

**Kennedy Krieger Institute  
The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine  
Center for Child and Family Traumatic  
Stress**

**Postdoctoral Fellowship Program**

*Policies and Procedures/  
Postdoctoral Trainee  
Handbook*

**2024 - 2025**



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Center for Child and Family Traumatic Stress  
at Kennedy Krieger Institute



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## **Program Overview and Description**

The Kennedy Krieger Institute/Johns Hopkins School of Medicine Postdoctoral Fellowship within the Center for Child and Family Traumatic Stress is an APPIC member. This handbook includes overall policies and procedures for the postdoctoral programs within the Department of Neuropsychology.

The Training Leadership consists of:

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Ms. Jessica Modderman, Training Coordinator for all training programs -  
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This handbook includes policies and procedures for the postdoctoral fellowship program at the Center for Child and Family Traumatic Stress.

Kennedy Krieger Institute (KKI) is a specialty pediatric and rehabilitation hospital with an international reputation for treating children with developmental disabilities. Clinics within KKI serve as training locations for the fellowship. These include the Center for Child and Family Traumatic Stress and the Psychiatric Mental Health program. Kennedy Krieger Institute is affiliated with the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions in downtown Baltimore, Maryland. Fellows have their clinical appointment with the title “Postdoctoral Fellow” through the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine (JHUSOM). The fellow’s clinical training is located at one primary site throughout the training year five days per week. Office space, computer access, and administrative/scheduling support are provided for the fellow.

The core faculty of the postdoctoral fellowship is made up of three licensed psychologists. All of the training supervisors specialize in the assessment and treatment of children and families, each having particular expertise in specialty areas. The fellowship is funded as part of the operating budgets of the KKI departments. Fellows receive a stipend for the training year in addition to paid medical and dental benefits for the fellow, vacation and sick leave, five days for professional leave, and a \$500 stipend for conference attendance.

Our one-year postdoctoral training program begins on the first Tuesday in September following Labor Day and ends on the Friday prior to Labor Day on the next year. Trainees receive 2,000 hours of supervised training experiences, with approximately 50% of their time in direct patient contact.

#### Individual and Cultural Diversity:

The program recognizes the importance of cultural and individual differences and diversity in the training of future psychologists and their supervisors. Our training program follows Kennedy Krieger Institute's policy, as an equal opportunity employer, of commitment to diversity at all levels. The training program welcomes and encourages qualified individuals to apply and enter on the basis of demonstrated ability, performance, and merit, and embraces cultural and individual differences included but not limited to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language, national origin, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, veteran status, and socioeconomic status. The Department of Family and Community Interventions/ Center for Child and Family Traumatic Stress and the Institute's Diversity Committees organize presentations to increase multicultural competence for our supervisors and trainees. The Diversity Committees and Training Program Committee meet regularly to identify ways to further promote individual and cultural diversity, and to provide a supportive environment for our diverse faculty, staff and trainees.

## Financial Assistance

1. Postdoctoral fellow stipend level is based on NIH's National Research Service Award doctoral stipend level.
2. Trainees receive health insurance through the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine's Student Health Plan. The Departments pay the premium for all postdoctoral trainees. If interested in having dependents covered, the trainee is responsible for paying the difference between what KKI pays for the individual policy and the cost for two party or family coverage. Trainees are required to show comparable coverage for any dependents, otherwise trainees must either sign a waiver or provide coverage for dependents through the JHSOM Student Health Plan.
3. Trainees receive 10 vacation days, 5 professional days, and 8 sick days. Please see the Postdoctoral Trainee Vacation/Professional Leave/Sick Policy below and JHH postdoctoral fellows Health Care and Sick Leave for additional details. [Policies | The Office of Graduate Medical Education \(hopkinsmedicine.org\)](#)
4. Postdoctoral fellows receive a travel stipend for attendance at professional meetings and conferences. The current stipend is \$500. Please see Conference Attendance Policy for additional details. Fellows also receive up to \$150 for office supplies and educational materials.

## Vacation/Professional Leave/Sick Policy:

### Postdoctoral Fellowship Leave Policy

1. Understanding that fellows are expected to complete 2,000 training hours during their internship year, fellows are granted the following leave:
  - a) 10 vacation days
  - b) Regularly scheduled Institute holidays
  - c) Up to 5 professional days
  - d) 8 sick and safe days

Vacation days: must be approved by primary supervisors in advance

Institute holidays: see the Kennedy Krieger Institute Holiday schedule for specific days.

Professional days: refer to Professional Days policy.

Sick and safe days: to be used when fellow is contagious or has an illness/injury preventing intern from performing job. Sick days are not to be used as additional vacation or professional development days. Sick days should be used only when necessary, as they subtract from the fellow's total training time. If a fellow takes 4 sick days within a 3 month period, the supervisors, Training Director, and intern will meet to discuss how absences will affect completion of training. Other eligible reasons for which accrued, paid sick leave can be used has been expanded to include certain absences related to: domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking against an employee, or against the employee's family member, as well as maternity or paternity leave.

Bereavement Policy: In the unfortunate event that a fellow needs to attend the funeral of a family member or support a family member who is ill, the intern may use up to three sick days and would then use any other requested days as vacation. Extenuating circumstances will be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

2. In the event that all professional days are exhausted, the fellow will be required to use vacation days for all remaining professional activities. If all professional and vacation days are exhausted and additional professional time is necessary, it is up to the discretion of the supervisor as to whether or not the intern can take time off.
3. As per Institute-wide policy, a fellow may be asked to present his/her supervisor with a physician's letter stating the nature of the illness/injury. If the fellow misses three or more consecutive calendar days, he/she will need a physician's letter providing the date of return to work.
4. **Your supervisor must approve all requests for time off in advance.** The fellow must first receive approval from supervisor, complete the Request for Leave form, and then email this form to Jamie Sharkey – sharkey@kennedykrieger.org
5. Extenuating situations will be reviewed on an individual basis with the intern, supervisors and Training Director.
6. Fellows must be physically present on their final training day to complete the exit process.

### Professional Days

Professional days are vital to postdoctoral fellow professional development and allow trainees to focus on relevant career-building activities. Trainees receive five (5) professional days throughout each year. Additionally, professional days may be granted as needed based on individual circumstances.

The following are acceptable activities that can be used as professional days:

- Traveling to and attending a conference/training.
- Attending local training/workshop.
- Traveling to and participating in a job talk/interview or post doc interview. Half-travel day permitted on either end, if needed.
- Preparation for or taking the EPPP or state exam.
- Job interviews

### **Conference Attendance Policy**

1. Fellows will receive \$500 to attend one conference a year.
2. Trainees will be reimbursed up to the allotted amount, with any expenses above this stipend to be paid for by trainee. In the event that the trainee received a travel advance and final expenses totaled less than the travel advance, the trainee will be required to return the difference.
3. The completed reimbursement form goes directly to the Training Director. Fellows should read and follow the guidelines for Institute's Travel Reimbursement prior to incurring any expenses.
4. Request for time off to attend a professional conference must be approved by the trainee's supervisor and the Training Director. Requests for time off should conform to the guidelines for leave described above.

## **Evaluation and Feedback**

### Postdoctoral Evaluations

1. Fellows receive written evaluations quarterly during training. Evaluations are discussed in person between the trainee and supervisor(s).
2. Evaluations are based on progress towards the program-specific competencies. .
3. Trainees typically work with more than one primary supervisor at a time. All supervisors working with a trainee should actively work together as a supervisory team when evaluating trainees and providing feedback
4. Fellows participate in an exit interview with the Training Director of their program and are given the opportunity to share their opinions about the program strengths and weaknesses as well as recommendations for improvements. The fellows are also asked about the degree to which the training program met their goals and prepared the trainees for the stated competencies. This meeting occurs at the end of each training year.



## Supervision

1. Fellows receive a minimum of 2 hours individual supervision and 2 hours of group supervision per week. Trainees are responsible for tracking their supervision hours each week.
2. Supervisors must be licensed psychologists in the state of Maryland and credentialed psychologists through the KKI Medical Staff Office.
3. Supervision focuses on the application of psychological concepts and current scientific knowledge, principles, and theories to the professional delivery of psychological services. Supervision also provides an opportunity for discussion of individual and cultural considerations, professional conduct, professional development and ethics and standards for providers of psychological services.
4. Individual supervision time is protected each week. That is, it is scheduled in advance so that both trainee and supervisor can depend on that time for supervision. Trainees should understand that supervision will occasionally get interrupted or will need to be rescheduled. Supervisors should minimize interruptions as much as possible and should make up any missed supervision as soon as possible.
5. Group supervision may consist of clinic meetings or co-leading groups, journal clubs or case conferences. Events such as grand rounds and didactic presentations are considered knowledge-based training opportunities and do not qualify as supervision.
6. Supervision also occurs throughout each week via electronic feedback on case-related products (e.g., evaluation, progress notes, case summaries, case-related data, etc.).
7. Supervisor availability outside of regularly scheduled supervision occurs through an “open door” policy so that trainees can meet with supervisors on an as needed basis as situations arise.

Individual supervision is face-to-face, one-on-one, and, most of the time, in-person.

Group supervision is any experience with the supervisor, trainee, and other trainees or professionals that allows for discussion of ideas regarding cases or professional development..

Telesupervision is defined as supervision of psychological services through a synchronous audio and video format where the supervisor is not in the same physical location as the trainee.

1. Rationale: Kennedy Krieger, consistent with CDC guidelines, switched the some of its clinical services to remote delivery (telehealth). As a result, the postdoctoral programs switched some supervision to telesupervision.
2. Similar for expectations for in-person supervision, the supervisor will be an appropriately trained and licensed psychologist who will maintain full professional responsibility for the

trainee's clinical cases.

3. Although some trainees will be onsite with their supervisors, to maintain as much physical distancing and to eliminate as much sustained in-person contact as possible, onsite supervision may occur via telesupervision from separate offices. At the discretion and comfort of fellows and supervisors, supervision occurs primarily in person in the fellow or supervisor's office. Telesupervision via zoom or other secure platforms remain an option should either party elect that for health or logistical reasons.
4. Our secure videoconferencing system will ensure privacy and confidentiality during telesupervision. We use the same secure system for telesupervision as we do for our telehealth program for clinical care.
5. Each trainee will receive training on how to use the videoconferencing system. Each trainee will also receive competency-based training on best practices for delivery of telehealth services.
6. Once trainees are approved to conduct telehealth services without supervisor presence in the remote session, supervisors may then conduct periodic observations based on the training needs of each individual trainee.

### **Administrative Assistance**

1. Trainees have private offices with a desk, computer and a telephone equipped with voice mail. Computers provide access to email and the internet.
2. Institute Network. All trainees have either a desktop computer and/or laptop with internet access and necessary software programs (e.g., Microsoft 365).
3. Trainees have access to office supplies and machines such fax, copy, and shredders, which are located throughout the Institute.
4. When completing any work offsite that involve PHI, trainees should remotely access their desktop. Trainees should not save any documents with PHI to personal devices. If additional assistance is need, the IT Helpdesk number is 443-923-4357 (HELP); their general business hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
5. Trainees have access to the libraries at the Johns Hopkins University. Additionally, trainees are able to access electronic databases (e.g., Medline, PsycInfo, PubMed, and ERIC), electronic journals, and other electronic references via the Johns Hopkins Medical School's Welch Library.

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## **Fellow- Supervisor Conflict Resolution**

In the event that a problematic situation arises between a supervisor and a trainee, the following steps should be taken (in the sequential order provided below). NOTE: These steps are meant as a guide for negotiating trainee and supervisor concerns unrelated to trainee performance. If difficulties are not satisfactorily resolved by these means, the trainee may choose to initiate a formal grievance (see Grievance Policy)

1. The trainee will schedule a meeting with the supervisor and discuss the grievance/problem in sufficient detail so that the supervisor will have a complete understanding of the situation. During this meeting the trainee and supervisor should discuss potential solutions to the problem and develop a plan to resolve the conflict.
2. If the trainee feels intimidated by such a meeting, they may choose to have an initial meeting with the program's Training Director, the Senior Psychologist, the Vice President/ Department Director, the Chief Clinical Officer of the Kennedy Krieger Institute, or the Vice President of Training. Subsequent meetings that include the supervisor will be held if necessary.
3. If the trainee or supervisor is not satisfied with the solution proposed to the problem, the trainee will notify the training director. Examples of problems may include but are not limited to the following:
  - a) A psychological or physical concern the trainee/supervisor is experiencing that is interfering with the trainee or supervisor's capacity to successfully perform responsibilities
  - b) Personality conflict between supervisor and trainee such that neither party can satisfactorily give/receive feedback or instruction to work out the problem
  - c) Harsh treatment that is not consistent with Kennedy Krieger's Culture of Respect, Civility and Safety.
  - d) Illicit use of drugs/alcohol
  - e) Any other situation in which the trainee/supervisor feels threatened or unable to carry out the requirements necessary to successfully complete/supervise the rotation in question
  - f) Discrimination or sexual harassment\*
4. The Training Director will meet with the trainee and document the problem in as much detail as possible.
5. The Training Director will meet with the supervisor and document the problem from the supervisor's perspective in as much detail as possible.
6. The Training Director will meet jointly with the trainee and the supervisor and assist in formulating a plan for resolving the problem.
7. The Training Director will follow up with the trainee and the supervisor at two weeks and again at one month to assess progress toward the resolution of the problem. The process will end if a mutually agreed upon plan is successfully carried out during both assessments by the Training Director.
8. The Training Director will inform the Senior Psychologist and the Vice President/ Department Director if the conflict is not resolved within one month or if a change in the trainees' status is requested (i.e., change in typical responsibilities of rotation or permanently moved off rotation).
9. If the conflict is not successfully resolved:
  - a) The Training Director will meet with the Senior Psychologist and Vice President/ Department Director and review the problematic situation from the perspective of the trainee and supervisor and will recommend specific guidelines for how the situation should proceed.

- b) The Senior Psychologist and Vice President/ Department Director will provide feedback to the Training Director after reviewing the situation.
- c) A final plan will be developed. During this time, the trainee may be given responsibilities with another supervisor until the Senior Psychologist, Vice President/ Department Director and Training Director meet and the final plan is developed.
- d) The Training Director will meet with the trainee and supervisor and discuss the recommendations of the Senior Psychologist and Vice President/ Department Director
- e) Follow-up will occur once per week for the first month and once per month for the duration of the rotation.
- f) If consensus cannot be reached by either or both parties on how the situation should be resolved, the trainee will a) be removed from supervision by the supervisor, b) placed with a new supervisor and/or possibly a new rotation.
- g) Written documentation of the situation will be placed in the trainee's file.

10. If there is a conflict of interest (e.g., Training Director is also involved as a supervisor) or if there continues to be no satisfactory resolution, the trainee may discuss concerns with the department director, chief clinical officer and/or vice president of training.

12. If the Trainee finds that the situation is not resolved or at any other time, the trainee may submit a grievance (See Grievance Policy) more formal avenues that can be pursued through the School of Medicine. (Grievance Procedure for Faculty, Fellows, and the Student Body).

13. The trainee can also seek support through APPIC's Informal Problem Consultation at any time <https://www.appic.org/Problem-Consultation>

14. The supervisor can communicate with their own departmental supervisor if not satisfied with the resolution of a conflict.

\*JHU will not tolerate harassment, sexual harassment (including sexual violence), discrimination or retaliation in the workplace or educational environment whether committed by managers, faculty, administrators, staff, or students, or by visitors to our institution of higher learning. To file a complaint through official university channels go to: <https://oie.jhu.edu/discrimination-and-harassment>

## **Policy for Trainees Who May Need Accommodations**

The purpose of this policy is to assist trainees who may need accommodations to access or obtain support necessary to successfully complete the training program. Every reasonable effort will be made to meet the needs of the trainee so that the trainee can successfully complete the postdoctoral fellowship. A trainee may be in need of accommodations due to a situation, event, or condition that precludes or interferes with the trainee's completion of their training responsibilities. Examples may include but not be limited to substance abuse, a psychological or psychiatric problem, acute or chronic medical conditions, illegal activities, and civil litigation.

1. If a trainee requests an accommodation from a supervisor, the supervisor and trainee should discuss the trainee's perceived needs. The trainee and supervisor should construct a list of the trainee's needs.
2. The supervisor and trainee should have a frank and open discussion regarding confidentiality, including how information will be provided to the Training Director. The supervisor will inform the trainee that the fellow will be notified. If the trainee requests that some or all of the information discussed remain confidential (beyond the supervisor and the fellow), the supervisor and fellow will honor this request if the concerns can be resolved in a timely manner without placing anyone (e.g., patients, staff, and other trainees) at risk and if it is within the purview of the supervisor and the fellow to make the changes requested by the trainee. If the supervisor and the fellow believe that the issues resulting from the trainee's condition are serious and cannot be resolved in a timely manner or that the trainee requires resources that are not within the supervisor's and/or fellow's purview, the supervisor and the fellow will inform the trainee that it will be necessary to involve additional individuals. The supervisor and the fellow will inform the trainee regarding what information will be disclosed and to whom it will be disclosed. Even in this case, the supervisor and the fellow will make every reasonable attempt to keep the information as confidential as possible by only involving those individuals who are necessary to resolve or manage the topic of discussion. The supervisor, trainee, fellow, and if necessary, other faculty will construct a plan to meet the trainee's needs. In constructing a plan, consideration will be given to the trainee's needs, the requirements of the training program, and the impact on staff, patients, and other trainees. When circumstances preclude the department from making modifications requested by the trainee, these issues will be discussed with the trainee and every reasonable attempt will be made to meet the trainee's needs in some other way.
3. If the trainee requests time off (above and beyond the time allotted for trainees), every reasonable attempt will be made to accommodate the trainee, while insuring that the requirements of the training program are met and preventing any negative impact to staff, patients, and other trainees. The trainee and supervisor will construct a plan in writing for how the trainee will meet the training requirements in light of scheduled time off. A copy of this written plan will be given to the fellow to ensure uniform application of policies across trainees.
4. If a supervisor suspects a trainee may need an accommodation plan, or another trainee, staff member, or patient's parent reports concerns regarding the trainee, the reporting party will be asked to discuss this with the fellow. If the reporting party is unwilling to discuss

the issue with the fellow, the recipient of the report will discuss the issue with the fellow. The fellow will discuss the issue with the trainee's supervisor.

5. If the supervisor and fellow determine that the issue does not require intervention, they will develop a plan to monitor the situation.
6. If the fellow and supervisor determine that the issue is of a seriousness to warrant action, a plan will be developed to resolve the issue. In general, a faculty member will be identified by the fellow who knows the trainee well (i.e., has developed a positive rapport with the trainee) and who can address the issues with the trainee in a sensitive and empathetic manner. This faculty member will meet with the trainee. The faculty member will inform the trainee that the purpose of the meeting is to provide support to the trainee in order to assist the trainee in completing the fellowship successfully. The faculty member will discuss with the trainee that some concerns have been expressed about the trainee. The faculty member will outline the data that led to the concerns. The faculty member will ask the trainee to work with him or her to adequately address these concerns. The faculty member and trainee will devise a plan for addressing the trainee's needs.
7. If the trainee disputes the allegations, and the issue is not affecting the trainee's performance, the supervisor and fellow will develop a plan to monitor the situation. If the trainee disputes the allegations, and the issue is affecting the trainee's performance, the supervisor and trainee will identify the areas in which the trainee's performance is being affected. They will develop a plan to improve these particular areas of performance deficit. The supervisor will make recommendations for the trainee to receive additional assistance (e.g., drug counseling) when appropriate.
8. In the event that further action is necessary, please see the Remediation Plan Policy.

## Support Plan

The program understands that additional support, beyond what is programmatically provided through the postdoctoral program, may be necessary if a trainee's performance drops below that expected of the trainee. To ensure all trainees have sufficient support to develop skills necessary for entry to practice, the following Support Plan policy is to be followed and is based on the guidelines set forth by the Kennedy Krieger Institute and The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

The threshold for a support plan varies across fellowship programs. See specific competency benchmarks for each program for more information. When a trainee falls below the benchmark at the specified time, a written support plan is implemented.

- a) Written support plan to be implemented including:
  - i. an operational definition of the trainee's behavior that needs improvement.
  - ii. actions needed by the supervisor to support the trainee in correcting deficit.
  - iii. the timeline for reviewing progress (suggested, two to four weeks).
  - iv. action that will be taken if performance does not improve.
  - v. notification that the trainee has the right to request a review of this action.
  - vi. the supervisory team, trainee, and fellow sign the written plan.
- b) If performance has improved, the supervisory team and trainee agree to continue with the support plan and agree to monitor performance in specified (suggested, two to four week) intervals until satisfied that performance has returned to expected levels. Performance is then tracked according to usual policy. Supervisory teams can decide to implement more frequent evaluations. Written feedback is provided to the trainee within 2 weeks of supervisor/fellow satisfaction that performance has returned to expected levels, documenting that a) performance has improved to expected levels, and b) including whether additional evaluations are planned beyond the quarterly evaluations.
- d) If performance has NOT improved and it is determined that this is not because of the supervisor not following through with assistance, additional supports may be determined or the trainee may be placed on a Remediation Plan (see Remediation Plan for additional guidance). Written feedback is provided to trainee within 2 weeks of the decision by the supervisors and fellow that performance has not improved, indicating that a) performance has not improved to expected levels, b) additional supports are needed, and the specific nature of supports to be implemented, and c) whether or not a Remediation Plan will be implemented and the details of the Plan.
- e) In the case of a trainee displaying poor performance from the start of the training year, the supervisory team will share specific concerns (verbally and in written form) with the trainee and inform the trainee that the trainee's performance will be evaluated at the end of the first month of the training year, such that the trainee can work on deficit areas prior to the first evaluation.

Note: In all cases, it is imperative that supervisors take a nurturing, non-threatening, helpful approach with the trainee. If a supervisor feels unable to do so (personality conflicts, etc.), when feasible, another supervisor should become involved with the trainee.



## Remediation Plan

The Kennedy Krieger Institute recognizes the prerogative of the training leadership to appoint and terminate postdoctoral trainees. It is the policy of the department to employ procedural fairness in all matters, which may lead to termination. For the protection of all concerned (the trainee, the department, and the Institute), the following policy for remediation and disciplinary action for trainees is to be followed and are based on the guidelines set forth by the Kennedy Krieger Institute and The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. A Remediation Plan should be developed when the trainee exhibits concerning behavior (e.g., unprofessional) or has failed to meet the requirements of a Support Plan (see Support Plan for more details).

*Remediation and Sanction Alternatives* - It is important to have meaningful ways to address a problem once it has been identified. In implementing remediation, the training staff must be mindful and balance the needs of the trainee, the clients involved, members of the trainee's training group, the training staff, and other agency personnel, the department and Institute. In the case that a problem with a trainee is identified, the following procedures will be initiated:

1. Verbal Warning to the trainee is conducted by the supervisor(s) responsible for the area of the trainee's work that is noted to be unsatisfactory, emphasizing the need to discontinue the inappropriate behavior under discussion. The fellow should be provided with written documentation of the date and nature of all verbal warnings given to trainees. In the case of co-occurring behavioral deficiencies, the trainee should be given specific instructions regarding what to improve.
2. Written Remediation Plan is developed by the supervisory team in collaboration with the Training Director when the inappropriate behavior was not modified following verbal warning. The Plan will contain:
  - i. a description of the trainee's unsatisfactory performance;
  - ii. actions needed by the trainee to correct the unsatisfactory behavior;
  - iii. actions needed by the trainee to support the trainee in correcting the problem;
  - iv. the time line for correcting the problem;
  - v. action that will be taken if the problem is not corrected;
  - vi. notification that the trainee has the right to request a review of this action and if the trainee disagrees with either all or part of the negative performance evaluation or the remediation plan, the trainee may seek due process (see Due Process Policy) to resolve the concern.

**If performance has improved and/or inappropriate behavior discontinued or resolved** following the Remediation Plan, written notification developed by the supervisor in collaboration with the Training Director is provided to the trainee within 2 weeks of attaining expected levels of performance. Documentation includes that performance has improved and details any additional evaluations that are planned beyond the regular evaluations.

**If performance does not improve**, the Remediation Plan may be continued for an additional four weeks. The trainee will receive written notice within two weeks of the determination that the performance is not at expected levels and that additional remediation is necessary. The written notice will detail the additional supports provided and the expected level of performance.

3. Schedule Modification is a time-limited, remediation-oriented closely supervised period of training designed to return the trainee to a more fully functioning state. Modifying a trainee's schedule is an accommodation made to assist the trainee in responding to personal reactions to environmental stress, with the full expectation that the trainee will complete the fellowship. This period will include more closely scrutinized supervision conducted by the regular supervisor in consultation with the Training Director. Several possible and perhaps concurrent courses of action may be included in modifying a schedule. These include, but are not limited to:

- i. increasing the amount of supervision, with the same or other supervisors
- ii. change in the format, emphasis, and/or focus of supervision
- iii. recommending personal therapy
- iv. reducing the trainee's clinical or other workload
- v. requiring specific academic coursework

The length of a schedule modification period will be determined by the Training Director in consultation with the supervisory team. The termination of the schedule modification period will be determined, after discussions with the trainee, by the Training Director in consultation with the primary supervisor. If the Training Director determines that there has not been sufficient improvement in the trainee's behavior to remove modified schedule, the Training Director will discuss with the supervisory team possible courses of action to be taken. The Training Director will communicate in writing to the trainee that the conditions for revoking the modified schedule have not been met. This notice will include the course of action the Training Director has decided to implement. These may include continuation of the remediation efforts for a specified time period or implementation of another alternative. Additionally, the Training Director will communicate with the Psychology Lead/Chief and the Vice President of Training that if the trainee's behavior does not change, the trainee will not successfully complete the postdoctoral fellowship.

4. Probation is also a time limited, remediation-oriented, more closely supervised training period. Its purpose is to assess the ability of the trainee to complete the fellowship and to return the trainee to a more fully functioning state. Probation defines a relationship that the Training Director systematically monitors the degree to which the trainee addresses changes and/or otherwise improves the behavior associated with the inadequate rating over a specific length of time. The postdoctoral trainee is informed of the probation in a written statement, which includes the following:

- i. the specific behaviors associated with the unacceptable rating;
- ii. the recommendations for rectifying the problem;
- iii. the time frame for the probation;
- iv. the procedures to ascertain whether the problem has been rectified.

If the Training Director determines that there has not been sufficient improvement in the trainee's behavior to remove the probation, the Training Director will discuss with the supervisory team possible courses of action to be taken. The Training Director will communicate in writing to the trainee that the conditions for revoking the probation have

not been met. This notice will include the course of action the Training Director has decided to implement. These may include continuation of the remediation efforts for a specified time period or implementation of another alternative. Additionally, the Training Director will communicate to the trainee, the Psychology Lead/Chief, and the Vice President of Training that if the behavior does not change, the trainee will not successfully complete the fellowship.

5. Suspension of Direct Service Activities requires a determination that the welfare of the trainee's patient has been jeopardized. Therefore, direct service activities will be suspended for a specified period as determined by the Training Director and Psychology Lead/Chief in consultation with the Vice President of Training. At the end of the suspension period, the trainee's supervisor in consultation with the Training Director will assess the trainee's capacity for effective functioning and determine when direct service can be resumed.
6. Administrative Leave involves the temporary withdrawal of all responsibilities and privileges in the agency. Administrative leave would be invoked in cases of severe violations of the APA Code of Ethics, when imminent physical or psychological harm to a client is a major factor, or the trainee is unable to complete the fellowship due to physical, mental or emotional illness.

Note: If the Probation Period, Suspension of Direct Service Activities, or Administrative Leave interferes with the successful completion of the training hours needed for completion of the trainee's fellowship, this will be noted in the trainee's file and the trainee will not receive a certificate of completion. The Training Director will inform the trainee of the effects the administrative leave will have on the trainee's stipend and accrual of benefits.

7. Dismissal from the Postdoctoral Fellowship involves the permanent withdrawal of all agency responsibilities and privileges. When specific interventions do not, after a reasonable time period, rectify the impairment and the trainee is unable or unwilling to alter their behavior, the Training Director will discuss with the Psychology Lead/Chief, training committee, department directors and the director of training administration the possibility of termination from the training program or dismissal from the agency. Dismissal would be invoked in cases of failure to respond to several remediation attempts, severe violations of the APA Code of Ethics, when imminent physical or psychological harm to a client is a major factor, or the trainee is unable to complete the fellowship due to physical, mental or emotional illness. Before taking final action, the Psychology Lead/Chief and the Training Director shall meet with the trainee. A written summary statement will be prepared by the Training Director in consultation with the Training Committee, Psychology Lead/Chief and Vice President of Training defining the problem, warnings issued, and the proposed mechanism for resolution (probation or termination), and a specific statement as to action to be taken on stipend, benefits and training certification. In cases of termination, ordinarily salary and benefits will terminate as of the effective date and training certification may be granted for the period of months of acceptable service. Health insurance benefits may be maintained at the option of the individual beyond the termination date so as to provide an orderly transition. The trainee should be informed of the right to appeal available to them under due process (See Due Process policy) and applicable procedures of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Approved written decisions should be emailed to the trainee and sent by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Note: In all cases, it is imperative that supervisors take a nurturing, non-threatening, helpful approach with the trainee. If a supervisor feels unable to do so (personality conflicts, etc), another supervisor should become involved with the trainee. Nonetheless, everyone involved in the remediation process must *be clear* that this is a serious process, and that the trainee is at risk for dismissal.

## **Due Process**

### Purpose

On occasion, the Training Program may identify performance or behavior in a trainee that does not meet expectations and require correction or remediation.. Due process ensures that such decisions about trainees are not arbitrary or personally based. It requires that the Training Program identify specific evaluative procedures that are applied to all trainees and provide appropriate appeal procedures available to the fellow. These procedures may be implemented if a fellow fails to meet established competency milestones and/or in response to problematic behavior. All steps need to be appropriately documented and implemented.

### Fellows' Rights and Responsibilities

- a) Fellows have the right to receive information regarding the program's expectations and procedures for evaluation and due process during the orientation period.
- b) Fellows have the right to receive timely and regular feedback regarding their performance and any concerns for problematic behavior.
- c) If due process procedures are initiated, fellows have the right to hear all facts with the opportunity to dispute or explain the behavior of concern.
- d) Fellows have the right to receive information regarding due process decisions within the timeline outlined below.
- e) Fellows have the right to respond to and appeal the program's actions. Adequate time will be provided to formulate a response or appeal. When a challenge is made, the fellow must provide information supporting his/her position or concern.
- f) Fellows have the responsibility to interact with the training program in a respectful, professional, and ethical manner, make every reasonable attempt to remediate behavioral and competency concerns, and strive to meet the aims and objectives of the program.

### Postdoctoral Fellowship Program's Rights and Responsibilities

- a) The program has the right to implement these Due Process procedures when they are called for as described below.
- b) The program and its faculty/staff have the right to be treated in a manner that is respectful, professional, and ethical.
- c) The program has a right to make decisions related to remediation for a fellow, including probation, suspension and termination, within the limits of this policy.
- d) The responsibilities of the program include engaging with the fellow in a manner that is respectful, professional, and ethical, making every reasonable attempt to support fellows in remediating behavioral and competency concerns, and supporting fellows to the maximum extent possible in successfully completing the training program.

### Definition of a Problem

For purposes of this policy, a problem is defined broadly as an interference in professional functioning which is reflected in one or more of the following ways: 1) an inability and/or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's repertoire of professional behavior; 2) a failure to meet competency milestones as delineated on the postdoctoral fellowship evaluation form at the scheduled rotation, quarterly, or annual reviews; and/or 3) an inability to control personal stress, psychological dysfunctions, and/or excessive emotional

reactions which interfere with professional functioning.

It is a professional judgment as to when an issue becomes a problem that requires remediation. Issues typically become identified as problems that require remediation when they include one or more of the following characteristics:

- a) the fellow does not acknowledge, understand, or address the problem when it is identified;
- b) the problem is not merely a reflection of a skill deficit which can be rectified by the scheduled sequence of clinical or didactic training;
- c) the quality of services delivered by the fellow is sufficiently negatively affected;
- d) the problem is not restricted to one area of professional functioning;
- e) a disproportionate amount of attention by training personnel is required;
- f) the trainee's behavior does not change as a function of feedback, and/or time;
- g) the problematic behavior has potential for ethical or legal ramifications if not addressed;
- h) the fellow's behavior negatively impacts the public view of the agency;
- i) the problematic behavior negatively impacts other trainees;
- j) the problematic behavior potentially causes harm to a patient; and/or,
- k) the problematic behavior violates appropriate interpersonal communication with staff at Kennedy Krieger Institute or Johns Hopkins University.

General Due Process Guidelines Include:

- a) Presenting to the trainees during the orientation period the program's expectations related to professional functioning in writing and discussing these expectations in both group and individual settings.
- b) Stipulating the procedures for evaluation, including when and how evaluations will be conducted. Such evaluations should occur at meaningful intervals.
- c) Articulating the various procedures and actions involved in making decisions regarding impairment.
- d) Instituting, when appropriate, a remediation plan for identified inadequacies, including a time frame for expected remediation and consequences of not rectifying the inadequacies.
- e) Providing a written procedure to the trainee that describes how the trainee may appeal the program's action. Such procedures are included in the trainee handbook provided to trainee and reviewed during orientation.
- f) Ensuring that trainees have sufficient time to respond to any action taken.
- g) Using input from multiple professional sources when making decisions or recommendations regarding the trainee's performance.
- h) Documenting, in writing and to all relevant parties, the actions taken by the program and its rationale.

Due Process Procedures

When a matter cannot be resolved between the training director and trainee or staff through Fellow- Supervisor Conflict Resolution efforts (see policy on Fellow-Supervisor Conflict Resolution), the steps to be taken are listed below:

- a) Notice - There are two situations in which grievance procedures can be initiated. A trainee can challenge the action taken by the training director or a member of the training staff may initiate action against a trainee. These situations are described below.
  - i. *Trainee-Initiated Challenge* - If the trainee wishes to formally challenge any action taken by the training director, the trainee must inform the training director in writing

of such a challenge within 5 business days of receipt of the training director's decision. When a challenge is made, the trainee must provide information supporting the trainee's position or concern. Within 3 business days of receipt of this notification, the training director will consult with the senior psychologist and the vice president of training and will implement review panel procedures as described below. See also Grievance Policy below for the process regarding specific concerns with supervisors.

- ii. *Staff-Initiated Challenge* - If a training staff member has a specific trainee concern that is not resolved by the training director, the staff member may seek resolution of the conflict by written request to the training director for a review of the trainee's behavior. Within 3 working days of receipt of the staff member's challenge, the training director will consult with the senior psychologist and vice president of training and a review panel will be convened.

b) Hearing/Review Panel and Process

- i. When needed, the senior psychologist will convene a review panel. The panel will consist of three staff members selected by the senior psychologist with recommendations from the supervisor, training director, and the trainee involved in the dispute. The trainee or supervisor has the right to hear all facts with the opportunity to dispute or explain the behavior of concern.
- ii. Within 5 business days, a hearing will be conducted in which the challenge is heard and relevant material presented. Within 3 work days of the completion of the review, the review panel submits a written report to the senior psychologist that includes any recommendations for further action. Recommendations made by the review panel will be made by majority vote.
- iii. Within 3 business days of receipt of the recommendation, the senior psychologist will either accept or reject the review panel's recommendations. If the senior psychologist rejects the panel's recommendations due to an incomplete or inadequate evaluation of the dispute, the senior psychologist may refer the matter back to the review panel for further deliberation and revised recommendations or may make a final decision.
- iv. If referred back to the review panel, the panel will report back to the chief psychologist within 5 business days of the receipt of the chief psychologist's request of further consideration. The senior psychologist, in conjunction with the Vice President of Training, then makes a final decision about what action is to be taken.
- v. The training director informs the trainee and supervisor of the decisions made.

c) Appeal

- i. If the trainee wishes to formally challenge the Due Process decision, the trainee must inform the training director in writing of such a challenge within 5 business days of receipt of the training director's decision. When a challenge is made, the trainee must provide information supporting the trainee's position or concern.
- ii. If the trainee wishes to appeal this decision, they can address the appeal in writing to the Vice President of Training.
- iii. The trainee has the right to contact APPIC at any point to obtain support..

## **Grievance Policy**

The Kennedy Krieger institute seeks to provide a supportive educational, training, and professional environment. The Institute provides several avenues of redress for individuals who believe they have been treated unfairly by any employee at the Institute. The purpose of this procedure is to provide a formal mechanism to report and resolve grievances that are not addressed through the supervisors/fellow conflict or the due process policy.

### General Overview of Grievance Policy

In the event that a problematic situation arises between a trainee and an Institute employee or if a trainee has a significant concern about the program, the following steps should be taken:

1. The trainee is strongly encouraged to first attempt a verbal resolution through verbal discussion with the parties involved (e.g., directly with the staff member for an interpersonal conflict or with the program training director for issues related to the program). If the trainee prefers, they may choose to share their concerns verbally with the Senior Psychologist, the Vice President/ Department Director, the Chief Clinical Officer of the Kennedy Krieger Institute, or the Vice President of Training.

For workplace conflicts, the trainee can also seek support through the JHSOM Office of Postdoctoral Affairs <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/som/offices/pda/policies.html#Workplace-Conflict>.

2. If the fellow is dissatisfied with the outcome of the attempt at a direct verbal resolution with the parties involved or if the trainee fears retaliation with direct verbal discussion, the trainee should submit a written grievance and summary of the attempt to verbally resolve the grievance to interested, but uninvolved parties (e.g., the program training director(s), the senior psychologist, or one of the department co-directors). This written grievance and summary should be submitted within seven working days of the failed verbal meeting.

3. Upon receiving the written grievance, the leader(s) who received the written complaint may request a meeting with the trainee and may convene a small committee (possible members include senior psychologist, department co-directors, chief clinical officer, and/or vice president of training) to determine the best next steps for resolving the grievance. A written response to the grievance will be shared with the trainee within 7 days.

5. Lastly, the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine has a grievance procedure for faculty, residents, fellows, and the student body to address serious matters which are not resolved using the procedures above. For more information go to:

[https://hpo.johnshopkins.edu/som/policies/501/37864/policy\\_37864.pdf](https://hpo.johnshopkins.edu/som/policies/501/37864/policy_37864.pdf)

If, after meeting with the above, the trainee finds that the situation is not resolved or at any other time, the issue can be brought to the Johns Hopkins University Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs, Dr. Dana Boatman. The office of postdoctoral affairs will attempt to counsel and mediate conflicts through informal discussion, decision-making, and goal setting. If these are not successful there are more formal avenues that can be pursued through



the School of Medicine. (Grievance Procedure for Faculty, Fellows, and the Student Body).

*\*JHU will not tolerate harassment, sexual harassment (including sexual violence), discrimination or retaliation in the workplace or educational environment whether committed by managers, faculty, administrators, staff, or students, or by visitors to our institution of higher learning. To file a complaint through official university channels go to: <https://oie.jhu.edu/discrimination-and-harassment/>*

## **Policy on Maintenance of Records**

1. Trainee Training records including the following are permanently and securely stored electronically in a secure electronic folder that only a few administrators have access to for future reference by the trainee or by confirmed written release to licensing and credentialing bodies:
  - a. Dates of training
  - b. Names of supervisors and training track(s)
  - c. Midterm and final evaluations
  - d. Grievances
  - e. Due process documentation
  
2. The Institute Training administration also maintains names, training programs, and dates of training for all Institute trainees.