



MEDICAL STUDENT POLICY

Policy Title: Leave of Absence	Curricular Structure: All Medical Students in Legacy and ASCEND
Approved By: Executive Oversight Committee (EOC)	Last Approved: 6/7/24

RELEVANT LCME ELEMENT(S):

- 9.9 Student Advancement and Appeal Process
- 11.0 Medical Student Academic Support, Career Advising, and Educational Records

POLICY STATEMENT:

A leave of absence (LOA) is a period of temporary non-enrollment in the MD program. A LOA constitutes a mutual agreement between the School and a student regarding utilization of time during the leave, as well as the requirements that must be met prior to reentering the curriculum.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

All requests for a LOA are made directly to and granted by the Office for Student Affairs' discretion. Students who wish to pursue a research year should reach out to the Medical Student Research Office (MSRO) for more information about taking a Scholarly Year.

Student Initiated LOAs:

- **Personal Leave of Absence:** A student in good academic standing may request a Personal LOA to take time off to address issues of a personal nature, including to pursue outside work or interests, those related to the health and well-being of a family member or partner, childbirth, adoption, or other parental responsibilities. The leave may be extended for a second year at the Office for Student Affairs' discretion. Any request beyond Time to Degree is reviewed for approval or non-approval by the Promotions Committee.
- **Medical Leave of Absence:** Students may initiate a Medical LOA for health-related reasons. Students on a Medical LOA will require physician's clearance prior to return. The term of the leave is up to one year. The leave may be extended for a second year at the Office for Student Affairs' discretion. Any request beyond Time to Degree is reviewed for approval or non-approval by the Promotions Committee.



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- **Educational Leave of Absence:** Students in good academic standing may request an Educational LOA. Students who choose to pursue an additional academic degree at another institution or at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai (ISMMS) and are not working towards their MD degree, will be considered on an Educational Leave of Absence from the MD program. The term of the leave is up to one year. The leave may be extended for a second year at the Office for Student Affairs' discretion. Any request beyond Time to Degree is reviewed for approval or non-approval by the Promotions Committee. This does not apply to students enrolled in the MD-PhD program at ISMMS.
- **Leave of Absence for Military Service:** A student may request a LOA for military service. This includes students who will fulfill service in the US armed forces and students from countries outside of the US that require compulsory military service. Students returning from a LOA due to military service will return for any term within a year after the student's release from active service. Students should direct any questions about the return from active service process to the Office of Student Affairs.

School Initiated LOAs:

- **Administrative Leave of Absence:** Students may be placed on a mandated Administrative LOA by the Deans for Medical Education, the Promotions Committee, or their representative. This LOA is usually as the result of students not complying with the School's administrative, academic or professional requirements, or if students present a potential harm or has engaged in or is alleged to have engaged in behavior that is dangerous or deleterious to the educational, research, clinical or community environment. Students on an Administrative LOA must complete a fitness for duty evaluation before returning to the program.

Withdrawal

Students who wish to withdraw from the MD Program must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to discuss their intent to separate from the School.

- Students may request a withdrawal from the MD program if in Good Academic Standing.
- Students who are Not in Good Standing or are at risk for Dismissal may be granted permission by the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs to request to withdraw with a transcript and MSPE notation of "Not in Good Standing."

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PROCEDURES:

A. Clearance to Take a LOA:

- Meeting Requirements: Students who wish to go on a LOA must obtain clearance beforehand. Students must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to discuss the reason for and understand the implications of the LOA before filling out the appropriate forms. Students will be provided with all support options and appropriate referrals to make an informed decision.
- Once given clearance, students must fill out the Request for Leave of Absence form located on the [Office of the Registrar website](#), which will go through various approvals. Students will receive a final approval letter with the timing and conditions of the leave, including information about communication and initiation of the return process.

B. Documentation and Implications of a LOA:

- Documentation of a LOA: The dates for a LOA will be noted on the Transcript and the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE). The reason for the LOA will not be included in these documents, except for an Administrative LOA, which will be designated as such on the transcript and MSPE.
- Financial Implications of a LOA: Students on a LOA are not eligible for financial support during their leave through the ISMMS Office of Student Financial Services.

For students with prior or current educational loans, deferment ends after 180 days.

- Health Insurance: Students on LOA are not eligible to continue with the School's [health insurance plan](#) unless granted approval by the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs.
- Housing Eligibility: Students who reside in student housing are required to vacate while on LOA.
- Status within the MD Program: Students who take a LOA from the MD program do not retain student status with the School. Students may not participate in any educational activities, access any student resources, and are not eligible for conference funding or other internal funding for scholarly pursuits from Medical Education.
- Patient Care: Students are not covered by malpractice insurance during their LOA and may not participate in any patient facing activities that provide direct care, such as shadowing or EHHOP.

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- C. Returning from a LOA: Students should refer to the individualized terms of their leave letter to understand the expectations and timeline for return.
- Return Forms: Students must complete the [Return from Leave of Absence form](#) located on the Office of the Registrar website by the date specified in their approval letter.
 - Failure to Complete the Return Form: Students who do not complete the form by the return date specified in their approval letter will be automatically withdrawn from the School, as it will be assumed the student no longer wishes to be considered enrolled. Students who wish to apply for reinstatement at a later date may complete a new application for admission.
 - Return Tasks: Students are responsible for checking their email periodically during their LOA to ensure all return requirements are completed. Requirements include completing the return form, compliance, entering the class lotteries, and other class specific tasks.
 - Approval: The Office of Student Affairs is the final approval for return from a LOA.
- D. Withdrawals: Students who wish to withdraw from the MD program must meet with the Office of Student Affairs.
- Paperwork: Upon approval, students will be provided with the Withdrawal form to complete their check out.
 - Documentation: The student will receive a letter documenting their request with their withdrawal date and academic standing. The withdrawal will also be noted on the students' transcript and Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

RELATED POLICIES:

Progression Requirements Policy
Academic Status Policy
Attendance Requirements

REVISION HISTORY: