

# VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY MEDICAL LEAVE/WITHDRAWAL

Medical leave/withdrawal is available for all students (undergraduate and graduate-level) with a documented physical or psychological illness of a serious nature that requires them to leave the university after the last day to withdraw with a grade of "W" without completing their coursework, or that requires them to withdraw from the university for up to two consecutive semesters. Students who have reported an incident to the Title IX office may also be eligible for a medical withdrawal under this policy. After two consecutive semesters, a student who does not take appropriate steps to return to the university will be deemed officially withdrawn. Students must intend to withdraw from all coursework to be eligible for medical leave. Approved medical leave does not guarantee students the ability to return to the university without approval from the dean of students (or designee). Students attempting to withdraw from an individual summer session should understand that all summer sessions are considered part of a single semester. If a student wishes to withdraw from a specific summer session, they must petition their academic college. If a student wishes to switch to part-time status or withdraw from selected courses, they must contact their academic advisor and obtain approval of their college dean.

## ***Voluntary Medical Leave/Withdrawal***

Medical leave requests are processed through the Division of Student Affairs and approved by the dean of students. The dean of students may grant a student medical leave in place of the student requesting late withdrawal through their academic college. Requests for medical leave must be submitted on or before the last day of regular classes of the term from which the student wishes to withdraw. The Dean of Students will not retroactively withdraw students from previously completed terms. Students must follow the existing process to receive a **retroactive medical withdrawal**.

Students are encouraged to discuss medical issues with a licensed healthcare provider as soon as it becomes apparent that their health is preventing them from successfully completing their work. This serves both the best interests of the student and the university. In order for a medical leave request to be considered, students must provide official documentation from a licensed healthcare provider.

Documentation may be submitted via the **online application form**, fax, U.S. mail, or by dropping off the documents at the dean of student's office (103 Kilcawley House). The official documentation must contain the following information:

- The care provider's name on office letterhead
- A brief statement identifying the student as a patient or client
- The date of illness onset
- Dates of medical care
- The general nature of the student's medical condition
- The impact of the student's medical condition on their coursework
- The most recent date that the student was able to attend classes
- The length of time (up to two consecutive semesters) that the student will require medical leave

Upon receipt of the aforementioned information, the dean of students will work with the Medical Withdrawal Review Committee to authenticate the documents. The committee is comprised of the Director of Student Counseling Services, Associate Director for Accessibility Services, Associate Vice President for Student Experience, Associate Vice President for Student Enrollment and Business Services, Assistant Dean of Students for Community Standards, Advocacy, and Conduct, and Student Advocacy and Support Case Manager. This group reserves the right to discuss documents and request authentication from the university's currently contracted health center

as necessary. After the documents have been authenticated, the Dean of Students will approve or deny the request.

If medical leave is approved, the following will occur:

- The dean of students will notify the student, the Office of the Registrar, the Bursar's Office, the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, the student's college dean and the student's department chair that leave was approved.
- The Registrar's Office will adjust the student's transcript to reflect a grade of "W" for all semester courses. Grades of "W" do not affect GPA or a student's academic standing.
- The Bursar's Office will audit the student's account and bill for any outstanding fees. The audit may take up to 30 days to conclude. If the student has no active balance, or has a credit on their account, they will receive a statement containing this information. Students who are approved for medical leave may receive a reduction of tuition fees in proportion to the number of weeks in attendance in accordance with the late withdrawal date established by the Bursar's office.
- If the student lives in university housing, the dean of students will notify the Office of Housing & Residence Life of their medical leave. The student is individually responsible for scheduling a time to vacate their residential space and return room keys.
- If the student receives veteran's benefits, is an international student on a visa, or is an NCAA athlete on scholarship, the student must independently notify the appropriate office(s) to avoid disruption to aid, additional benefits, or eligibility.
- If the student is a dependent, the dean of students does not notify their parents/guardians of the medical leave, unless the student signs a release of information waiver.
- The decision is final; however, additional supporting documentation will be considered if received prior to the above deadline. Students may also submit future applications as appropriate due to change(s) in circumstances.

## ***Involuntary Medical Leave/Withdrawal***

In order to provide a safe environment in support of the university mission, a student may be required to take involuntary medical leave when their behavior, relative to their illness, is incompatible with community standards. Requiring a student to take a leave of absence is rare and only considered when no reasonable accommodations can adequately reduce the risk(s) described below. The Dean of Students will review information and consult with the University CARE Team, Medical Withdrawal Review Committee, and/or others with knowledge of the situation on a case-by-case basis as appropriate. The Dean of Students will issue a notice to the student in writing that an involuntary leave of absence is under consideration.

Students may be considered for involuntary medical leave if:

- Objective evidence suggests a significant risk to the student's health or safety and/or the health or safety of others including but not limited to significant risk of suicide, persistent self-harm and/or homicidal intentions.
- The student's physical/psychological illness requires specialized services unavailable at the university or locally.
- The student's behavior severely disrupts the university environment causing significant emotional and/or physical distress to other students, staff, and/or faculty in the classroom, campus community, or within the living learning community. Such disruption may stem from a single incident or a pattern of ongoing behavior.
- The student has not complied with previously established assessment and/or treatment plans required by university officials. Failure to follow these plans of action increases the likelihood that a student's behavior progresses toward long-term impairment and inability to function as a successful student at the university.

A student may appeal the decision for involuntary withdrawal in writing to the Division of Student Affairs within five (5) business days of notice of the

involuntary withdrawal. The associate vice president for student enrollment and business services or associate vice president for student experience or designee (other than the dean of students) will review the appeal and provide a decision in writing within eight (8) business days of receipt. While this is the final level of appeal, the appellate authority has the discretion to alter or extend the return date on a case-by-case basis. During the appeals process, the university reserves the right to initiate or uphold interim measures such as removal from campus or residential housing.

#### ***Effective Date of Medical Leave/Withdrawal and Possible Extension of Leave Status***

The effective date of approved medical leave is the last day the student attended class. A student's one or two-semester leave period will commence on the first day of the subsequent academic semester. A student on a one-semester medical leave may request an additional one-semester extension by submitting a written request to the dean of students at least 60 days prior to the desired semester of continued leave. Additional documentation may be necessary for approval of an extension. A decision approving or denying extended medical leave will follow the same process described in the section entitled "Medical Leave Process." The dean of students has the discretion to alter or extend the return date on a case-by-case basis.

#### ***Returning to the University***

Students on medical leave are not regarded as having permanently withdrawn from the university and are not required to apply for readmission unless the leave period exceeds two consecutive semesters. Upon departure from the university, a medical leave hold will be placed and remain on a student's account, inhibiting them from registering for courses until all responsibilities have been met for re-entry.

A student requesting to return from medical leave must:

- Have a licensed care provider provide a specific diagnosis and a detailed report discussing the nature of the psychological or medical illness, the major symptoms of the illness, and how the illness might affect the student in the university environment.
- Have their licensed healthcare provider establish and outline a treatment plan, including necessary medications and any substantial side effects that could impair the student's ability to return to campus. Any recommended accommodations should be included in the report, if long-term disability exists.
- Provide a signed release of information allowing the Dean of Students, Student Advocacy and Support Case Manager, and Director of Student Counseling Services (only if reason for leave was related to a psychological issue) to communicate with the licensed healthcare provider to determine readiness to return to the University (if additional information is needed).
- Provide proof of progress toward or completion of active recommendations from the licensed healthcare provider.
- Complete any required student conduct sanctions stemming from prior behavioral incidents, if applicable.
- Assure all above documentation is received via the **online application form**, fax, U.S. mail, or by dropping off the documents at the Dean of Student's office at least 60 days prior to the desired semester of return.

Upon receipt, the dean of students will work with the Medical Withdrawal Review Committee to review the aforementioned information, determine whether requirements have been satisfied, and establish if the student is ready to return to campus.

The decision is final; however, additional supporting documentation will be considered if received within the 60-day timeframe prior to desired semester of return. If approved to return to the university, agree to meet with the Dean of Students, Student Advocacy and Support Case Manager, and/or other appropriate designee for regular check-ins, as requested.

A resolution letter outlining the status of the medical withdrawal and the guidelines for return will be forwarded electronically to the following

appropriate offices: Registrar's Office, Bursar's Office, college dean and department chair, Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, and Housing and Residence Life (if appropriate).

#### **contact For Questions/Concerns**

Office: Dean of Students

Location: Kilcawley Center

Website: <https://ysu.edu/student-experience/student-outreach-support>  
(<https://ysu.edu/student-experience/student-outreach-support/>)