

# Policy for Student Travel to Required Rotation Sites,

## A3.14j

Students enrolled in the Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine Physician Assistant Program are required to complete supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) at a variety of affiliated clinical sites. These sites are selected based on their ability to provide high-quality educational experiences that meet the program's clinical learning outcomes and accreditation requirements. Students must therefore be prepared to travel to rotation sites both within and outside the immediate geographic area of the program.

### 1. Assignment and Notification

- Clinical rotation assignments are determined by the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) in accordance with program objectives, site availability, preceptor capacity, and student progression requirements.
- Students will receive their clinical schedule at least 30 days before the start of the semester, to allow for planning and travel arrangements.
- Students with questions or concerns about assignments or travel expectations should contact the DCE or the Clinical Education Staff Assistant. Students are not permitted to independently arrange their own clinical placements or contact preceptors directly without prior written approval from the DCE.

### 2. Distance and Frequency of Travel

- Most of SCPE sites are located within approximately 90 miles of the Rowan-Virtua SOM Sewell Campus. To ensure a complete range of clinical experiences, students may be assigned to sites beyond 90 miles from campus.
- An 'away rotation' is defined as any required clinical assignment located more than 90 miles from the Rowan-Virtua SOM Sewell campus. The program makes every effort to limit the number of such assignments to no more than four (4) per student, unless specifically requested by the student. Rotations meeting this definition may necessitate temporary lodging.
- The program strives to distribute distant rotations equitably and to provide adequate notice of all site assignments.

### 3. Travel and Lodging Responsibility

- Students are solely responsible for arranging and funding their own transportation, lodging, and any associated travel costs for all assigned rotations, regardless of location. This includes rotations that may require extended commutes or temporary relocation.
- The program does not reimburse students for travel or housing expenses incurred during the clinical year.
- All anticipated travel distances and related costs are incorporated into the published Cost of Program Completion available online so that students can plan appropriately before matriculation.
- The program encourages students to plan ahead for potential costs associated with travel and lodging during the clinical year and to budget accordingly in coordination with Financial Aid resources.

- These estimated travel and lodging expenses are included in the program’s Cost of Attendance calculation in compliance with ARC-PA Standard A3.11f, and available on the website: <https://som.rowan.edu/physician-assistant/financial-aid/cost-of-program.html>
- The program provides this information to promote transparency and help students anticipate travel-related expenses.

#### **4. Vehicle Access and Driver’s License**

- Students are expected to maintain reliable transportation throughout clinical training and should possess a valid driver’s license. Those without personal vehicles must arrange dependable alternatives—such as public transit, ride-sharing services, or carpooling—that ensure timely arrival at assigned sites.
- Failure to maintain adequate transportation that affects attendance or performance may result in referral to the Student Progress Committee and delay progression through the program.

#### **5. Site Location Preferences and Availability**

- While students may indicate regional preferences, the program cannot guarantee placement at preferred sites. Students must be willing to travel to any assigned location required to meet graduation requirements.
- Clinical site availability may change at any time and may alter travel expectations; therefore, all distance and cost estimates are approximate and subject to change.
- No specific clinical site, geographic location, commute length, or housing arrangement can be guaranteed.

#### **6. Unforeseen Hardship and Reassignment Requests**

- If a student encounters significant and unanticipated hardship related to travel or associated expenses, the following options may apply:
  - **Written Hardship Request**  
Students may submit a formal written request for reassignment to an alternate site addressed to the DCE. The request must describe the hardship, include documentation, and propose alternative preferences. Reassignment decisions are made case-by-case based on site availability and compliance with accreditation standards. Approval of any hardship request is not guaranteed, does not exempt a student from required SCPEs, and may result in delay of progression if an appropriate alternative cannot be secured.
  - **Student Emergency Fund (SEF) Application**  
Students facing acute, short-term financial emergencies may apply to the Rowan-Virtua SOM Student Emergency Fund for temporary assistance. Eligible expenses may include unexpected travel-related emergencies but not routine rotation travel or housing costs. Students must exhaust financial-aid and personal options before requesting SEF support.
  - **Cost of Attendance (COA) Appeal**  
Students whose cumulative travel or lodging expenses substantially exceed the estimated COA may submit a COA Appeal Budget Worksheet with documentation to a Financial Aid Counselor for possible aid adjustment.
  - **Limitations and Conditions**  
Reassignment and financial-aid adjustments are not guaranteed and depend on site

capacity, compliance requirements, and completeness of documentation. Requests should be submitted at least 60 days before the start of the affected rotation whenever feasible.

- **Potential Impact on Progression**

If a student is unable to travel to an assigned site and no suitable alternative is available, clinical progression may be delayed. The matter will be referred to the Student Progress Committee for review.

## 7. Variability in Travel-Related Costs

- Travel and lodging costs vary based on distance from campus, regional cost of living, and other factors difficult to calculate (such as fuel costs, the presence of traffic, car maintenance, etc.). Most SCPE sites are within daily commuting distance, while others may require short-term relocation.
- Students should budget for these expenses in advance and explore cost-saving strategies such as carpooling, shared housing, short-term rentals, or staying with family or friends when appropriate.
- Students are encouraged to communicate any concerns about the feasibility of a commute early, so that the program can offer guidance or discuss options.
- No stipends or reimbursements are provided for travel or housing associated with SCPEs. Estimated costs and typical commuting distances are available on the Cost of Program Completion webpage.
- Rowan-Virtua SOM publishes a PA-specific *Cost of Program Completion* that includes both **direct costs** (tuition, fees, equipment, insurance) and **indirect costs** (housing, food, transportation, books, and clinical-year travel and lodging). These estimates are based on a typical student model and include anticipated commuting expenses such as fuel, tolls, parking, and vehicle maintenance, as well as short-term housing for required away rotations. A typical student is assumed to complete up to four away rotations during the clinical year. All figures are reviewed annually and updated as tuition, fees, and cost assumptions change. Published costs are estimates—not guarantees—and individual expenses may vary. The most current information is available on the *Cost of Program Completion* and *Financial Aid* webpages.

## 8. Compliance and Professionalism

- Students are expected to report to assigned sites on time and to maintain professional conduct when managing travel arrangements. Failure to travel to a required rotation, refusal of assignment, or unprofessional behavior related to travel logistics may result in referral to the Student Progress Committee and disciplinary action.