

Texas Medical Board (TMB) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Regarding Utilization of Physicians-in-Training in Residency
Programs During the Texas Disaster Declaration for COVID-19
Pandemic

***Disclaimer – The COVID-19 Disaster is a fluid and rapidly evolving situation. Please check these FAQs often, as events may warrant frequent updates.**

April 15, 2020

1. How has the utilization of Physicians-in-Training (PIT) permit holders in a Texas Graduate Medical Education (GME) training program changed due to the Governor’s disaster declaration?

Governor Abbott waived rules to temporarily allow greater utilization of PIT permit holders by Texas hospitals and facilities associated with GME training programs. This expanded utilization allows these hospitals and facilities to utilize PIT permit holders, with proper physician oversight, outside of their GME training program. (See [announcement](#).)

This means, for example, that a resident in a surgery residency program could assist in an Emergency Department if a surge of patients is experienced.

2. Do PIT permit holders need an emergency license or permit to participate in this expanded utilization?

No. Expanded utilization of PIT permit holders does not require any additional license or permit issued by TMB. How and where PIT permit holders are utilized is a decision for the hospital or facility associated with the GME training program, along with the training program itself.

3. Can medical students apply for a PIT permit to assist with the COVID-19 response?

To obtain a PIT permit, an individual must be enrolled in a Texas GME training program. Requirements for a PIT permit can be found [here](#). These requirements have not changed.

4. Does this greater utilization of PIT permit holders mean that, during an emergency or disaster, PIT permit holders do not need to be fully credentialed by Medical Staff Services?

Credentialing is a facility issue that can be decided upon assignment outside of the GME training program.

5. Can residents in a GME training program who hold PIT permits be utilized to work with COVID-19 patients?

Yes, as long as the PIT permit holders are properly supervised by a licensed physician.

6. Some residents may have acquired full Texas medical licenses before completing their training. Can residents with a full license practice outside their residency program?

TMB does not specify limits on a full license absent a disciplinary order. A resident's ability to practice outside the GME training program is determined by the program and its contract with the resident.

7. Can residents who hold a full Texas medical license have a complaint filed against them if they are utilized outside their GME training program for the COVID-19 emergency response?

Yes, fully licensed residents could have a complaint filed against them, as can a PIT permit holder. Nothing in the Governor's announcement changes this.

8. Are residents allowed to practice outside their GME training program required to have professional liability insurance?

TMB does not require malpractice insurance. Residents need to consult with their facility's/GME training program's legal staff regarding medical malpractice civil liability.

9. Does the Governor's announcement or the COVID-19 response allow a PIT permit holder to bill independently?

TMB does not handle billing issues. Any question regarding how a PIT permit holder may bill should be addressed with the facility's legal and billing staff.