Policy on Passage of United States Medical Licensing Exams (USMLE)

Approved by: UTMB Graduate Medical Education Committee

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Purpose: To ensure that residents and fellows complete the three steps of exams required for licensure by the Texas State Board of Medical Examiners. It is beneficial to the resident if the exams are completed within the first two years of residency because the exams cover multiple disciplines. It ensures that residents meet the exam requirements of USMLE before completion of training regardless if they remain in Texas or practice medicine in other states.

This policy does not apply to residents and fellows who hold an unrestricted Texas medical license. They have met all exam requirements.

Guidelines for Residents/Fellows:
Prior to acceptance of a residency/fellowship applicant, the Program Director shall assure that the applicant has passed USMLE Step 1, or its equivalent, within the number of attempts required for Texas licensure.

Residents/Fellows – Lacking USMLE Step 2 for employment:
1. At the end of the first year of residency/fellowship training, each resident/fellow will be required to present proof using an original notarized House Staff Examination Verification Form accompanied with a copy of their examination results. The required document should be sent to the GME Office reflecting the passage of USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge and Clinical Skills, or its equivalent, within the number of attempts required for Texas Licensure.

Residents/Fellows – Lacking USMLE Step 3 for employment:
2. House Staff must register for USMLE Step 3 within the first 18 months of employment and pass within 24 months of employment. Each resident/fellow will be required to present proof using an original House Staff Examination Verification Form accompanied with a copy of their examination results. The required document should be sent to the GME Office reflecting the passage of USMLE Step 3, or its equivalent, within the number of attempts required for Texas Licensure.

1. Notification of Attempts and Instructions:
   • If the resident/fellow fails their first attempt during the year they are in (first or second year), they must notify the Program Director and Institutional GME Office in writing immediately following notification of score.
   • If the resident/fellow fails a second time, the resident/fellow will be removed from service for one month prior to the next earliest scheduled exam date. The resident/fellow must notify the Program Director and Institutional GME Office of the new scheduled exam date.
• If resident/fellow fail greater than the number of attempts allowed for Texas Medical Board licensure, they may be dismissed.

Educational Leave will be granted during the time required to take the exams.

Residents/Fellows who do not complete the Steps in accordance with the above time frames may be placed on leave with pay using accrued vacation time. Once accrued time is depleted, residents/fellows may be placed on leave without pay. This combined form of leave will not exceed three months after which they will be dismissed from the program if the step exams are not successfully completed. Residents/Fellows who do not complete the Steps within the number of attempts required for Texas Licensure may be dismissed from the program. Residents/Fellows who are dismissed are eligible to appeal the dismissal.

Sources: https://www.tmb.state.tx.us/