

Operating Policy	
TITLE: Housestaff Attendance and Failure to Report for Duty	
ISSUING DEPARTMENT: Graduate Medical Education Office, Creighton University School of Medicine-Phoenix	ORIGINALLY ISSUED: 7/29/25
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PURPOSE

Provide all Creighton University School of Medicine-Phoenix (CUSOM-PHX) programs with guidance and procedures for addressing situations in which a house staff physician fails to report for a shift of regularly scheduled work commitment without prior notification.

SCOPE

The policy applies to all CUSOM-PHX sponsored training programs that are ACGME accredited or meet the criteria in the Non-ACGME Accredited Program Policy.

DEFINITIONS

Absence: The failure of a HSP to report for a scheduled clinical, educational, or on-call duty without prior notification and approval from appropriate supervisory personnel. This includes any instance in which the HSP is unaccounted for at the expected time and location of duty.

Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT): Creighton University's appointed team which directs immediate actions in response to emergency situations.

House Staff Physician (HSP): Any resident or fellow in a CUSOM-PHX GME program.

Local Emergency Contact (LEC): An individual designated by the HSP who resides within a reasonable distance from the training site and can be reliably reached in the event of an emergency involving the trainee. The LEC is listed in New Innovations.

Emergency Contact (EC): An individual designated by the HSP to be notified in the event of a serious concern involving the trainee's health, safety, or wellbeing. The EC may be located locally or outside the area. The EC is listed in New Innovations and may be the same individual as the LEC.

Failure to Report for Duty: A HSP not appearing for scheduled duties, failing to notify appropriate personnel, or abandoning duties after arrival without authorization. This includes failure to report for clinical care, required conferences, on-call assignments, or other responsibilities.

Local Police Department: The municipal or county law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over the area in which the training site or medical facility is located.

Program Designee: An individual appointed by the Program Director to serve as a representative or backup for managing responsibilities related to absence management within the program.

LEADERSHIP DISCRETION

If an HSP fails to report for a regularly scheduled shift without prior notice, the immediate priority is to confirm their safety and determine whether an emergency is involved. Program and institutional leadership maintain discretion in applying this policy based on the specific circumstances of each incident. The steps outlined are intended to guide response efforts and may be adapted in sequence, scope, or nature as needed to prioritize the wellbeing of HSPs.

PROCEDURE

HSPs are expected to be present for all scheduled duties unless an absence has been appropriately requested, reported, and approved. Unexcused absences or failures to report for duty compromise patient safety, disrupt team operations, and violate professionalism standards.

HSPs who are unable to report for duty (e.g., due to illness or an emergency) must follow their program policy and notify the appropriate individual(s) as soon as possible.

Should an HSP miss their scheduled duties without prior notification, reasonable efforts must be made to contact them. If they do not respond, it's crucial to first confirm their availability and ensure they are not experiencing an emergency.

- A. Person (can be anyone who notices that the HSP doesn't show up for shift) notifies the Program Manager, Chief, or Program Director.
- B. Program Designee (typically the Chief Resident or Program Manager) will reach out to the HSP through a variety (at least one, but could be multiple) of means including (document):
 - a. Phone call
 - b. Text
 - c. Email
- C. Program Designees:
 - a. If a Chief Resident does not receive a response within approximately one hour of attempting contact, they should inform the Program Manager. (document)
 - b. If a Program Manager does not receive a response within approximately one hour of attempting contact, the Program Manager should inform the Program Director. (document)
- D. The Program Manager should inform the Program Director and the GME Manager or GME Wellbeing Manager via phone or email. They should continue to reach out to GME Manager or GME Wellbeing Manager until one is reached and are sure the information has been communicated and received. (document)
- E. The Program Manager or Program Director should reach out to the HSP's LEC.
- F. Local Emergency Contact (LEC):
 - a. The Program Manager or Program Director will explain the situation to the LEC (document):
 - i. The HSP has not shown up for a scheduled shift
 - ii. The program reached out to the HSP via call, text, email
 - iii. Ask- Would you like to reach out to the HSP or immediately engage with police for a well-check?
 - iv. Answer any questions the LEC has – the goal is to communicate information back and forth that will help locate the HSP (the only information that would be prohibited would be HIPAA or other protected information)
 - b. If the LEC would like to reach out to the HSP, please let the LEC know if you don't hear back from the LEC or the HSP in 30 minutes, you will reach out to local police to request a well-check. If the LEC does not want to reach out to the HSP or LEC can't be contacted within 30 minutes, move to the next step.
- G. Emergency Contact (EC):
 - a. The LEC process should now be repeated with the EC. The Program Manager or Program Director should reach out to the HSP's EC. NOTE: If the EC and LEC are the same person, proceed to Step H.
 - b. The Program Manager or Program Director will explain the situation to the EC (document):
 - i. The HSP has not shown up for their shift
 - ii. The program reached out to them via call, text, email
 - iii. Ask -Would you like to reach out to the HSP or immediately engage with police for a well-check?
 - iv. Answer any questions the EC has – the goal is to communicate information back and forth that will help locate the HSP (the only information that would be prohibited would be HIPAA or other protected information)

- c. If the EC would like to reach out to them, please let the EC know if you don't hear back from the EC or the HSP in 30 minutes, you will reach out to local police to request a well-check. If the EC does not want to reach out to the HSP or EC can't be contacted within 30 minutes move to the next step.
- H. **NOTE: Program Manager, Program Director, Chief Resident/Fellow or any other program designee should NOT engage in well check** – the Police should do that. If there has been no contact with the HSP by the Program Manager, Program Director, other program designee, LEC or EC, contact Local Police Department, non-emergency number (for Phoenix - 602.262.6151). Have all the resident/fellow information available (name, phone, address, how long they have been missing, why you are concerned and asking for a well check). (document)
- I. This is a time-sensitive process, so continuing communication is imperative. The Program Manager, Program Director or other program designee in contact with the Local Police Department should be available to the Local Police Department until next steps are communicated or decided.
- J. For Phoenix, you should get automated communication if they have had contact with the HSP. You can call the non-emergency number for any information they are able to share. Other jurisdictions may have different processes. If the HSP is found safely, attempt contact with the HSP. When you make contact with them let them know that you contacted their LEC/EC and they should reach out to them and let them know that they are safe. (document)
- K. You will get a phone call back from the local police department if they have not made contact with the HSP. (document)
- L. If the Local Police have not made contact with the HSP, put them in touch with the EC. This allows the Local Police Department to share any information directly with the EC. This is also the start of ongoing communication between the Local Police Department and the EC, as this will be the necessary communication moving forward. (document)
- M. While the EC is likely to be the primary contact for the Local Police Department, keep in close communication with the Local Police Department to learn as much as you can and any ways that GME/Creighton University School of Medicine can be helpful in the investigation. (document)
- N. If the Local Police Department is unable to locate the HSP the Program Director or program designee should contact GME Manager/GME Wellbeing Manager and they will ensure that Creighton University Critical Incident Response Team is notified. (document)
- O. CIRT may be contacted at any stage in which the Program Director, GME Director, or GME Wellbeing Manager has reason to believe CIRT resources are needed or likely to be needed.

Following the outcomes of these calls, the Program Director shall address the HSP's absence and failure to provide prior notification in accordance with institutional policies. Remedial or corrective actions may be applied in accordance with the GME Corrective Action Policy and the terms of the GME Program Agreement ("employment contract"). If appropriate, the Program Director can recommend the HSP schedule a 1:1 meeting with the GME Wellbeing Manager to go over wellbeing resources.

ADMINISTRATION AND INTERPRETATIONS

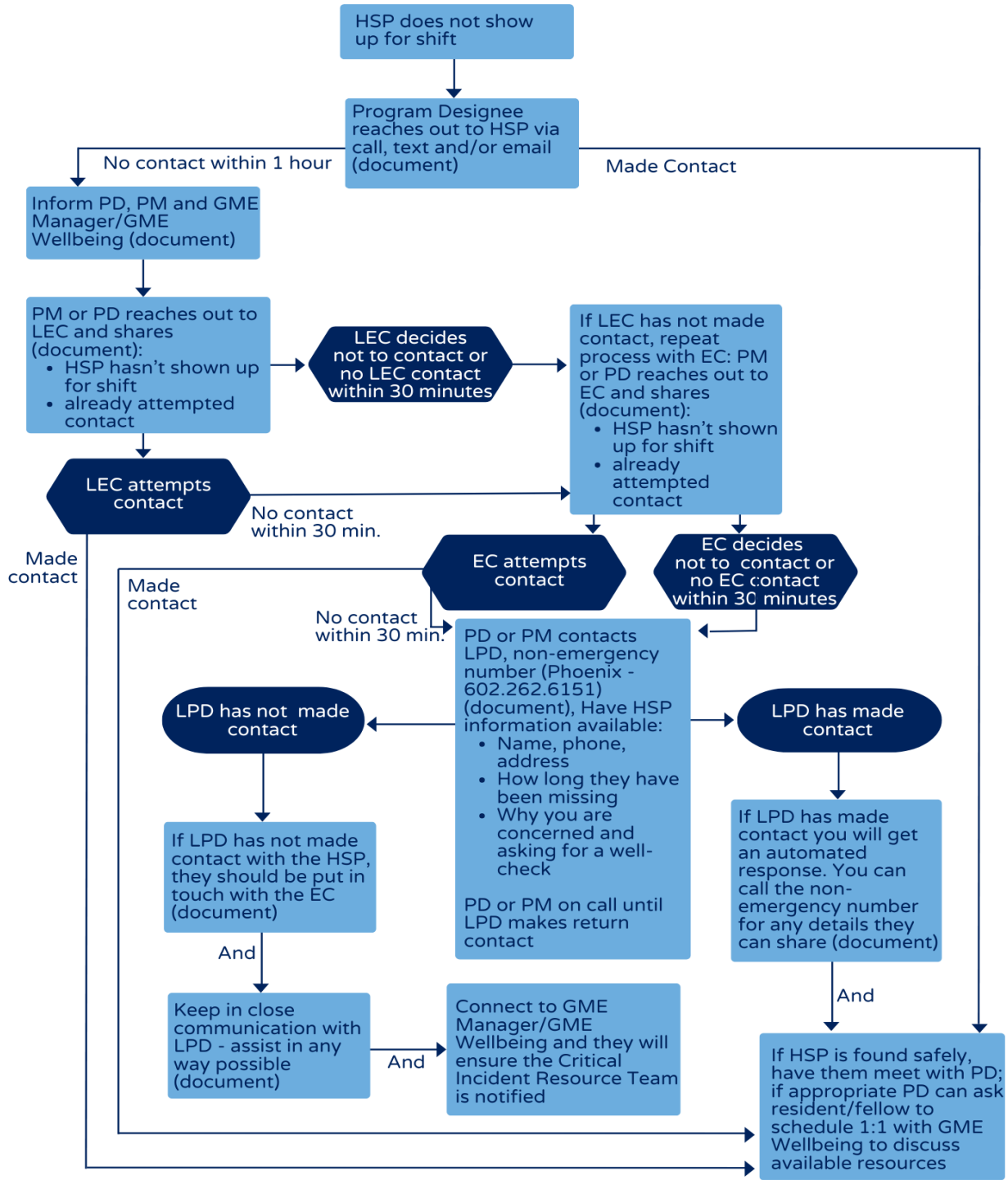
The Graduate Medical Education Office – Creighton University School of Medicine-Phoenix is responsible for the administration of this policy and may interpret its provisions as needed.

AMENDMENTS OR TERMINATION OF POLICY

This policy supersedes all program level policies regarding this area/topic. In the event of any discrepancies between program policies and this GME policy, this GME institutional policy shall govern. The University reserves the right to modify, amend or terminate this policy at any time.

HOUSE STAFF PHYSICIAN (HSP) ABSENCE MANAGEMENT GUIDE

Note: Only Police should perform a well-check



PD = Program Director PM = Program Manager LEC = Local Emergency Contact
EC = Emergency Contact LPD = Local Police Department