

Campus Administrative Policy

Policy Title: Medical Leave of Absence and Fit to Return

Policy Number: 7038 Functional Area: **Student Affairs**

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Responsible Officer: Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Applies to: University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

A. INTRODUCTION

A student with a mental health and/or physical health condition may apply for a voluntary Medical Leave of Absence from the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. This document describes the circumstances under which a student may request a Medical Leave of Absence and the procedures the student must follow.

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C. POLICY STATEMENT

Students may seek a Medical Leave of Absence only for their own personal mental health and/or physical health circumstances. Students seeking a leave of absence for other reasons should contact their program director or the Office of the Registrar.

Students participating in an international education program may not seek a Medical Leave of Absence for the term in which the student is participating in the international education program.

The Medical Leave of Absence is not intended to shield a student from unsatisfactory progress or any other academic irregularity unrelated to a mental health and/or physical health condition that causes a degree of functional impairment that warrants a complete withdrawal from academic study for an academic term as provided in this policy.

Students who receive an approved Medical Leave of Absence are eligible for relief from their school or college's time-to-degree requirements, but remain subject to the time-to-degree requirements for any applicable accrediting body.

If a student takes courses for credit at another institution while on a Medical Leave of Absence, the student must comply with the applicable policies for receiving transfer of credit toward a degree from their school or college.

A student who has already received a Medical Leave of Absence during enrollment in an educational program and who has a mental or physical health emergency during a subsequent term may submit a request for an additional Medical Leave of Absence.

The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or their designee, in consultation with the applicable dean at the school or college, and the Medical Director of Student Mental Health or their respective designees, has the discretion to determine whether to grant an additional Medical Leave of Absence.

If CU Anschutz approves a Medical Leave of Absence, the Office of Case Management will notify relevant offices/departments that the student is withdrawing for medical reasons.

A student cannot withdraw a request for a Medical Leave of Absence after CU Anschutz has approved the request.

If the student is unable, due to their mental health and/or physical health condition, to complete an application for a Medical Leave of Absence, at the discretion of the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or their designee, CU Anschutz may accept an email from the student as notice that another individual will complete the application on behalf of the student, provided that the student has executed a FERPA release, as needed, for such individual.

D. MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

1. The student may submit an electronic application to the Office of Case Management for a Medical Leave of Absence for mental health and/or physical health conditions that prevent the student from functioning successfully or safely as a member of the CU Anschutz community. Students should promptly seek care from their treating physician, licensed mental health provider, or other licensed healthcare provider and should request a Medical Leave of Absence as soon as possible.

In exceptional circumstances, students may submit an application for a Medical Leave of Absence after the last day of the term. If submitting an application after the last day of the term, students may be required to complete additional procedures and provide additional documentation at the request of the student's progression body.

2. Along with the application, the student must submit adequate medical documentation from the student's treating physician, licensed mental health provider, or other licensed healthcare provider specifying a mental health and/or physical health condition that causes a degree of functional impairment that warrants a complete withdrawal from all academic activities including, but not limited to, academic study and/or clinical rotations for an academic term. The student and the provider should have a shared understanding of the information being submitted to CU Anschutz on the student's behalf. CU Anschutz will request documentation from the provider that must include the following:
 - a. The treating physician, licensed mental health provider, or other licensed healthcare provider's professional qualifications and licensure
 - b. Date the student first consulted the provider
 - c. Number of visits with the provider
 - d. Professional opinion regarding the approximate date on which the symptoms first began
 - e. Diagnosis of the mental health and/or physical health condition or statement of symptoms and plan for diagnostic workup
 - f. Impact of the condition on the student's academic activities (including attending classes and completing coursework)
 - g. Identification of the degree of functional impairment(s) that warrants withdrawal from all courses for the term
 - h. Treatment recommendations and estimated length of treatment plan
3. Submission of an application for a Medical Leave of Absence does not guarantee that the requested Medical Leave of Absence will be approved.

E. REENTRY FROM A MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The student must complete the following steps for the reentry process:

1. Submit a Return from a Medical Leave of Absence application and an academic and transition success plan to the Office of Case Management.

2. Submit medical documentation from the student's treating physician, licensed mental health provider, or other licensed healthcare provider. The student and the provider should have a shared understanding of the information being submitted to CU Anschutz on the student's behalf. CU Anschutz will request documentation from the provider and must include the following:
 - a. The treating physician, licensed mental health provider, or other licensed healthcare provider's professional qualification and licensure
 - b. Professional opinion regarding the student's ability to successfully perform academically with a full-time and/or half-time course load at CU Anschutz with or without continued treatment
 - c. A treatment summary with the following specificity:
 - Time span and type of treatment provided to the student during the student's time away from CU Anschutz
 - Whether the treatment was concluded (with or without the healthcare provider's approval) or is on-going
 - Specific intensive treatment, if any, while on the Medical Leave of Absence
 - Demonstrated understanding of the diagnoses and functional impairment that resulted in a Medical Leave of Absence, and clear evidence that the healthcare provider completing the medical documentation for reentry addressed these specific issues in the treatment of the student during the Medical Leave of Absence
 - If treatment is ongoing, recommended treatment plan during student's return to full-time study
 - Any continuing care needs or concerns for the student
 - Any safety concerns for the student or for others in the CU Anschutz community

The submitted medical documentation will be reviewed by the Medical Director of Student Mental Health or other non-treating clinician. The non-treating clinician may indicate agreement or disagreement with the treating provider's recommendation or request additional follow-up or documentation.

The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or their designee, in consultation with the applicable dean at the school or college, and the Medical Director of Student Mental Health or their designee, has the discretion to determine whether the student has submitted sufficient documentation to support the Return from a Medical Leave of Absence application and approve or deny reentry.

CU Anschutz may establish conditions for the student in the first term after reentry based on the information provided in connection with the Return from a Medical Leave of Absence application. If the student's Return from a Medical Leave of Absence application is approved with conditions, the student must also submit updated medical documentation consistent with the conditions or as otherwise provided in the approval of the Return from a Medical Leave of Absence application.

The student must submit medical documentation and any other information required by the Return from a Medical Leave of Absence application with sufficient time to allow for processing and registration. The student must also comply with all other applicable procedures for returning to CU Anschutz.

If a student seeks to extend their Medical Leave of Absence beyond one year, the student should contact the staff in their specific School/College or Office of Case Management to discuss applicable procedures.

Students may appeal a decision denying a Medical Leave of Absence and/or Reentry to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or their designee. An appeal will only be considered when the student submits a completed appeal form, available from the Office of Case Management, to the Office of Case Management within five (5) business days of the date on the denial letter. The grounds for appeal are limited to the following:

- The existence of procedural errors so substantial that such errors greatly impacted the decision
- New medical documentation that was not reasonably available at the time of the initial decision.

Students who have concerns regarding a possible violation of CU Anschutz's anti-discrimination policies should contact the Office of Equity.

Notes

1. Dates of official enactment and amendments:

September 27, 2019: Adopted/Approved by the Chancellor

2. History:

October 1, 2019: This policy describes the circumstances under which a student may request a Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA) and the procedures the student must follow to obtain the MLOA as well as the procedures the student must follow for re-entry into their academic program once the health condition is mitigated.

3. Initial Policy Effective Date: October 1, 2019

4. Cross References/Appendix:

- [Campus Administrative Policy 7005, Guidelines for Assisting Students with Pregnancy and Parenting](#)