



## **MIDOCs PRACTICE SITE & SERVICE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Site Information**

MIDOCs-approved practice sites are health care facilities that generally provide primary care services to populations residing in urban or rural Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) or a Medically Underserved Area or Population (MUA/P).

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Certified Rural Health Clinics
- Community Health Centers
- Community Mental Health Clinics
- Federally Qualified Health Center 'Look-Alikes'
- Hospital-Affiliated Primary Care Clinics
- Local Health Departments
- Other Not-for Profit Primary Care Clinics
- Private/Not for Profit Primary Care Clinics
- State Psychiatric Hospitals
- State/Federal Correctional Facilities
- State-funded Primary Care Clinics
- Tribal-Affiliated Primary Care Clinics
- Urgent care sites
- Emergency Rooms/Departments
- Long term care facilities
- Nursing homes

### **Employment Contracts**

Employment contract negotiations are between the clinician and the employer. The terms of the employment contract should be carefully reviewed and fully understood by the clinician before the contract is signed. Applicants may want to seek legal guidance from private counsel before entering into an employment contract. Please note that MIDOCs requires a participant to work a specified minimum number of hours per week (defined below).

### **Service Requirements**

Every participant is required to engage in full-time clinical practice of the profession for which he/ she trained at his/her MIDOCs-approved practice site(s).

Full-time clinical practice is defined, for the purposes of MIDOCs, as a minimum of 32 hours/week for a minimum of 45 weeks each service year. Participants must spend at least 50% of their hours/week providing patient care (exception for Preventive Medicine residents). Participants do not receive service credit for hours worked over the required 32 hours/week and excess hours cannot be applied to any other work week. Also, time spent "on call" will not be counted towards the service commitment.

### **Inpatient Settings**

Inpatient hospital settings may be eligible MIDOCs practice sites if they are located in an area of Michigan with a HPSA (Health Professional Shortage Area) or MUA/P (Medically Underserved Area/Place) designation. Hospitalists may qualify for MIDOCs as long as they can consistently meet the required minimum number of 16 direct patient care hours per week.

### **Administration, Management, Teaching, Etc.**

Clinical-related administrative, management or other activities may include charting, care coordination activities, training, laboratory follow-up, patient correspondence, attending staff meetings, activities related to maintaining professional licensure and other non-treatment related activities pertaining to the participant's approved MIDOCs practice. Any time spent in a management role is also considered to be an administrative activity. The duties of a medical director are also considered primarily administrative, and MIDOCs applicants serving in such a capacity should keep in mind that they must provide direct patient care for at least 16 hours per week.

Teaching activities, to qualify as clinical practice, require MIDOCs participants to provide clinical education to students and residents in their area of expertise at the approved practice site(s). All teaching must be conducted at the MIDOCs-approved practice site(s). The clinical education may:

- (1) Be conducted as part of an accredited clinical training program;
- (2) Include the clinical supervision of a student/resident that is required in order for that student/resident to receive a license under State law; or
- (3) Include mentoring that is conducted as part of the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP), or the Centers of Excellence program.

Clinical service provided by MIDOCs participants while a student/resident observes, should be counted as patient care, not teaching, as the MIDOCs participant is treating the patient.

### **Requirements for School-Based Clinics**

For providers working at a MIDOCs-approved school-based clinic, MIDOCs requires that the school-based clinic be open year-round with sufficient patient visits to meet the clinical service requirements, or the provider will be required to work at additional suitable MIDOCs-approved sites to meet the clinical practice requirements.

### **Telemedicine**

Subject to the restrictions below, MIDOCs will consider telemedicine as patient care when both the originating site (location of the patient) and the distant site (the MIDOCs- approved site where the MIDOCs clinician works) are located in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or Medically Underserved Area or Population (MUA/P) within Michigan.

- Telemedicine services must be furnished using an interactive telecommunications system, defined as multimedia communications equipment that includes, at a minimum, audio equipment permitting two-way, real time interactive communication between the patient at the originating site and the MIDOCs clinician at the distant site.
- Facsimile machines and electronic mail systems do not meet the definition of an interactive telecommunications system.

### **Absences Policy**

Please note that the information provided below pertains to compliance with the MIDOCs service obligation and is not a guarantee that a practice site will allow any particular amount of leave. MIDOCs participants are allowed to spend no more than 35 full-time workdays per service year away from the MIDOCs-approved practice site for vacation, holidays, continuing professional education, illness, or any other reason.

If a participant works more than the minimum 32 hours per week, the only time spent away from the site that will need to be reported (see below “In-Service Verification”) and deducted from the allowed absences per service year (as set forth above) are the hours of absence that cause a participant’s work hours to fall below the MIDOCs-required minimum number of hours per week. For example, a participant who works 40 hours a week would not need to report 8 hours of sick leave because the participant meets the MIDOCs minimum service requirement of 32 hours a week.

MIDOCs-approved absences over 35 workdays will result in the extension of the participant’s service commitment. Participants who have a medical or personal emergency that will result in an extended period of absence will need to request a suspension of the MIDOCs service commitment and provide supporting documentation. MIDOCs cannot guarantee that a suspension request will be approved. If a suspension is requested and approved, the participant’s service commitment end date will be extended accordingly. See “Suspension, Waiver, and Cancellation”.

### **Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Leave Policy**

Maternity/paternity/adoption leave of 12 weeks or fewer will be automatically approved by MIDOCs, if documented with the MIDOCs office. If participants plan to be away from their site for maternity/paternity/adoption leave, they are required to inform the MIDOCs office before taking the leave. MIDOCs will allow participants to be away from their site within the timeframes established by the Family Medical Leave Act; however, the participant must also adhere to the leave policies of his/her MIDOCs-approved practice site. If participants plan to take additional leave, they are required to request a medical suspension (see “Suspension”), which needs to be approved by MIDOCs. Requests should be submitted to the MIDOCs office. Remember that a participant is required to serve a minimum of 45 weeks per service year and is allowed to be away from the MIDOCs-approved practice site for no more than 35 workdays per service year; therefore, a participant’s obligation end date will be extended for each day of absence over the allowable 35 workdays.

### **In-Service Verification**

Every 6 months, MIDOCs verifies that participants are fulfilling their service obligation by meeting program requirements. The In-Service Verification (ISV) form must be completed by the participant and the practice site manager and returned to the MIDOCs office. By completing and signing the In-Service Verification, the participant and the site are certifying the participant’s compliance (or noncompliance) with the clinical practice requirements during the preceding 6-month period.

The practice site manager must complete the 6-month In-Service Verification in order for the participant to remain in compliance, and it is the participant’s responsibility to ensure that the In-Service Verification form is accurate and timely submitted. Participants who fail to ensure that their 6-month In-Service Verifications are completed and submitted on time risk not receiving service credit.

The provider should initiate regular communication and follow up with the practice site manager to ensure that ISV is completed accurately and in a timely manner.

## **CHANGING JOBS**

MIDOCs expects that participants will fulfill their obligation at the original MIDOCs-approved practice site(s) identified in their MIDOCs Agreement that applicants are required to submit along with a copy of their signed employment contract. If a participant feels he/she can no longer continue working at the approved practice site, the participant should discuss the situation and/or concerns with his/her practice site manager and must contact the MIDOCs office immediately. If the participant leaves his/her practice site(s) without prior approval of the MIDOCs office, he/she may be placed in default as of the date he/she stopped providing patient care at the MIDOCs-approved practice site and become liable for the monetary damages specified in this Guidance (see “Breaching The MIDOCs Agreement”).

### **Site Change**

Participants who require a site change to another practice site must request a transfer through the MIDOCs office. The site change must be approved by the MIDOCs director prior to the participant beginning work at the new site. If a participant begins employment at a site before obtaining approval from the MIDOCs office, he/she may not receive service credit for the time period between his/her last day providing patient care at the prior practice site and resumption of service at the transfer site following MIDOCs approval. If the proposed site is disapproved by the MIDOCs office and the participant refuses assignment to another MIDOCs-approved practice site, he/she may be placed in default.

### **Unemployment**

MIDOCs recognizes that circumstances may arise whereby a participant feels that he/she can no longer continue serving at his/her assigned practice site. In some of these situations, the participant may be eligible to transfer to another MIDOCs-approved site to continue service in accordance with the requirements specified in this Guidance.

Participants who resign or are terminated from their MIDOCs-approved site(s) must contact the MIDOCs office immediately. If MIDOCs deems the participant eligible for a transfer, the participant will be granted a certain time frame in which to obtain and accept an employment offer at an approved practice site. Although MIDOCs may assist unemployed participants with identifying suitable positions at MIDOCs-approved sites (referred to as “site assistance”), it is the participant’s responsibility to obtain employment at a MIDOCs-approved site. Unemployed participants may be expected to relocate in order to fulfill their MIDOCs obligation.

### **Working at Sites That Are Not MIDOCs-Approved**

Participants who are asked to work at a clinic that is not listed in the MIDOCs Agreement must immediately notify the MIDOCs office. Time spent at unapproved clinics will not count towards the service commitment.

**QUESTIONS?** If you need help determining whether a practice site qualifies, or have other questions, contact Amy Hoge, MIDOCs Executive Director at [amy.hoge@mhc.org](mailto:amy.hoge@mhc.org) or (231) 499-5136.

## SUSPENSION, WAIVER, AND CANCELLATION

### **Agreement Terminations**

MIDOCs requires participants to fulfill their service obligation without excessive absences or significant interruptions in service. Participants are allowed approximately 7 weeks of leave per service year; however, circumstances might occur that will prevent a participant from staying within this timeframe. In these cases, MIDOCs may, under certain circumstances, suspend (i.e., put “on hold”) the MIDOCs service obligation. In addition, MIDOCs may waive (i.e., excuse) the MIDOCs service or payment obligation.

- (1) **Suspension.** A suspension of the MIDOCs commitment may be granted if compliance with the commitment by the participant: (i) is temporarily impossible, or (ii) would involve a temporary extreme hardship such that enforcement of the commitment would be unconscionable. Periods of approved suspension of service will extend the participant’s service commitment end date. The major categories of suspension are set forth below. Suspension requests are submitted through to the MIDOCs Executive Director at amy.hoge@mhc.org.
  - a. **Leave of Absence for Medical or Personal Reasons.** A suspension may be granted for up to one year, if the participant provides independent medical documentation of a physical or mental health disability, or personal circumstances, including a terminal illness of an immediate family member (e.g. – child or spouse, including same-sex spouse), which results in the participant’s temporary inability to perform the MIDOCs service obligation.
  - b. **Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Leave.** If the participant’s maternity/paternity/adoption leave will exceed 12 weeks during a service year, a suspension may be granted by MIDOCs based on documented medical need.
  - c. **Call to Active Duty in the Armed Forces.** Participants who are military reservists and are called to active duty must submit a request for a MIDOCs service suspension. The period of active military duty will not be credited towards the MIDOCs service obligation. Suspensions for active duty military assignment are granted for up to one year, beginning on the activation date described in the reservist’s call to active duty order. A copy of the order to active duty must be provided to the MIDOCs office with the request for a suspension. In the event that the MIDOCs participant’s period of activity duty with the Armed Forces entity is extended beyond the approved suspension period, the participant must contact the MIDOCs office for guidance on how to request an extension of the suspension period.
- (2) **Waiver.** A waiver permanently relieves the participant of all or part of the MIDOCs commitment. A waiver may be granted only if the participant demonstrates that compliance with his/her commitment is permanently impossible or would involve an extreme hardship such that enforcement of the commitment would be unconscionable. A waiver request must be submitted to the MIDOCs office by a signed request letter, including the reason(s) the waiver is being sought. The participant will be contacted regarding the medical and financial documentation necessary to complete the waiver request. All documents can be submitted to the MIDOCs office. Note that waivers are not routinely granted, and require documentation of compelling circumstances.
- (3) **Cancellation of MIDOCs Obligation**

The MIDOCs obligation will be cancelled in its entirety in the event of a participant’s death. No liability will be transferred to the participant’s heirs.

### **BREACHING THE MIDOCs AGREEMENT**

While MIDOCs will work with participants to assist them, to the extent possible, to avoid a breach and fulfill the service commitment, participants are reminded that the failure to complete service is a breach of the MIDOCs agreement. Participants should make sure that they understand the following monetary damages when a MIDOCs agreement is breached.

A participant who breaches a commitment to serve in a full-time clinical practice will become liable to MIDOCs for an amount equal to the sum of the following:

- 1) The amount of the loan repayments paid to the participant representing any period of obligated service not completed;
- 2) \$11,200 multiplied by the number of months of obligated service not completed;
- 3) Interest on the above amounts at the maximum amount authorized by legal authority; and
- 4) Forfeit any right to future payments from the MIDOCs program.

**Note: The minimum amount MIDOCs is entitled to recover from a participant who breaches a commitment will not be less than \$46,500.**

Any amounts MIDOCs is entitled to recover, as set forth above, must be paid within 30 days of being notified of the debt. Failure to pay the debt by the due date may result MIDOCs using all available collections activities which might include, but not be limited to, legal action as appropriate, withholding some portion of current payments/benefits, asset seizures including funds held in financial institutions, wage garnishments, and levies on property.

*\*\*\* MIDOCs reserves the right to update practice site and service requirements at any time. \*\*\**