

PRACTICE STANDARD

Changing Registration Status to Temporarily Inactive During an Absence from Medical Practice

Effective: September 30, 2015

Last revised: May 6, 2022

Version: 2.7

Related topic(s): [Leaving Practice](#); [Medical Records Documentation](#); [Medical Records Management](#)

A **practice standard** reflects the minimum standard of professional behaviour and ethical conduct on a specific topic or issue expected by the College of its registrants (all physicians and surgeons who practise medicine in British Columbia). Standards also reflect relevant legal requirements and are enforceable under the [Health Professions Act](#), RSBC 1996, c.183 (*HPA*) and College [Bylaws](#) under the *HPA*.

Preamble

This document is a practice standard of the Board of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia.

College's position

Registrants who have paid their annual licence renewal fee may request a change in their registration status to temporarily inactive and may be eligible for a waiver or refund of fees (subject to a processing fee). The request for a change in status must be based on a legitimate reason such as an absence due to health reasons or parental leave. Requests for a leave of absence for other reasons are reviewed on an individual basis.

Note: Requests for a change in status to temporarily inactive for reasons such as humanity aid work or sabbatical time are not granted.

Registrants who change their status to temporarily inactive either for health reasons or a parental leave will be identified as temporarily inactive under their registration status on the College website. The reasons for the change in status will not be identified to the public.

Registrants who are temporarily inactive are not licensed to practise medicine. This includes non-clinical medicine, providing medical advice and prescribing medications.

Registrants who are planning a leave should consider continuity of care of patients during their absence. This includes ensuring appropriate access to medical records and to emergency care and follow-up. It is also important to notify patients that when a registrant's status is changed to temporarily inactive, prescriptions, including refills, are not valid.

Continuing professional development

Registrants who change their status to temporarily inactive must still meet their continuing professional development (CPD) requirements and will be expected to attest to CPD compliance when they complete their next Annual Licence Renewal Form. Therefore registrants who are unable to remain compliant with their CPD requirements during their inactive period should contact the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada or the College of Family Physicians of Canada to discuss accommodation before their return to practice.

Currency in practice

All registrants are subject to sections 2-7 and 2-8 of the College Bylaws regarding currency in clinical practice and re-entry to or change in focus or scope of practice. Registrants who have been absent from clinical practice for a consecutive period of three years or more, or who have practised less than eight weeks a year in the preceding three years, must contact the College to discuss retraining requirements prior to returning to practice.

To learn more about re-entry to practice, review [Re-entry to or Change in Practice](#).

Registrants in the provisional class

Registrants in the provisional class must still meet the registration and licensure requirements of this class and timelines are not automatically extended for any period of being temporarily inactive. Before returning to practice, registrants in the provisional class must contact the

registration department at provisionalcompliance@cpsbc.ca to review ongoing registration and licensure requirements. A review by the Registration Committee may also be required. This process can take up to eight weeks. Registrants in the provisional class may not return to practice prior to approval from the registration department.

Waiver of fees and duration of temporarily inactive status

Registrants who change their status to temporarily inactive may receive a refund of their annual licence fees after a period of three months. The requirement to complete the Annual Licence Renewal Form still applies but fees are waived for the first 12-month period. At the discretion of the registrar (or designate), a registrant may remain as temporarily inactive for two further 12-month periods, for a maximum of 36 months, with fees waived. Registrants must provide a written request asking for an extension of their leave beyond the initial 12-month period.

Note: Registrants who do not return to active practice after 36 months must resume full payment of annual licence renewal fees, although they will continue to have temporarily inactive status and will not be licensed to practise medicine. Registrants who do not wish to return to active practice may also choose to retire/resign from practice. For more information on retirement/resignation from practice, click [here](#).

Requesting temporarily inactive status

Parental leave

Registrants who wish to change their status to temporarily inactive – parental leave must download and complete the [Temporarily Inactive – Parental Leave](#) form. The completed form must be emailed to registration@cpsbc.ca.

Health leave

Registrants who wish to change their status to temporarily inactive – health leave must download and complete the [Temporarily Inactive – Health Leave](#) form. The completed form must be faxed to 604-646-9110 or emailed to monitoring@cpsbc.ca. Registrants may also contact the health monitoring department to speak with a health monitor.