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**TO:** Applicants to Mount Sinai Residency and Fellowship Programs

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Mount Sinai always attempts to ensure that the work environment remains free from hazards to patients, employees, and visitors. In keeping with the requirements of the New York State Department of Health, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations, and the Drug-Free Workplace Act. All new employees, including house staff are required to complete a health screening process before beginning work.

The adverse impact of substance abuse on workplace safety, efficiency and productivity is well documented and continues to be a primary concern of employers, employees and the public. Since July 1997, the screening process for all incoming house staff has included urine toxicology testing. This test screens for amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cannabinoids, cocaine, opiates and phencyclidine.

All positive specimens are confirmed by gas chromatography and reviewed by a certified Medical Review Officer. Any information related to toxicology screenings is confidential, and a strict chain of custody is followed.

The implementation of toxicology screening for new employees assists us in continuing to deliver the best possible medical care. Thank you for your cooperation in this important effort.

Policy Reference: <http://policies.mountsinai.org/web/human-resources/policies/-/policy-management/viewPolicy/83488>



## Reminder to Residents and Fellows – Mount Sinai Health System

### Recreational and Medical use of Cannabis by Physicians and Providers

#### Drug-Free Workplace

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 requires Mount Sinai, as a federal grant recipient and contractor, to certify that it will provide a drug-free workplace.

To accomplish this, each employee is provided with the Health System's Drug-Free Workplace Policy and Statement and is expected to be familiar with and abide by its contents ([Mount Sinai Health System Code of Conduct](#)).

This information is also contained within the *Mount Sinai House Staff Manual* ([GME Manual](#)).

As a condition of employment Mount Sinai residents and fellows will abide by the following:

1. Notify their program director of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation inside or outside of the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction.
2. Health screening program for all incoming residents and fellows that includes urine toxicology testing for cannabinoid metabolites.
3. A Drug-Free Awareness Program has been established to inform all residents and fellows about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace; the Hospital's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace; the available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and the potential penalties for drug-abuse violations.

The following statement describes Mount Sinai's policy regarding substance abuse for all House Staff:

The Mount Sinai Health System has a significant interest in ensuring that the work environment is free from the hazards to patients, employees, and visitors that are created due to the unauthorized use of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances.

The illegal sale, manufacture, distribution, or unauthorized use or possession of drugs or controlled substances (including cannabis) by employees on Hospital premises, or in the course of Hospital business, are prohibited and may be grounds for immediate dismissal. The Mount Sinai Health System may, at its discretion, take any other appropriate disciplinary action short of termination against employees who have violated the above rules.

***Important reminders related to cannabis products:***

While medical and recreational cannabinoid use is legal in many states, residents and fellows are reminded of the following:

1. Federal law still prohibits recreational marijuana use.
2. Recreational marijuana use is not legal in New York State.
3. Medical marijuana (medical cannabis) use is legal for *patients* in New York State under prescription and certificate by a licensed physician.
4. Physicians' performance may be compromised or impaired — and patients' lives put at risk— by any use of cannabis.
5. Under the terms of employment, physicians are subject to drug testing if suspected of being impaired and for other cause. Any employee who is suspected of being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or drug while on duty who refuses to be medically evaluated or to release the results of such evaluation is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
6. Routine testing for cannabinoids may remain positive long after medical or recreational use. Using in a state where use is legal is not a mitigating factor if a physician tests positive.
7. There is no specific drug test that indicates impairment by cannabis and therefore a positive drug test could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
8. CBD products, not all of which are legal in New York State, could trigger a positive test because of trace THC.
9. Physicians who test positive for cannabinoids may be referred to state physician health or other programs and could cause physicians to lose their job, face mandatory treatment, and potentially impact their ability to hold a medical license.
10. Due to the training requirements and nature of the work performed by residents and fellows, Mount Sinai might not be able to provide a reasonable accommodation for physicians that wish to take medical cannabis.
11. Residents and fellows that have received a certified prescription for medical cannabis should consider alternative therapy and discuss this with their personal physicians.

Residents and fellows with questions about this policy should consult with Employee Health Services.