



# MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

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A student with a serious medical condition may elect to withdraw and take a leave of absence from the University with appropriate medical documentation. This document describes the circumstances under which this procedure is appropriate and the procedures the student must follow.

## WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

1. Leave of Absence and Withdrawal: these terms both refer to a process by which a student officially withdraws from the University. The Leave of Absence Program assumes that the student will be returning to the University within four quarters, though the student is not obligated to do so. The Withdrawal Program assumes that the student will not be returning, though the student may do so if otherwise eligible.
2. Any course that is dropped after the first week of the quarter will result in "Ws" on the student's transcript regardless of the reason for the drop. A "W" is an appropriate registration status indicating that a student withdrew after the first week of the quarter. "Ws" are not factored into a student's G.P.A.
3. If the student is able to document the presence of a medical condition serious enough to warrant withdrawing from all courses for the term and approved for a Medical Leave of Absence:
  - a. The University will expedite the withdrawal process and grant an automatic tuition refund for any funds paid out of pocket.
  - b. If the withdrawal from classes occurs after the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> week of the term but before the end of the last day of classes prior to finals week, students who are participating in the Medical Leave of Absence are not obligated to obtain signatures from the instructors of their courses to withdraw from the quarter.
  - c. If the withdrawal occurs after the last day of the term the student must complete an Exception to Academic Policy. The student will request a retroactive drop of all courses for that quarter due to medical reasons. The same requirements for medical documentation apply through this process. If the academic exceptions petition is approved then the student will be directed to complete the Tuition Appeal process in the Office of the Bursar.
4. Appropriate medical documentation must be submitted to the Executive Director of Academic Resources. Documentation should include the following:
  - a. A signed, dated letter on letterhead from a medical care provider appropriate for the medical condition indicated. Student must sign a HIPAA-compliant consent form for release of the information by the provider.
  - b. Diagnosis of the condition, describing symptoms and outlining a recommended treatment plan while student is on leave of absence, confirmation that the condition is serious enough that the student should not be attending classes and/or cannot complete coursework.
  - c. Release of information signed for the DU Health and Counseling Center to consult with treatment provider.
5. Information provided to the University as part of a Medical Leave of Absence will be considered confidential and will be released only in circumstances described by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).
6. If able to do so, the student should complete the Medical Leave of Absence Form. If the student is unable to complete the form, an Academic Advisor may do so, at the discretion of the Associate Provost of Student Life, the Executive Director of Academic Resources or their designee. An email request to complete the form by the student or the parent/guardian, if the student is unable to, should be sent to [advising@du.edu](mailto:advising@du.edu). The email should include the student's id number.
7. If the Medical Leave of Absence is approved, Academic Resources will notify relevant departments that the student is withdrawing for medical reasons:
  - a. Faculty
  - b. Office of the Registrar
  - c. Office of the Bursar
  - d. Health and Counseling Center
  - e. Housing and Residential Education (if the student has on-campus housing)

- f. Office of Financial Aid (if the student has financial aid)
  - g. University Technology Services (if the student has borrowed a laptop computer)
  - h. International Student and Scholar Services (if the student is an international student)
  - i. Office of Student Outreach and Support
8. The student will be responsible for meeting all financial obligations to the University by published deadlines. Failure to do so could mean that the student would not be eligible to register and/or to have transcripts/diplomas released until the obligation has been met.
  9. For a student whose condition is so severe that return to the University is unlikely, the University may initiate Withdrawal procedures, at the discretion of the person with the student's power of attorney or the Associate Provost for Student Life, Executive Director of Academic Resources or their designee.
  10. A student may request a Medical Leave of Absence a total of two times during an undergraduate career at the University. If extenuating circumstances exist, or as an ADA reasonable accommodation, the student may request additional Medical Leaves of Absence, at the discretion of the Associate Provost of Student Life, Executive Director of Academic Resources or their designee.
  11. Students who complete a Medical Leave of Absence will have "Ws", a registration status indicating the student withdrew from courses, recorded for their courses for the term. "Ws" are not factored into a student's G.P.A.

## RETURNING TO THE UNIVERSITY

1. As a condition of accepting a medical leave, before the student's return to the University, the student agrees to:
  - a. Obtain appropriate medical treatment. Submit a letter formally requesting re-entry to the University. The letter should include a brief description of how the student has made productive use of the time away, what treatment recommendations the student has followed, and why the student believes that they are ready to return to the University.
  - b. Submit medical documentation from an appropriate health care provider to the Executive Director of Academic Resources *a minimum of six weeks prior to the quarter for which the student plans to return.* (Student must sign a HIPAA-compliant consent form for release of the information by the provider.) The documenting letter must be signed, dated, and on the health care provider's letterhead. It must describe the problem(s) that led the student to take a medical leave, including diagnoses, and must indicate that the student, at the time of evaluation by the health care provider, is medically able to resume study at the University. In addition, the health care provider must list any medications prescribed for the student, any side effects that may affect the student's ability to attend and complete classes, whether any prescribed medications require monitoring, and the name of the treatment provider designated to monitor the medication.
  - c. Submit a completed "Treating Health Care Provider Questionnaire" form provided by the University found at [http://www.du.edu/studentlife/advising/documents/10\\_11%20Request%20for%20Re-Entry%20Medical%20Information.pdf](http://www.du.edu/studentlife/advising/documents/10_11%20Request%20for%20Re-Entry%20Medical%20Information.pdf)
  - d. Releases of information signed for DU's Health and Counseling Center and the Student Life Division to consult with each other and with the treatment provider.
2. The student must also complete an Application to Re-Enter found at <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/advising/forms/reentry.html> If the student attends other colleges or universities while away from DU, transcripts from each institution must be submitted.
3. The Associate Provost for Student Life, Executive Director of Academic Resources or their designee has final determination as to whether the documentation the student has submitted is sufficient.
4. If the student has elected to take a Leave of Absence, Academic Advising will send registration materials to the student the quarter before the scheduled return.
5. Students whose medical condition has not improved within four quarters, or who have elected not to return in that time, remain eligible to return to the University, as long as they are not otherwise barred from doing so (e.g. by having been suspended or dismissed). However,
  - a. The University cannot guarantee that merit-based financial aid will be awarded.
  - b. If the student is away from DU for an extended period, it may be difficult for the student to finish the initial degree program, since the curriculum changes over time.

Please read the Medical Leave of Absence policies before completing this application to be sure you are seeking the appropriate leave for your circumstances. The form and policies can be found at <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/advising/forms.html> This form needs to be turned in at the Driscoll Student Center, suite 30 with the appropriate medical documentation.