

# Transportation Policy for Medical Students on Clinical Assignments

—This policy applies to all MD students.—

## Background

The primary goal of the medical program at Washington University School of Medicine is to provide the highest quality education possible to its students resulting in the development of competent and caring physicians. Among the core curricular activities necessary to accomplish this are intensive and meaningful patient care rotations. Though most clinical assignments will be located on the Barnes-Jewish Hospital/Washington University campus, some required clinical assignments are located off campus. In keeping with LCME standards 5.5 and 6.4, this is to ensure appropriate resources for clinical instruction in both ambulatory and inpatient settings with adequate numbers and types of patients.

## Policies

A listing of clinical rotations requiring transportation will be available to students. This list will be updated annually by the Office of Medical Student Education (OMSE). All students are required to make themselves aware of these rotations well in advance so that they are familiar with travel requirements. Gas, mileage, parking fees, and ride or public transportation fares are not reimbursed by the school.

In order to more equitably distribute both on- and off-campus assignments, a system for centrally monitoring students' travel for off-campus clinical assignments will be available to clinical course directors and will be overseen by the Phase Curriculum Committees. When applicable, students will have the opportunity to submit their ranked choices for clinical assignments in advance. A record of student choice with subsequent alignment and nonalignment with clinical assignment will be included in this system.

Medical students will be required to travel to off-campus clinical rotations when these are assigned by the clinical rotation course director. In order to avoid inequitable distributions of these assignments, a student's stated lack of access to a private vehicle should not be considered in and of itself when creating these assignments. Students who do not have access to a private vehicle will consult the "Guidelines" section of this policy item for recommended options.

If a student believes that they have been unfairly assigned, they should discuss it first with the clinical course director. If the issue is not resolved to satisfaction, they may approach the Assistant Dean for Curriculum with their concerns.

## Guidelines

Clinical course directors should consider a student's current choice for assignment in the context of the degree to which their prior choices aligned with prior assignments. Clinical course directors should work to accommodate students who indicate a preference for a particular off-campus assignment as opposed to one that is on site.

Course directors should be aware of the significant amount of time incurred by students who are assigned off site in their commutes to and from campus when scheduling required learning activities on campus. When available, telecommunication strategies should be used as a way to mitigate this burden. Clinical courses that require a subset of enrolled students to travel to off-campus assignments are encouraged to consider changes in scheduling that compensate for the lost travel time.

Students without direct access to a car are advised of the following options for travel. These may include carpooling, ride services (e.g., taxi, Uber, Lyft), public transportation, rental car service, or biking/walking.

Mutually acceptable trades in clinical assignments between peers can be considered at the discretion of the clinical course director, although there are no guarantees that these can always be accommodated.

*Last approved on April 6, 2020*