

Emory Department of Emergency Medicine Observership Policy

revised 7/7/2025

The Emory Department of Emergency Medicine (DEM) embraces the role of academic leadership and understands the value of allowing learners to experience our clinical practice. To the degree possible, the DEM will permit approved clinical observerships by visiting observers in the Emory and Grady Memorial Hospital Emergency Departments (ED). Considerations for approving observer time include the participants' educational needs, the safety and crowding of the EDs and the faculty's capacity to accommodate additional learners without compromising the educational experience of the core Department learners.

- This policy is superseded by any relevant institutional policies.
- "Observers" include anyone who is not part of a formal educational program involving the ED. This includes but is not limited to: undergraduate students, medical students outside of formal rotations/electives, Grady/Emory/CDC employees or affiliates (e.g. EMS personnel, scribes) outside of their regular duties, unaffiliated physicians (residents, fellows or attendings), etc. This policy does not apply to medical students in a clerkship, visiting student rotation, or other elective associated with emergency medicine (including Thrills and Spills); residents, including visiting or rotating residents; or APP or EMS learners doing a formal ED rotation.
- The Observer is expected to be over the age of 18 years. ☐
- All Observers must have a faculty sponsor who is responsible for all elements of the observership, including approval of the experience, clinical chaperoning, and completion of badging and hospital-based paperwork. That sponsor is responsible for the Observer and may not leave them under the supervision of other faculty without explicit agreement.
- Travel and logistics including any cost of the observership are the responsibility of the Observer or the sponsoring institution or agency.
- Departmental communications (Barbara Voss) to be alerted of planned observership for necessary communications forms and preparations.
- There will be no Emory or Grady certificate offered at completion of observership and the Observer must explicitly agree that they will not represent that they 'trained,' "completed," or "graduated" from Emory or Grady.
- Observer Supervision
 - The faculty sponsor must directly supervise the observer in the department. They may not place observers under the supervision of other faculty without explicit agreement from that faculty
 - Faculty may not supervise an observer while simultaneously supervising a medical student (this is in accordance with SOM and LCME policies)
 - To avoid this conflict, we recommend against scheduling observers in Grady Zone 2 or EUH Midtown Zones 1 or 3
 - The medical student schedule is available upon request
- Observer Behavior
 - The Observer must be counseled on the multiple inherent dangers of work in the ED and must understand that the institution, the Department, and faculty are not liable for injury, disease, or emotional distress stemming from this experience.

- “Observer” and “observership” status requires that the learner may not physically participate in any portion of patient care, may not submit patient care orders, may not complete any clinical documentation nor direct clinical care. The observer shall not have incidental patient contact as defined by Emory University.
 - Observers must adhere to all institutional policies and procedures and all relevant laws, including those pertaining to social media use, patient confidentiality, and communicable disease prevention
- Approval Process
 - Observerships will be administered via DEM Senior Associate Director of Programs (Lynn Hansen) and approved through the Emory Emergency Medicine education committee. Please contact EMObservershipRequests@emory.edu with any questions.
 - For an experience of less than a week, a faculty must request permission from the Chief of Service and ensure that hospital onboarding activities are completed.
 - For an experience lasting longer than 1 week: the sponsor must complete the observer application form and submit for review and approval by the EM Education Committee. Completed forms can be sent to EMObservershipRequests@emory.edu. Please allow 2 weeks for approval and allow additional time for hospital badging.
- Hospital Badging Resources
 - [Link to Grady policy](#) (note: Grady Observership requests require a fee and are accepted only Jan 2- March 31 and Sept 1-December 15 yearly)
 - [EHC Observerships](#) (See “Shadowing”)