

ACGME Expectations for Content of Resident and Fellow Files

Department of Field Activities

What are the expectations for content of resident and fellow files?

Minimum content in current residents'/fellows' educational files should include:

- written evaluations from multiple evaluators, including self-evaluations, as specified in the Program Requirements
- periodic evaluations (every six months or more frequently if required by the specialty Review Committee) by the Clinical Competency Committee, and discussed with the resident/fellow by the program director or his/her designee
- records of the resident's/fellow's rotations and other training experiences, including surgical and procedural training as applicable
- medical school graduation documentation, and Education Commission on Foreign Graduate Medical Education (ECFMG) certification for international medical graduates
- for residents/fellows engaged in moonlighting, a prospective, written statement of permission from the program director
- documentation of current training or permanent licensure
- documentation of required added training, such as ACLS, PALS, etc.
- documentation of scholarly activity and quality improvement projects, including records of presentations, abstracts, and publications
- records of any educational disciplinary actions, as pertinent to the particular resident/fellow
- other content as determined by the program director and/or the Sponsoring Institution

Resident and fellow files may be contained in an electronic system, or in a combination of paper and electronic records. Secure storage to prevent loss of records, and electronic file back-up and recovery protocols must be in place and consistently followed. These records must be available for review by the Accreditation Field Representative at the time of the site visit.

Are there expectations for retention of information in resident and fellow files?

The ACGME's standards for document retention and the period for which records need to be kept after a resident's or fellow's graduation defer to institutional document retention standards, which may be based on institutional, state, or other relevant requirements.

The Sponsoring Institution should indefinitely retain the following core files for all residents/fellows who successfully complete the program in order to accommodate future requests for primary source verification of program completion:

- a summation of the resident's/fellow's final summative evaluation, and the letter from the program director indicating readiness for unsupervised practice;
- records of the resident's/fellow's rotations, training experiences, and procedures, as applicable to the specialty; and,
- documentation of disciplinary action, if any.

For residents/fellows who do not complete the program or who are not recommended for Board certification, programs should keep the entire file for a minimum of seven years in case of subsequent legal action.

Programs with specific questions about what documents to include in their residents'/fellows' files and for what period of time should consult their designated institutional official and, as needed, institutional legal counsel.