, residents will **not be permitted** to go elsewhere.
2. The Program Director must approve any changes to mandatory rotations or rotations not specified in the overall program design for the PGY1 year. Non-core rotations will not be substituted for core rotations. Specification for PGY1 schedules can be discussed with the Department of Family Medicine program.
3. Ideally, residents must obtain agreement from another resident to make a straight switch. Only in very exceptional circumstances will a service be left vacant, i.e. without the switch of another resident.
4. Residents must get written approval from the service they wish to join and from the service they wish to leave.

5. **Notice of approvals must be sent to the Faculty of Medicine Postgraduate Medical Education Office**, who will ensure all individuals and departments are notified of any change.

Postgraduate Year 2

In the interest of maintaining the integrity of the teaching programs at all training sites and ensuring critical mass of trainees, the above procedures when considering requests for changes **must** be adhered to, in addition to the following:

1. Non-core rotations **will not** be substituted for core rotations unless circumstances are truly exceptional. Core rotations at a site or department outside the Dalhousie system will not be approved if the experience is currently available within the Dalhousie system.
2. Only under exceptional circumstances will consideration be given to the modification of rotations within the Dalhousie system.
3. Ideally, residents must obtain agreement from another resident to make a straight switch. Both residents are required to submit a written request seeking approval from the Postgraduate committee.
4. If a straight switch is not possible, the resident must submit a written request stating the reason(s) for change, along with a letters from the Director of the releasing service and the Director of the accepting service.
5. Approved rotation changes **must be submitted to the Faculty of Medicine Postgraduate Medical Education office**.