



# Distance Guidelines for Clinical Site Assignments

**Senior Leader:** Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education

**Responsible University Officer:** Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education

**Policy Owner:** Assistant Dean, Curriculum

**Policy Contact:** Director of Clinical Immersion and Transitions

## POLICY STATEMENT

It is a basic expectation that students be able to travel to their home campus for required onsite curricular and co-curricular activities (lectures, Becoming a Doctor Sessions, Advising meetings, etc). For required clinical assignments in the Foundational, Clinical Immersion and Specialty-specific Transitions phases, sites may be at a distance from the home campus (see '*Definitions*'). The medical school makes every effort to minimize the impact of traveling to off campus clinical sites. However, distance considerations must be balanced against the need to ensure students are provided with appropriate resources for clinical instruction in both ambulatory and inpatient settings that offer adequate numbers and types of patients. As such, students should be prepared for travel to and from clinical sites at a distance from their home campus.

### I. Distance Limits

Site assignments for required clerkships are made such that a student can expect to:

- not have more than a 50-mile one-way commute by car from their home campus
- not have more than a 40-mile one-way commute for a given required core clerkship with in-person attendance of a minimum of four weekdays per week, on average

### II. Exceptions

Rural Physician Associate's Program (RPAP): Inherent to the concept of rural training, rural clinical sites used by the RPAP are distributed throughout Minnesota. Students choosing to participate in the RPAP must prepare for clinical placements at sites exceeding the distance limits outlined above.

Foundations Phase Clinical Experiences: Students participating in immersive rural experiences during the Early Clinical Experiences (ECE) weeks in the Foundations phase may need to travel distances exceeding the distance limits outlined above.

Duluth or Saint Cloud Lanes: Students who opt into Duluth and/or Saint Cloud lanes, LICs, or individual clerkships should expect to travel distances exceeding the 50-mile limit from the Twin Cities campus.

### III. Electives

Students may choose to do elective experiences at the UMMS or go on away (extramural) rotations at other institutions. These are done at the student's own expense and any distance considerations are outside of the scope of this policy.

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## REASON FOR POLICY

The UMMS selects clinical sites based on their educational value and their ability to provide students with clinical experiences and training to meet the UMMS' educational program objectives. While educational value is paramount, the UMMS also makes every effort to assign students to sites that are within a reasonable distance without creating substantial burdens on students.

It also ensures that the UMMS meets LCME Accreditation requirements as follows:

**Element 5.5 Resources for Clinical Instruction.** "A medical school has, or is assured the use of, appropriate resources for the clinical instruction of its medical students in ambulatory and inpatient settings that have adequate numbers and types of patients (e.g., acuity, case mix, age, gender)."

**Element 10.9 Student Assignment.** "A medical school assumes ultimate responsibility for the selection and assignment of medical students to each location and/or parallel curriculum (i.e., track) and identifies the administrative office that fulfills this responsibility. A process exists whereby a medical student with an appropriate rationale can request an alternative assignment when circumstances allow for it."

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## PROCEDURES

### Special Considerations for Site Assignments

Some students may have circumstances that impact the sites to which they can be assigned and for which an exemption may be granted. Exemptions are granted for the following reasons:

- The student has a documented disability impairing their ability to travel the required distance to an assigned site
- The student serves in a caretaking role for a minor dependent (e.g., child, grandchild, sibling) or a substantial caretaking role for an adult family member (spouse, parent, grandparent, or domestic partner) who has a serious health condition

In these instances, the student must share their accommodations plan or provide an explanation of their caretaker needs with the relevant course manager prior to scheduling of site assignments. (See the [Medical Students with Disabilities Policy](#).)

### Appealing Site Assignments

Any student who believes they may be unable to complete their required clinical experience at their assigned site due to hardship must, within 1 week of site assignments being posted:

- Notify the clerkship coordinator, course manager, and clerkship director
- Petition the Dean of Students on their respective campus

If a reassignment is granted, and feasible, an alternative placement will be arranged in a timely manner. When site reassignment is not granted, the student must complete the required clinical experience at the originally assigned site.

### Financial Aid

The Office of Undergraduate Medical Education aims to support students and ensure they have what they need to successfully progress through the curriculum. Any student who has concerns regarding their financial aid package is encouraged to reach out to the Financial Aid Officer for their respective campus.

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## ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

Subject	Contact	Fax/Email
<b>Primary Contact</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Fax/Email</b>
Director of Clinical Immersion and Transitions	Holly Proffitt	<a href="mailto:proff022@umn.edu">proff022@umn.edu</a>
Assistant Dean of Student Affairs (Duluth)	Kendra Nordgren	<a href="mailto:knordgre@d.umn.edu">knordgre@d.umn.edu</a>
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## HISTORY

**Created:** May 2003

**Reviewed and Approved:** Assistant Dean for Curriculum, April 2024

**Reviewed and Approved:** Senior Associate Dean, UME, February 2023

**Reviewed and Approved:** Senior Associate Dean, UME, March 2024

Reviewed and Approved: Senior Associate Dean, May 2024