Medical Leave of Absence

A student with a serious medical condition may elect to withdraw and take a leave of absence from the University with appropriate medical documentation. Circumstances under which this procedure is appropriate and the procedures the student must adhere to follow.

Study Abroad

For students participating in a study abroad program, the medical leave of absence program is not an option for you during the term abroad. The medical leave of absence is a program for students who are attending classes on the University of Denver's campus. Study abroad participation involves additional institutions both administratively and financially, and the University of Denver is unable to dictate policies to other institutions.

Withdrawal Procedures

Please note: Once a medical leave of absence is approved, students cannot withdraw their request.

For the purpose of this policy and procedure, the term “medical” or “health” includes both physical and mental health conditions.

1. Leave of absence and withdrawal: these terms both refer to a process by which a student officially withdraws from the University. The leave of absence program assumes that the student will be returning to the University within four quarters, though the student is not obligated to do so. The withdrawal program assumes that the student will not be returning, though the student may do so if otherwise eligible.

2. Any course that is dropped after the first week of the quarter will result in a notation designating a withdrawal (“W”) on the student’s transcript regardless of the reason for the drop. A withdrawal notation (“W”) is an appropriate registration status indicating that a student withdrew after the first week of the quarter. The “W” grade notations are not factored into a student's GPA.

3. The simple diagnosis of a medical condition may not warrant a medical leave of absence. However, if the student is able to document the presence of a medical or mental health condition along with significant functional impairments that warrant withdrawing from all courses for the term, a medical leave of absence may be approved.
   • The University will expedite the withdrawal process and granting an automatic tuition refund for any funds paid out of pocket.
   • In general, it is expected that students experiencing serious health conditions will seek medical care and request a medical leave of absence before the end of the sixth week and/or before the end of 60-percent completion of the term. In exceptional circumstances, if there is documented evidence of a medical or mental health emergency or a significant exacerbation of symptoms, students may request a medical leave of absence by the last day of classes.
   • If the withdrawal occurs after the last day of the term the student must complete an exception to academic policy. The student will request a retroactive drop of all courses for that quarter due to medical reasons. In general, it is expected that the student will have evidence of having proactively sought healthcare during the term in question. The same requirements for medical documentation apply through this process.

4. If able to do so, the student should complete the medical leave of absence form. If the student is unable to complete the form, an academic advisor may do so, at the discretion of the associate vice chancellor for student life, the executive director of academic resources or their designee. An email request to complete the form by the student or the parent/guardian, if the student is unable to, should be sent to advising@du.edu. The email should include the student’s id number.

5. A request for a medical leave of absence or medical withdrawal must be accompanied by appropriate medical documentation to support the student’s request. Documentation must include the information identified below. Complete medical records are neither required nor desired:
   • Documentation must be submitted by an appropriately licensed medical or mental health provider on letterhead from that provider’s facility. The provider’s license number should be clearly evident somewhere in the documentation.
   • Documentation must include the date that the student first consulted the provider, the number of visits with that provider, and the approximate date that the provider believes the symptoms first began.
   • Documentation must clearly state the diagnosis, the symptoms, and explicitly state the functional impairments which inhibit the student from attending classes and/or completing coursework. For instance, simply stating that a student is depressed does not support a medical leave of absence.
     • Documentation must outline the treatment recommendations and the estimated length of the treatment plan. If the provider has an estimation of when the student might be able to return to the University, that information can be included as well. Please note: Students must also complete a HiPAA-compliant consent form with their healthcare provider to give permission to the University’s Health and Counseling Center and Student Life for release of the information by the provider. Students get this form from their treating provider.
   • Information provided to the University as part of a medical leave of absence will be considered confidential and will be released only in circumstances described by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA).

6. If the medical leave of absence is approved, Academic Resources will notify relevant departments that the student is withdrawing for medical reasons:
   • Faculty
   • Office of the Registrar
   • Student Financial Services
Medical Leave of Absence

1. As a condition of accepting a medical leave, before the student’s return to the University, the student agrees to:
   • Obtain appropriate medical treatment.
   • Submit medical documentation from an appropriate health care provider to the executive director of academic resources a minimum of six weeks prior to the quarter for which the student plans to return.
   • The documenting letter must be signed, dated, and on the healthcare provider’s letterhead addressing every item in the healthcare questionnaire (http://www.du.edu/studentlife/ advising/media/treatinghealthcareprofessionalform.pdf).
   • Please note: Students must also complete a HIPAA-compliant consent form with their healthcare provider to give permission to the University’s Health and Counseling Center and Student Life for release of the information by the provider. Students get this form from their treating provider.

2. The student must also complete an Application to Re-Enter (http://www.du.edu/studentlife/ advising/policies-forms/re-entry-form.html) and the questionnaire (https://publicdocs.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofDenver&layout_id=53).

3. If the student attends other colleges or universities while away from the University of Denver, transcripts from each institution must be submitted.

4. The associate vice chancellor for student life, executive director of academic resources in consultation with the University’s Health and Counseling Center’s executive director, medical director, and director of counseling or their designee has final determination as to whether the documentation the student has submitted is sufficient.

5. If the student meets all eligibility requirements, including physical presence in the course for the first 31 days of the quarter, the student must submit the Application to Re-Enter. If the student’s physical presence is interrupted, for example, by illness, the student must submit forms in consultation with the University’s Health and Counseling Center.

6. The student’s medical leave of absence will be determined based on the term length and course start date. Refunds will be based on the last date of attendance in an academically-related activity in combination with the date the condition was officially recognized by a healthcare provider. Please note: withdrawing prior to week six may impact a student’s federal financial aid award, please contact the Office of Financial Aid for more information.
5. With appropriate medical documentation per the requirement above, the student is eligible to resume studies within a five-year period unless they are on suspension or have been dismissed from the University. However, the University cannot guarantee that merit-based financial aid will be awarded. If the student is away from the University of Denver for an extended period, it may be difficult for the student to finish the initial degree program, since the curriculum changes over time.

• Please note: If the student has been away from the University for five years or more, then the student also has to go through the readmission process (http://bulletin.du.edu/undergraduate/undergraduateprograms/traditionalbachelorsprogram/admission/readmitted) through and there are no guarantees for readmission to the University.