

FAQs ABNM Policy on Leave During Nuclear Medicine Training

Q. What is the maximum amount of leave (for all reasons, including vacation and family/medical leave) permitted during Nuclear Medicine training without an educational compensation plan?

- A. • 6 weeks for 12 months of Nuclear Medicine training
• 8 weeks for 16 months of Nuclear Medicine training
• When Nuclear Medicine training is 24 months or longer, not to exceed the amount permitted by the local institution's graduate medical education office or equivalent, and/or applicable rules of the ACGME.

Q. A Nuclear Medicine resident in the third year of a three-year program took 6 weeks of leave in the first year, 6 weeks of leave in the second year, and needs to take 12 weeks of family/medical leave during the third year, which is allowed by our graduate medical education office. Does the ABNM allow this much leave?

- A. Yes. When the duration of Nuclear Medicine training is 24 months or longer, leave for any reason, such as vacation, illness, or family leave, may be taken as permitted by the local institution's graduate medical education office or equivalent.

Q. A physician who is eligible to be certified by the ABR in Diagnostic Radiology is doing 12 months of unaccredited Nuclear Medicine fellowship training in my institution, which has an ACGME accredited Nuclear Medicine program. The trainee needs to take 8 weeks of leave during the year, including 6 weeks of family leave and 2 weeks of vacation. The leave is permitted by the graduate medical education office. Will the physician be eligible to take the ABNM certification examination after graduation?

- A. Possibly. When Nuclear Medicine training is less than 24 months, the total amount of leave taken for any reason is limited to 0.5 weeks for every month of Nuclear Medicine training. Assuming the trainee completed the required 4 months of Nuclear Medicine training during Diagnostic Radiology residency training, the trainee may be eligible to take the ABNM examination after taking 8 weeks of leave during Nuclear Medicine residency training because the total amount of leave taken during 16-months of Nuclear Medicine training is 8 weeks. It doesn't matter if the training and/or leave occurred in two different institutions. The ABNM requires the Nuclear Medicine program director to attest that the trainee has met all of the eligibility requirements.

Q. A Diagnostic Radiology resident in the 16-month ABR Nuclear Radiology pathway wants to be certified by the ABNM. The resident needs to take 12 weeks of family/medical leave during the first year of DR training which is all Nuclear Medicine. Will the resident be eligible to take the ABNM certification examination after graduation?

- A. No, not without an educational compensation plan. When Nuclear Medicine training is less than 24 months, the total amount of leave taken for any reason is limited to 0.5 weeks for every month of Nuclear Medicine training. In this case, the total amount of leave allowed by the ABNM would be 8 weeks (16 months * 0.5 weeks/month). The Diagnostic Radiology program director, or Nuclear Medicine supervisor, must have an educational compensation plan approved by the ABNM to compensate for the extra 4 weeks of leave in this case.

Q. A fellow in an ACGME accredited Nuclear Radiology fellowship program, who is eligible for ABR initial certification, needs to take 16 weeks of leave for medical reasons. The fellow wants to be certified by the ABNM, which only allows 6 weeks of leave for any reason during 12 months of Nuclear Medicine training. How can the fellow compensate for the lost educational time and still be eligible to take the ABNM certification examination?

- A. The ABNM allows up to 0.5 weeks for every month of Nuclear Medicine training. Assuming the physician used all the leave permitted during Diagnostic Radiology residency training, the program director would need to submit an educational compensation plan to the ABNM to compensate for the 10 weeks of lost educational time (16 weeks of leave for medical reasons minus 6 weeks permitted by the ABNM). This educational compensation plan could include one or more of the following options (but is not limited to these options):

- extend training by 10 weeks beyond the 12 months of fellowship training.
- waive the option of having 4 weeks of elective time, and use this time for another Nuclear Medicine rotation (reducing the additional educational time needed from 10 weeks to 6 weeks).
- AMA category 1 continuing medical education credits.
- publication of a peer-reviewed article.
- presentation at a professional society meeting.
- special project, such as creation or contribution to a teaching file, or a quality control or practice improvement activity.

The educational compensation plan should be meaningful and relevant, and may include multiple educational activities. The plan must be reviewed and approved by the ABNM before the determination of eligibility can be made.

