

I. Institutions

B. Participating Sites

Common Program Requirement:

1. *There must be a program letter of agreement (PLA) between the program and each participating site providing a required assignment. The PLA must be renewed at least every five years.
The PLA should:*
 - a) *identify the faculty who will assume both educational and supervisory responsibilities for residents;*
 - b) *specify their responsibilities for teaching, supervision, and formal evaluation of residents, as specified later in this document;*
 - c) *specify the duration and content of the educational experience; and,*
 - d) *state the policies and procedures that will govern resident education during the assignment.*
2. *The program director must submit any additions or deletions of participating sites routinely providing an educational experience, required for all residents, of one month full time equivalent (FTE) or more through the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Accreditation Data System (ADS)*

Explanation:

Program directors are responsible for Program Letters of Agreement (PLAs) although the DIO may oversee this process in some institutions. **Such agreements are not required for sites used only for elective assignments or for sites that are under the governance of the sponsoring institution.** Some Residency Review Committees have additional requirements related to PLAs. Check specialty requirements for more details.

The primary purposes of PLAs are to ensure an appropriate educational experience and to protect residents from undue service requirements that do not enrich their education. Unlike affiliation agreements, PLAs are intended to be short, less formal documents. The PLA can be a simple letter or memo, signed by the program director and the official at the participating site who is responsible for supervising and overseeing resident education at that location, e.g., the local site director or the medical director, which contains four items of information:

- The faculty (by name or general group) who teach and supervise residents;
- The responsibilities for teaching, supervising and formal evaluation of residents;
- The duration and content of the educational experience (this does not need to be a curriculum document; it can be a descriptive paragraph that identifies the goal(s) and learning outcomes for the assignment or a reference to a more thorough explanation in the resident handbook); and
- The policies and procedures governing the resident's education at this site. (This may be a statement that residents must abide by the policies of the site and those of the program and the GMEC.)

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Additions or deletions of participating sites that provide an educational experience **required for all residents** of one month FTE (four weeks) or more must be submitted through the Accreditation Data System (ADS). Information to be entered in ADS for each participating site besides that in the PLA includes the distance (in miles) and time (in minutes) from the primary teaching site and whether the participating site is integrated (for those specialties that use that term). Changes in sites that provide **only elective experiences** are not required to be submitted through ADS but may be entered, especially if needed for the case log information system.

Additional information related to PLAs, including answers to specific questions and some sample PLAs, is available on the ACGME website:

http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/about/ab_FAQAgreement.pdf