Policy 1.2 UAMS Northwest Arkansas Internal Medicine Residency
Section UAMS Northwest Arkansas Internal Medicine Residency Program Specific Policies
Subject Addressing Resident Concerns
Policy Requirements ACGME Institutional: 2.3.c; 3.1; 3.2.f.4.a ACGME Common: 2.6.g; 6.12.f; 6.12.g ACGME Internal Medicine: 6.12.f; 6.12.g COM GMEC: 1.400
Version History Date developed: 05/2023 Replaces: **05/2023** Revisions Approved: **08/2026** Reviewed by Program Evaluation Committee: 08/2026

Purpose:

To ensure the residents have the opportunity to raise concerns and provide feedback in a confidential manner.

Policy:

Each University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Medicine (UAMS COM) Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited program must have a written policy that outlines a procedure and the various methods by which residents/fellows can raise concerns and provide feedback in a confidential manner as appropriate, without fear of intimidation or retaliation. This policy must identify how these procedures will be communicated to all residents/fellow at a minimum annually.

Residents in this program also have the option of reporting grievances through the Veteran's Health System of the Ozarks (VHSO) and Mercy Hospital. While these are options, these systems at times can work independently from UAMS. It is preferred residents use the options outlined in this policy to raise concerns to ensure UAMS, as the employer of the resident, is aware of any issues.

Resident Council

To provide a platform for residents/fellows across the UAMS COM ACGME accredited programs to communicate and exchange information with other residents, the Sponsoring Institution (SI) will support a Resident Council. The Resident Council will be composed of peer-elected residents/fellows and will meet regularly throughout an academic year. Any resident/fellow within a COM ACGME accredited program can raise concerns directly to this body. The Resident Council will conduct meetings, at least in part, without the Designated Institutional Official (DIO), faculty members or other administrators present. The Resident Council chair/co-chairs will serve as member(s) of the COM Graduate Medical

Education Committee (GMEC) and will provide regular updates to that committee and can present concerns that arise from discussions at the Resident Council meetings to the DIO and the GMEC.

Our program will have 3 residents as representatives to the resident council. Our resident council members will report to the resident council chair and vice chair who then as stated above attend GMEC meetings and report issues in a protected manner.

Residents can report issues to our representatives to be then reported to the council, or residents can email the council directly at residentcouncil@uams.edu

Office of GME

The UAMS COM GME has an open-door policy. A resident/fellow may request a meeting with the Vice Dean for GME/DIO to discuss concerns or provide feedback in a confidential manner.

Residents can:

1. Email the DIO Dr. Molly Gathright gathrightmollym@uams.edu
2. Email the GME office at AskGME@uams.edu
3. Report concerns directly via the GME committee's open door policy: https://medicine.uams.edu/gme/gme-community/gmec/members/

i-safe

i-safe, is the centralized UAMS incident reporting system and is accessible at the following link: https://apps.uams.edu/i-safe/default.aspx.

Employee Relations, in the Office of Human Resources, working collaboratively with the Academic Affairs and Faculty Affairs offices, will manage this all-inclusive reporting system. The user-friendly online forms allow reporting of claims of the following categories:

• Sexual Harassment or Gender Discrimination

• Discrimination or Discriminatory Harassment

• Professional Misconduct

Ombudsperson

The Ombuds role is independent of the COM faculty and administration and not aligned with any department. Ombuds will provide an **additional, confidential resource** who is external to existing channels within undergraduate and graduate medical education. For example, a student, resident or fellow might wish to talk about problems or perceived irregularities relating to academic issues, administrative policies or procedures, mistreatment, interpersonal conflicts or other disputes. The Ombuds' goal is to help students, residents and fellows problem-solve, identify goals, and think through possible solutions as they navigate complex situations and can help our learners understand the

institutional resources and reporting mechanisms that are available to them. The Ombuds adheres to four ethical tenets: **independence, neutrality, confidentiality, and informality.**

a. **Independence**: As noted above, the Ombuds role is independent of the faculty and administration. To ensure objectivity, the Ombuds reports to the College only for general administrative and budgetary matters and does not report information relating to individual cases. The Ombuds does not keep formal records for the COM, but may take confidential notes for the purpose of working through individual concerns of a case.

b. **Neutrality**: The Ombuds does not represent any party or "take sides" in a dispute. Instead, the Ombuds listens to the issues that are raised from a neutral perspective. The Ombuds advocates for a fair process and equitable results.

c. **Confidentiality:** The Ombuds provides a safe and confidential space for students, residents and fellows to talk about their concerns and experiences. The Ombuds will not identify you or share information about your visit without your permission. The only exception would be if the Ombuds believes there is an imminent risk of physical harm to self or others, or as required by policy, law or court order.

d. Informality: Ombuds interactions are informal. Conversations with the Ombuds will not automatically start a chain of activities that yield formal complaints or prespecified procedures. However, if an individual wishes to pursue a formal process, the Ombuds can assist with identifying appropriate channels and resources within UAMS. The Ombuds does not arbitrate, adjudicate or participate in formal procedures.

To contact the Ombuds, **email COM-Ombuds@uams.edu** to schedule a virtual or in-person appointment. A website with additional information is being developed, and we will keep our students and trainees posted.

Other Avenues to Raise Concerns

1. Talking with a colleague can or peer can help interpret a situation
2. Talking with a chief resident, mentor, program faculty is appropriate at times as well. Some issues are best taken care of at the local level such as conflict between residents. Others issues need to be reported to HR or GMEC. The Ombudsperson can always help a resident choose an avenue for reporting a concern.

Resources

The UAMS COM GME has developed a brochure, Raising Concerns, which outlines ways in which a resident/fellow may raise concerns or provide feedback. Residents/fellows receive this publication at orientation, and programs can contact the GME office for information on how to obtain additional copies of this brochure.

Related GMEC Policies

1.410 Adjudication of Resident/Fellow Grievances

1.440 Academic Improvement and Disciplinary Actions Policy

1.500 Appropriate Treatment of Residents

