

 <p><b>Category:</b> Student Affairs</p> <p><b>Policy applicable for:</b> Undergraduate Students</p>	<p><i>Policy Title:</i></p> <p><b>Medical Leave of Absence</b></p> <p><b>Effective Date:</b> 04/05/2021</p>	<p><i>Policy Number:</i></p> <p><b>4.1.6</b></p> <p><b>Policy Owner:</b> VP for Student Affairs</p> <p><b>Responsible Office(s):</b> AVP/Dean of Students Office</p>
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## **PURPOSE**

Students may experience serious health issues that require them to suspend their academics with the University to devote time to treatment. The purpose of this policy is to provide an avenue for students to take a medical leave of absence (“MLOA”) to address their health issues when their condition prevents them from meeting the expectations of a student for an extended period of time. This policy applies to all undergraduate students. Graduate students should refer to their college’s and program’s handbooks.

## **PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING A MLOA**

Prior to applying for a MLOA, students should confer with their academic advisor for more information on taking a MLOA and its impact on their academic status, individual advising plan, and the reinstatement process. Moreover, taking a MLOA may affect a student’s financial aid and initiate repayment status on loans. A student taking a MLOA should discuss any concerns regarding financial aid with the Financial Aid Office. Students on scholarship should also discuss how a MLOA will affect their scholarship with their academic program. *See also, Reimbursement of Tuition and Fees, infra.* Finally, students who have purchased the University’s Student Health Insurance should be aware that their coverage will end the following semester if they are not re-enrolled in classes by then.

To obtain a MLOA, the student must complete an assessment by a licensed medical or mental health provider who will determine whether the student’s condition prevents the student from meeting the University’s academic and non-academic requirements, with or without accommodations. A student may obtain an assessment from University Health Services (“UHS”), Counseling & Psychological Services (“CAPS”), or another health provider qualified to make a health assessment.

At the completion of the assessment, the student should complete Section I of the Treatment Provider Assessment Form and give it to the health provider to complete Section II of the form. Once complete, the student should return the Treatment Provider Assessment Form to the Dean of Students’ office via email at [deanofstudents@uc.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@uc.edu) or fax at (513) 556-1399.

The Dean of Students (or designee) will review the Treatment Provider Assessment Form and discuss it with the student, if necessary. The Dean of Students (or designee) will provide the student with written notice either approving or denying the request. Requests containing recommendations for a leave of absence from an appropriate licensed medical or mental health provider will generally be granted.

In addition to submitting the Treatment Provider Assessment Form to the Dean of Students, international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa seeking a MLOA must also submit the Reduced Course Load Due to Illness or Medical Condition Form to the Office of International Services. The student should contact the Office of International Services to obtain this form and for more information on taking a MLOA and its effect on visa status prior to withdrawing from classes and making a final decision.

## **REIMBURSEMENT OF TUITION AND FEES**

Students granted a MLOA may be eligible for a tuition refund. To apply for a tuition refund, a student must submit a Tuition Refund Application to the Assistant Dean of Students. This application is available through the Registrar's Office. The Assistant Dean of Students (or designee) will review the application and discuss it with the student, if necessary. The Assistant Dean of Students (or designee) will provide the student with a written determination either approving or denying the application. Refer to the Office of the Registrar's website, or call 513-556-1000, for criteria used to grant or deny an application.

## **PROCEDURE FOR REINSTATEMENT**

When a student on a MLOA is prepared to return to campus, the student should be re-evaluated by a licensed health provider to determine whether the student is ready to meet the academic and non-academic requirements of the University, with or without accommodations. The licensed health provider must complete the Reinstatement Treatment Provider Form. The student should send a written request seeking reinstatement, along with the completed Reinstatement Treatment Provider Form, and any other information relevant to the student's request, to the Dean of Students via email at [deanofstudents@uc.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@uc.edu) or fax at (513) 556-1399, thirty (30) calendar days prior to the first day of class for the semester seeking reinstatement.

Upon receiving the reinstatement request, the Dean of Students (or designee) will review the student's reinstatement request, Reinstatement Treatment Provider Form, and any other information submitted by the student, and determine whether the student is ready to return to the University. The Dean of Students (or designee) will provide the student with written notice of the decision and information on how to appeal a denial.

The Dean of Students (or designee) will only deny reinstatement if, after conducting an individualized assessment based on current medical evidence or on the best available objective evidence, it is determined that the student cannot safely return to the University, even with reasonable accommodations. The Dean of Students (or designee) will not base the reinstatement decision on speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations about individuals with medical conditions or disabilities.

If the Dean of Students (or designee) grants the student's request for reinstatement, the Dean of Students will notify the student's college. Although the Dean of Students (or designee) may reinstate a student to the University, the Dean of Students does not control the reinstatement status of the student to the student's college or program. While the student was away, their college or program may have adopted new curriculum requirements or guidelines that the student must adhere to upon return. Certain colleges and programs may also require the student to re-audition or re-apply. Students should work with their academic advisor to facilitate their return to their college or program.

## **APPEAL OF REINSTATEMENT DECISION**

If the Dean of Students (or designee) denies the student's request for reinstatement, the student may appeal. To appeal, the student must submit a written request to the Vice President of Student Affairs within five (5) University business days from the date of receipt of the Dean of Students' (or designee's) determination letter. A meeting between the Vice President of Student Affairs (or designee) and student to discuss the appeal will normally be set within seven (7) University business days following the request. The student may bring an advisor to the meeting, but the advisor may not speak for the student. The student must notify the Vice President of Student Affairs (or designee) two (2) University business days prior to the meeting if the student plans to bring an advisor who is an attorney. The student must authorize the Vice President of Student Affairs (or designee) to access relevant materials deemed necessary to consider the appeal. If the student refuses to grant access to the records, the meeting will proceed without the requested information.

The Vice President of Student Affairs (or designee) will inform the student in writing of its decision and reasons for the decision, as soon as practical following the meeting. The decision of the Vice President of Student Affairs (or designee) is effective upon being issued to the student and is final.

### **LICENSED HEALTH PROVIDERS**

Appropriate health providers for the purposes of submitting the MLOA Treatment Provider Assessment Form and Reinstatement Treatment Provider Form must be currently licensed within their state of practice and in good standing in their fields. They must not have an immediate familial relationship with the student.