

Leave of Absence Policy

A medical staff member at both BC Women's and St. Paul's hospitals is entitled to a Leave of Absence (LOA) up to and not exceeding 12 consecutive months. Due to the limited availability of medical staff privileges at both hospitals for midwives, the Department of Midwifery outlines additional requirements for a midwife whose intention is to take an LOA other than for medical reasons or a maternity leave.

LOAs for reasons other than medical or maternity leave will only be considered for department members who hold Active medical staff privileges. The maximum number of months for an LOA for reasons other than medical or maternity leave is six consecutive months. Some exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for special considerations, i.e. education or administrative leave.

For LOAs less than or equal to six months:

- The midwife must submit a letter to the Head of the Department of Midwifery outlining her plans and reasons for her LOA;
- The Department Head considers the LOA request and, if in support, a recommendation for the LOA of up to six consecutive months will be submitted by the Head of the Department to the hospital Medical Staff Administration, along with a completed and approved Notification of Leave of Absence form (BCW only).
- At the end of the approved LOA period, the midwife is expected to return to practice in the department, and to organize and present all required documentation for this.
 - If the midwife does not have the intention to return to practice within the Department of Midwifery at the end of the LOA, she must notify the Department Head, in writing prior to the end of the LOA, of her intention to resign her privileges. Sixty days following this written notification, her privileges will be formally resigned.
 - Temporary privileges for up to but not exceeding six months may be made available to the practice that the midwife is leaving in order to support her practice team in either downsizing their caseload or finding a replacement midwife.

LOAs granted under this policy may be subject to review in the event of changes to Medical Staff By-laws and/or Rules, direction from Medical Affairs or a change in the Midwifery Department Human Resource Plan. Midwives would be notified of any such review or possible change to their LOA designation.

Department Responsibilities:

While on LOA, midwives are excused from their usual departmental responsibilities, i.e. attending monthly Department meetings or Medical Staff meetings.

However, once any LOA of longer than one month has been approved it is the responsibility of the midwife to replace herself on her department committees for the duration of her leave, usually by having her locum attend in her place. Under the Medical Staff By-laws and Rules, midwives holding locum or temporary privileges are not able to sit on hospital committees so midwives going on leave for longer than one month also need to notify the chair of the Quality Assurance & Improvement Committee so they can be replaced on any hospital committees that they are members of for the duration of their leave.

If a midwife decides she is not returning to her practice and will be resigning her privileges, she must notify the chair of the Quality Assurance & Improvement Committee in order to have another department member assigned to her committee responsibilities.