

POLICY REGARDING FACULTY JOINT APPOINTMENTS TO THE
VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

The University of Maryland School of Medicine (UMSOM) and the Baltimore Veterans' Affairs Medical Center (VA) have a long-standing partnership, and our collaborative clinical and research activities advance the health of US veterans and the wider population. To facilitate our joint efforts in biomedical research and clinical care, the UMSOM supports and encourages UMSOM faculty with relevant research and/or clinical expertise to hold joint appointments with the VA. Some collaborations arise when the VA contracts with UMSOM (or a specialty-specific PA) to provide a qualified clinician to serve in a particular role within the VAMC or to provide clinical care within VAMC units. Other collaborations arise from joint appointments involving VA-sponsored research or other activities.

This policy outlines expectations for effort commitment, compensation, and other considerations that apply to faculty who have joint appointments that involve VA eighths.

To maintain compliance with Maryland State Ethics Law concerning secondary employment, UMB Policy on Faculty Workload, and UMSOM's Medical Service Plan as approved by the Board of Regents of the University System of Maryland, UMSOM maintains responsibility and authority to approve all work effort and total approved salary for all full-time faculty in UMSOM (including those holding GFT status).

A. Definitions.

1. **“Geographic Full-Time (GFT) Appointment”** means a full-time appointment of a faculty member where part of the faculty member's salary is paid by an affiliated entity and part of the faculty member's full-time effort is dedicated to the affiliated entity. For VA appointments, UMSOM faculty must have GFT status. All salary for the VA portion of the appointment is set and paid directly by the VA. Faculty members holding GFT Appointments are regarded as full-time UMSOM faculty members for purposes of UMSOM and UMB Policies applicable to faculty. This means that except as explicitly defined here, they are eligible for all rights and benefits of being full-time faculty.
2. **“Full-time equivalent” (FTE, %FTE)** means the percentage of full-time effort a faculty member spends on clinical, research, teaching, administrative, and other duties related to their position at either UMSOM (including affiliated UMSOM PAs) or at the VA.
 - i. For UMSOM faculty with VA appointments, a full-time appointment (1.0 FTE) is based on a 60-hour workweek.¹ By approving a faculty member to hold a VA appointment, UMSOM assigns a portion of this 60-hour workweek to the VA.
 - ii. The VA uses a system referred to as “VA eighths” which are the fractional portion of a full-time VA workweek which is based on a 40-hour workweek. Each 1/8 is equivalent to 5 hours per workweek devoted to VA duties.

¹ Basing a 1.0 FTE on a 60-hour work week is used to help facilitate more accurate effort reporting, guide and to set the general expectation of faculty in this category. However, all UMSOM faculty are exempt employees under applicable law and policy. This means actual schedules may vary based on clinical and operational needs.

- iii. For example, a faculty member with a 3/8ths VA appointment would be expected to devote 15 hours of their 100% UMSOM FTE to VA duties. The remaining 45 hours of the 60-hour work week (or 0.75 FTE) would be devoted to UMSOM duties (including affiliated UMSOM PAs).
3. **“Institutional Base Salary” (IBS)** means the base annual compensation set by UMSOM for a faculty member’s appointment, whether that employee’s professional effort for UMB is spent on research, teaching, patient care, or other activities, and whether that employee is appointed full-time or part-time. For UMSOM faculty who participate in the faculty practice (the Medical Service Plan), IBS is that part of the Total Approved Salary which is to be paid by UMB or by an affiliated UMSOM PA and is not variable during the fiscal year except as provided for in the UMB Policy on Institutional Base Salary.
- i. IBS does not include salary paid directly by the VA.
 - ii. The IBS of UMSOM faculty with a VA appointment is the proportional amount of their %FTE devoted to UMSOM duties.
 - iii. For example, if a faculty member’s 1.0 FTE IBS is \$150,000, and the faculty member is assigned to devote 0.75 FTE of their effort towards UMSOM duties with the remaining 0.25 FTE of their full-time effort devoted to VA duties, their IBS will be set at \$112,500 (75% of \$150,000). Salary associated with the faculty member’s VA appointment is set and paid directly by the VA pursuant to its own compensation system – See, VA Base Salary below.
4. **“Full-Time IBS Equivalent” (FT IBS Equivalent)** means the Institutional Base Salary set for a faculty member if they were to devote 100% of their FTE to UMSOM duties.
5. **“Payable Institutional Salary”** means all annual compensation payable through the biweekly UMB payroll. Payable Institutional Salary is not reflected on funding applications and is subject to revision during a fiscal year consistent with the terms of the policies or approvals which authorize a change in salary component (e.g., faculty salary enhancement plans, faculty practice plans, approvals of bonuses for special duties). Salary paid directly by the VA is not included in Payable Institutional Salary.
6. **“Total Base Paid Salary” (TBPS)** means the total combined base salaries – both UMSOM IBS and VA Base Salary. TBPS excludes any non-guaranteed or variable earnings whether paid by UMSOM (including its affiliated PAs) or by the VA.
7. **“Total Approved Salary” (TAS)** means all variable and non-variable annual compensation that a full-time or GFT faculty member is allowed to earn for full-time professional effort without additional approvals, and may be payable from UMB, authorized faculty practice organizations and affiliated organizations, including the VA.
8. **“VA Base Salary” VABS** means the base annual compensation paid by the VA to a UMSOM GFT faculty member with a VA appointment.
- i. VA Base Salary does not include any salary paid directly by UMB or by an affiliated UMSOM PA.
 - ii. The VA Base Salary of UMSOM faculty with a VA appointment is the proportional amount of their full-time effort devoted to VA duties based on the VA’s 40-hour workweek.

- iii. For example, if a faculty member's 1.0 VA Base Salary is \$150,000, and the faculty member is assigned to devote 3/8ths of their effort towards VA duties, their VA Base Salary will be set at \$56,250 (3/8ths of \$150,000). Salary associated with the faculty member's UMSOM duties is set by UMSOM pursuant to its own compensation system.

B. Effort Distribution.

1. A VA Memorandum of Understanding (VA-MOU) defining the relative effort commitments to UMSOM and the VA must be executed upon VA appointment and updated annually or upon any change in relative UMSOM or VA effort commitment.
2. UMSOM GFT faculty may hold up to 7/8 VA appointments. For purposes of the VA-MOU, the %FTE for each appointment (VA or UMSOM) will be the applicable portion of a 60-hour work week (100%FTE).
3. Below are the relative hourly and %FTE distributions for UMSOM faculty with VA appointments up to 7/8th, based on a 40-hour VA work week and 60 hours/week FTE, as the totals should appear on the VA-MOU:

	VA 1/8		VA 2/8		VA 3/8		VA 4/8		VA 5/8		VA 6/8		VA 7/8	
	Hours per Week	%FTE	Hours per Week	%FTE	Hours per Week	%FTE	Hours per Week	%FTE	Hours per Week	%FTE	Hours per Week	%FTE	Hours per Week	%FTE
VA	5	8.3	10	16.7	15	25	20	33.3	25	41.7	30	50	35	58.3
UMSOM	55	91.7	50	83.3	45	75	40	66.7	35	58.3	30	50	25	41.7
TOTAL	60	100	60	100	60	100	60	100	60	100	60	100	60	100

4. Combined total effort for GFT UMSOM faculty with a VA appointment must be 1.0 FTE (100%), according to B.3., above. Separate part-time appointments to the VA and UMSOM are necessitated in the case where combined VA and UMSOM effort do not equal 1.0 FTE.

C. Compensation.

1. For UMSOM faculty with a VA appointment, salary compensation for UMSOM duties in the form of IBS will be based on their FT IBS Equivalent as defined in A.4.
2. The hourly rate for a faculty's UMSOM salary may differ from the hourly rate for that faculty's VA salary because the VA sets salary based on its own compensation system and because the VA utilizes VA eights. Therefore, salary amounts that comprise a faculty member's TBPS, may differ based on the relative %FTE devoted to UMB and VA duties.
3. IBS of UMSOM faculty is set in consideration of a variety of factors including market data for differing specialties, equity, productivity, duties assigned, and availability of funds.
 - i. UMSOM also adheres to the UMSOM Salary Support for Tenured Faculty Policy ("SSTF Policy") which sets certain minimum salary thresholds for tenured faculty.
 - ii. For tenured UMSOM faculty in this situation, the minimum IBS commitment would be guided by the SSTF Policy, prorated by the new %FTE devoted to UMSOM duties.

4. For UMSOM faculty with VA appointments of 7/8 or less who experience a reduction in VA eighths, their IBS will be reassessed in consideration of UMSOM's pay principles described in C.3.
 - i. In cases where the hourly rate for VA Salary is more than the hourly rate for IBS, UMSOM is not required to increase the base IBS to compensate for the amount of VA Salary lost due to a reduction in VA eighths.
 - ii. For tenured UMSOM faculty in this situation, the minimum IBS commitment would be guided by the SSTF Policy, prorated by the new %FTE devoted to UMSOM duties. based on UMSOM's 60-hour workweek.
5. For UMSOM GFT faculty with VA appointments who receive a base increase in VA Salary due to VA-awarded COLA, VA-awarded merit, VA-awarded step increase, or VA-implemented market adjustments, TAS will be increased. A change in VA Base Salary will be noted by the UMSOM Dean's Office, and the UMSOM Dean's Office will then notify the faculty member's department of the revised TAS.
6. Annual VA bonus payments to UMSOM faculty with VA appointments should be included in the faculty's TAS or documented. If a VA bonus payment will cause a faculty member's total annual compensation to exceed their current TAS, the Dean's Office will record the bonus as one time increase in TAS or as an Individual Performance Incentive.
7. UMSOM faculty with VA appointments may participate in the UMSOM Research Incentive Plan. Participation in the Research Incentive Plan will be determined by meeting criteria for IBS coverage for researchers, and earned Incentive will be based on Grants, Contracts, and Awards to UMB, as outlined in the Research Incentive Plan.

D. Benefits.

1. All GFT UMSOM faculty members with VA appointments are eligible to participate in UMB benefits that are available to full-time faculty. This includes eligibility for health care subsidies, accrual of annual, sick, holiday, and personal leave, participation in retirement plans, and eligibility for tuition remission.
 - i. Benefits which are typically accrued on a proportional basis (e.g., annual leave or sick leave) will be accrued as if the faculty member is full-time.
 - ii. Benefits which are associated with an employee's Payable Institutional Salary (e.g., employer contributions to retirement plans) and typically require a minimum FTE will be paid based on the terms and conditions of those benefits plans irrespective of %FTE.
 - iii. Benefits which are vested based on service time (e.g., retiree healthcare subsidy for the Optional Retirement Plan or Maryland State Retirement Pension Plan, tuition remission, pension plan years of service) will be accrued as if the faculty member is full-time, irrespective of %FTE.
2. Because UMSOM GFT faculty with VA appointments accrue leave as if the faculty member is full-time, approval to use leave and recording of leave will also be accounted for as if the faculty member is full-time.

- i. For example, if a faculty member takes 8 hours of leave during a workweek, 8 hours of leave must be recorded on the faculty member's university time sheet even if some of those hours overlap with VA time.
 - ii. Faculty members are separately responsible for complying with applicable time and attendance reporting rules imposed by the VA on the faculty member's VA time.
- 3. Eligibility for leave payouts and the maximum number of hours that are eligible for leave payouts are governed by University and Departmental Policies. If a UMSOM GFT faculty member with a VA appointment is eligible for a leave payout, the payout will be calculated as follows:
 - i. UMSOM will first identify the maximum number of leave hours eligible for payout under applicable Department or University policy; second determine the faculty member's hourly rate based on their Full-Time IBS Equivalent; third multiply the total number of accrued but unused leave hours (up to the applicable maximum) by the hourly rate; and fourth multiply the total by the %FTE.
 - ii. Example: Dr. Jones is a UMSOM GFT faculty member who works in a UMSOM Department with a maximum leave payout of 400 hours. Dr. Jones holds a 3/8ths VA GFT appointment and has an IBS of \$150,000. Thus, Dr. Jones' Full-Time Equivalent IBS is \$200,000 which translates to a UMSOM hourly rate of \$96.15. If Dr. Jones separates from UMSOM employment with 400 hours of accrued annual leave, Dr. Jones' leave payout would be $(\$96.15 \times 400) \times 0.75 = \$28,846$.
 - iii. Example: Dr. Smith is a UMSOM GFT faculty member who works in a UMSOM Department with a maximum leave payout of 200 hours. Dr. Smith holds a 6/8ths VA GFT appointment and has an IBS of \$125,000. Thus, Dr. Smith's Full-Time Equivalent IBS is \$250,000 which translates to a UMSOM hourly rate of \$120.19. If Dr. Smith separates from UMSOM employment with 300 hours of accrued leave, Dr. Smith's leave payout would be $(\$120.19 \times 200) \times 0.50 = \$12,019$

E. Expectations

- 1. UMSOM faculty who are approved for a GFT appointment with the VA are subject to policies, procedures and professionalism expectations applicable to all other UMSOM faculty.
 - i. UMSOM and VA will share information related to personnel matters including clinical privileges, complaints and dispute resolution.
 - ii. Faculty members are separately responsible for complying with applicable VA policy expectations when performing their VA 8ths.
- 2. Faculty having questions about which policies apply should contact the UMSOM Dean's Office.

F. 8/8 VA appointments

- 1. In exceptional circumstances, UMSOM GFT faculty may hold 8/8 VA appointments, determined on a case-by-case basis, with prior review and approval by the UMSOM Dean. Approval will be based on performance of critical clinical, research, education, or administrative duties at the UMSOM.

2. UMSOM faculty with 8/8 VA appointments must maintain a minimum of 10 hours per week commitment to UMSOM duties, with the combination of VA and UMSOM effort commitment not to exceed 100%FTE.
3. Compensation for UMSOM effort of faculty with 8/8 VA appointments must be financially supported by the performance of critical duties to the UMSOM and align with the %FTE devoted to UMSOM duties.
4. All other provisions applicable to UMSOM GFT faculty members with 7/8ths or less apply to those who are approved for an 8/8ths VA appointment except that they will only accrue university benefits in accordance with their UMSOM FTE.
 - i. For example, if an 8/8ths faculty appointee is working an estimated 20 hours on the UMSOM side, their FTE will be 33% and they would accrue benefits accordingly.
 - ii. For each approved 8/8ths appointment, the UMSOM shall provide the faculty member with a letter describing the estimated FTE, salary and including language should VA commitment cease.
 - iii. To implement this exception, 8/8ths faculty appointees will be recognized as full-time faculty in the School of Medicine records but would not be recorded as GFT in the UMB payroll system.

Recommended: _____

Dean, UM School of Medicine

Date: **June 29, 2026**

Approved: Bruce E. Harrell

President, UMB

Date: 9/3/2026