



Changes in the New Resident Physician Agreement

We are pleased to announce the new Resident Physician Agreement (subject to ratification), which introduces several important changes aimed at improving the well-being of resident physicians, while ensuring high-quality patient care. Below is a summary of the key updates in the agreement:

Salary Increases (Article 35.03)

Salaries will increase as follows to ensure that Alberta's resident physicians are competitively compensated:

- 3% salary increase **plus** a market adjustment for July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025. These adjustments will be retroactive to July 1, 2024, for all active resident physicians.
- Additional 3% increase for July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026
- Additional 2% increase for July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027
- Additional 2% increase for July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2028

Call Stipend Increases (Article 35.05)

To ensure that resident physicians are competitively remunerated for call and essential after-hours work, market adjustments will be applied to all call stipends with significant increases across categories. These adjustments will also be retroactive to July 1, 2024:

- In-house weekday: \$118.02 increased to \$159.48
- In-house weekend: \$178.72 increased to \$243.09
- Home weekday: \$59.01 increased to \$72.81
- Home weekend: \$89.35 increased to \$96.61

Comprehensive Call Review and Modernization (Letter of Understanding)

Programs across specialties utilize different scheduling practices, making it difficult to develop standardized solutions. To address these variations, a comprehensive call review will be conducted:

- Through a comprehensive call review and restructure, a committee with representatives from PARA, AHS and the Universities will evaluate duty hours, call categories and best practices to ensure resident physician wellness is prioritized, patient care is safeguarded and compensation reflects the evolving nature of after hours work/call.
- First Step: The committee will examine call categories to ensure that virtual and home call work is appropriately compensated. Any changes resulting from this review will be retroactively applied to call shifts worked after July 1, 2024. For example, if a program

schedules home call but the work consists of consults or high-volume virtual care, this will be adjusted and compensated at the in-house rate.

- **Comprehensive Review:** The committee, comprising representatives from PARA, AHS and the universities, will conduct a full review of the resident physician call program and remuneration model. The goal is to modernize call practices in Alberta and align them with national and international standards. A written report with recommendations will be provided within a year.

Duty Hours and Scheduling (Article 23)

- **Increased Rest Period Between Shifts (Article 23.01 d)**
 - “The minimum rest period between in-house duty hour shifts is ten (10) hours. This includes standard duty hours, shift-based duty hours, call shifts and handover where an individual has been required to work ‘in-house’ providing service and is not being provided a post-call day off”.
 - The intention of this article is to provide a minimum period of rest to resident physicians that have been scheduled for an in-house shift and are not otherwise provided a post-call day.
 - The minimum rest period between in-house duty hour shifts has been increased from eight hours to 10 hours.
 - This applies to standard duty hours, shift-based duty hours, call shifts and handover periods where a post-call day off is not provided.
- **New Maximum Weekly Duty Hours (Article 23.01 e)**
 - “Resident Physicians shall be scheduled for a maximum of eighty (80) hours per week averaged over a four (4) week block, inclusive of standard duty hours, shift based duty hours, call shifts, handover and rounds”.
 - This includes all duty hours, shift-based hours, call shifts, handovers and rounds.
- **Maximum consecutive hours and handover (Article 23.01 f)**
 - “Resident Physicians shall not be required to work more than twenty four (24) consecutive hours plus two (2) additional hours for handover. This is inclusive of standard duty hours, shift-based duty hours, call shifts and rounds”.
 - PARA’s understanding is of this change is to prevent resident physicians from remaining in-house after their call shift.
- **New Handover Time Limits (Article 23.01 g)**



- “Handover must occur immediately following the conclusion of the standard duty shift or call shift and cannot exceed two (2) hours”.
- Voluntary Extended Hours for Learning Opportunities (Article 23.01 h)
 - “Where it is safe to do so, Resident Physicians may voluntarily choose to stay beyond the maximum hours specified in 23.01 (e), (f) and (g) above for purposes of enhanced learning opportunities. However, they cannot be compelled to work beyond these hours and no additional payment or stipends will apply in these situations”.
 - Resident physicians may voluntarily choose to stay beyond the maximum hours for enhanced learning opportunities if it is safe to do so.
 - However, they cannot be compelled to work beyond the maximum hours and no additional payment or stipends will be provided for this voluntary time.

Duty Schedule Communication (Article 23.10 a)

- “All duty schedules shall be provided to PARA, for information only, and to the affected Resident Physicians on a regular basis and available at least four (4) weeks prior to its effective date. Nothing in this sub clause precludes changes to the posted schedule due to unforeseen circumstances, but these changes shall be communicated to PARA by the end of that scheduling period”.
- Duty schedules must now be provided to resident physicians and PARA at least four weeks in advance of the start of a block.
- This is an increase from the previous one-week notice requirement.
- Any changes to posted schedules due to unforeseen circumstances must be communicated to PARA by the end of the scheduling period.

Winter Break Scheduling (Article 23.03)

- “In recognition that residents may need to coordinate winter break plans, the schedule for Block 7, including days off and call duties, will be released no later than November 1 of the same year”.
- Block 7 schedules, which include days off and call duties during the winter break, must now be released no later than November 1 of the same year.
- This change allows resident physicians more time to plan their winter holidays.
- Previously, the schedule was required to be released only one week before the start of Block 7.