

Medical Leave of Absence Policy and Procedure

The purpose of a medical leave of absence (MLOA) is to provide undergraduate and graduate students on the Danforth Campus time away from Washington University for treatment of a physical or mental health condition that either requires concentrated treatment such that standard engagement with school is not feasible, or impairs a student's ability to function successfully or safely as a member of the University community. The authority to grant a MLOA and permission to return from a MLOA resides with the student's individual School. This policy describes: 1) the process to request a MLOA; 2) important information about the student's status during a MLOA; and 3) the process to request reinstatement following a MLOA.

Forms and additional information can be found on the [MLOA website](#).

Process for MLOA Departure Request and Approval

1. Contact WashU Cares

To begin the MLOA process, send an email to studentmedleave@wustl.edu, to schedule an appointment with the Leave Case Manager. At that meeting you will review guidelines, policies and expectations for taking a leave and returning. Students can submit the required forms (see below) with the initial meeting request or following the meeting. Please understand, no recommendation can be forwarded to your respective school or program until all forms have been received and reviewed.

2. Required Medical Documentation for MLOA Departures

- All students must provide documentation from treatment provider(s). All documentation must be written in English from the medical provider, or translated by a licensed professional translation service.
- If your treatment provider is on campus, you can complete the [release of information form](#) and submit it with your medical documentation.
- If you have a current treatment provider off campus, you will need to sign their HIPPA compliant release of information and have the provider complete the Reason for Medical Leave Provider Documentation Form.
- If you are not currently working with a treatment provider, you must complete a Reason for Medical Leave Personal Statement.
- If an MLOA is recommended, the MLOA Committee will send a letter of recommendation, including recommended effective date, to the student's School and the school will make the final decision and notify the student.

3. **Required Administrative Forms for MLOA Departures.** After the MLOA Committee reviews the request for leave, the student should send a completed [Request for Medical Leave of Absence Form](#) and the signed MLOA policy to studentmedleave@wustl.edu. The student should consult their advisor, department, or the designated School official about the amount of time available for MLOA and the conditions for return from MLOA. It is the student's responsibility to understand any relevant implications regarding registration/grading, tuition/financial aid, or immigration.
4. **Deadlines.** Students must submit all necessary paperwork, including approval from their School or department, no later than the last day of classes by 5pm, this will allow their school to determine the outcome to obtain a MLOA for the current semester. Any request submitted beyond this deadline will be considered for the following semester.
5. **Determination.** The Dean's office will notify the student in writing of its determination. The designated School official will inform the student of the status of their current coursework, withdrawal from classes, and conditions for reinstatement.

Student Status during MLOA

1. **Student Status.** The student should check with their advisor, department, or designated School official about their status as a student while on MLOA. Students on leave retain access to their Washington University email account, however other resources and activities are not allowed while on leave.
2. **Registration.** While on MLOA, students may not register for any WashU classes unless they have completed the reinstatement process (below) and the student has been reinstated by their Dean's office.
3. **Tuition, Stipends and Scholarships.** The student should consult with their advisor, department, or designated School official about the MLOA's impact on stipends, scholarships, and refunds. It is strongly recommended that undergraduate students meet with their Student Financial Services advisor. Any students receiving funding (external, federal, sponsor, institutional, or other) are strongly encouraged to consult directly with their funding sources.
4. **Involvement in and Access to Campus.** While on MLOA, students are not allowed to take University classes, reside in university-owned student housing (including fraternity and sorority life housing and off-campus apartments), or participate in student organizations, programs, clubs, and activities.
5. **Financial Aid.** Students are not eligible for student financial aid while on MLOA; however, a LOA does not impact a student's future eligibility for financial aid.
 - Students on leave will be reported to the National Student Clearinghouse/National Student Loan Data Service as on an approved leave of absence for up to 180 days; leaves of absence that are longer will after 180 days be reported as withdrawn per federal reporting requirements.
 - Federal student loans go into repayment after the expiration of the grace period if the student is not enrolled for at least a half-time course load according to the academic load policies for their program level (undergraduate or graduate). A student on MLOA *does not* qualify for student loan deferment; however, the student may request forbearance from the lender which would temporarily suspend

student loan repayment. For questions about the impact of a MLOA on student loans, contact [Student Financial Services](#) and the [Federal Student Loans](#).

6. **Health Insurance.** A student considering a MLOA should consult with Habif Health and Wellness regarding their health insurance eligibility under the Washington University Student Health Insurance Plan (“the Plan”). Students who are not covered by the Plan during their MLOA should seek other insurance coverage.

Students granted an MLOA remain on the Plan **only** if they are approved by the MLOA Committee and (1) attended WashU full-time the previous semester; **or** (2) enrolled in the current academic term for thirty – one calendar days before requesting an MLOA. If eligible, students will remain on the Plan for the current plan year. The Student Health Insurance plan year is August 1 – July 31. If they meet one of the aforementioned criteria, a student is allowed two semesters of coverage while out on leave.

- Students approved for a MLOA in the fall semester will maintain insurance for the remainder of the current plan year, which will exhaust their two semesters of coverage at the conclusion of the plan year. Thus, they will not qualify for additional coverage under the Plan during the remainder of their leave.
- Students going on MLOA after January 12 will qualify for coverage into the following plan year, called a “continuation plan.” They must obtain this coverage directly through United Healthcare by calling 866-346-4826.
- If a student does not meet the required thirty-one days of plan enrollment, they will be able to purchase the “continuation plan” if you were on the previous year’s plan.
- Students on the Student Health Insurance Plan will continue to use Habif Health and Wellness as a primary care provider while residing within 50 miles of the University. Students covered under the Plan are required to comply with the terms of the Plan during MLOA. The enrollment deadline is September 5th of each Plan year. Failure to complete this step EACH plan year that the student remains on medical leave will automatically withdraw the student from the Plan.
- Habif Psychiatry and/or Counseling and Psychological Services will work with their current psychiatrist/therapist to find an outside provider for their Medical Leave

Process for MLOA Reinstatement Request and Approval

1. **Submit Reinstatement Materials to WashU Cares MLOA Committee.** In order to resume study at Washington University, the student will be asked to demonstrate that the condition that caused them to take a leave has resolved sufficiently to allow resumption of studies. The duration of the leave should correspond with an appropriate recovery time associated with the issues for which the leave was initiated.

Students must submit the documentation described below to studentmedleave@wustl.edu or by fax to the MLOA Committee at 314-970-9093. If using email, be aware that it is not necessarily a confidential method of communication. Please call (314) 935-5956 or email to confirm that we have received your documentation. Documentation from outside providers must originally be in English and on letterhead

from the medical provider or translated by a licensed professional translation service.

- **Reinstatement Form.** To be completed by the student. For undergraduate complete [here](#). For graduate and professional schools complete your program [specific form](#).
 - **Student Reflective Personal Statement.** To be completed by the student and turned in with paperwork. Hyper link
 - **Health Evaluation/Readiness for Return Form.** The student's health care provider(s) must complete and sign the "[Health Evaluation Form for Reinstatement after Medical Leave of Absence](#)." If the student is under the care of more than one health care provider, such as a psychiatrist, medical provider and/or therapist, a form from all providers are required. The form elicits pertinent information from the health provider including but not limited to (diagnosis, medications, dosages, length of time, and other functional behaviors).
 - **Release of Information.** Each student must complete a HIPPA compliant release of information with their provider to allow communication with the MLOA Committee to support assessment for readiness to return.
 - **Eating Disorders.** For students returning from an MLOA due to an eating disorder, the following additional information is required from the student's health care provider:
 - a. Complete history of the eating disorder (with explanation of severity of behaviors).
 - b. Report of physical exam completed by a physician within the past month.
 - c. Height and weight parameters and vital signs for the last 3-6 months (depending on duration of leave).
 - d. EKG and labs: CMP, CBC, amylase, urinalysis, magnesium, and phosphorus completed within the past 30 days (preferred) - 60 days (acceptable)
 - **Athletics.** Students returning from an MLOA may be asked to undergo an evaluation by a team physician and/or an additional healthcare provider designated by the university at the university's expense.
2. **Evaluation of Reinstatement Materials.** A representative of the MLOA Committee will contact the student to discuss next steps (e.g. additional documentation, interview). Then, the MLOA Committee will provide the Dean's office with a recommendation regarding the student's readiness to return to the University.
 3. **Confidentiality.** The Reinstatement Form and the Personal Statement and any other relevant information submitted as part of the reinstatement process may be shared with the designated School official after committee review.
 4. **Deadlines.** Requests for reinstatement beginning in a fall semester must be submitted between June 1 and July 1. Requests for reinstatement beginning in a spring semester must be submitted between November 1 and December 1.
 5. **Reinstatement Determination.** The designated School official will evaluate the information provided by MLOA Committee and make the final determination whether the student may be reinstated. Reinstatement is based on the student's readiness to manage a full-time course load (12-15 credits for undergraduates; minimum of 9 credits for graduate students). Generally, students will not be reinstated as a part-time student or for summer programs. The Dean's office will notify the student in writing of its determination. Factors the designated School official may consider include:

- The MLOA Committee evaluation and recommendation.
- The student's demonstrated ability to engage in productive and realistic academic planning.
- The student's personal statement included on the Reinstatement Form.
- Any external coursework completed or employment during the MLOA; and
- Any other factors that the appropriate school official, in their discretion, deems relevant under the student's particular circumstances.

MLOA Denial and Appeals Process

If the student's request to return from MLOA is denied, the student may appeal the decision to their respective school, for review and a final decision. The appeal must be submitted within seven business days of notification of a denial for reinstatement, the student may appeal, in writing, the decision, setting out the reasons for the appeal and any supporting materials.

Appeals will be submitted to the Dean of the School, School of Graduate Studies, or their designee. Appeals will be considered only when:

- There is relevant new information that was not reasonably available at the time the original petition was submitted and that in the judgment of the appeal officer, the introduction of the information may have changed the original decision or,
- When a substantial procedural error is demonstrated and in the reasonable judgment of the appeal officer such error is sufficient enough it may have affected the original decision.
- If the appeal officer determines the appeal has merit, they may consult the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Support and Wellness. Decisions will be communicated to the student within ten business days of the appeal deadline. This decision constitutes the final decision of the University.

Attestation of XXX

I, _____ (Print Name), hereby acknowledge that I have read the above Medical Leave of Absence Policy and understand the terms and conditions set forth therein. I am further requesting a review and recommendation from the WUC MLOA Committee that I be placed on a Medical Leave of Absence pursuant to the terms of this Policy.

Student Signature	Student ID#	Date
Witness Signature		Recommended MLOA Date

Email: studentmedleave@wustl.edu
Website: <https://students.wustl.edu/medical-leave-absence/>