

## MEDICAL LEAVE

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Medical leave is available for students who, due to documented serious physical or psychological illness, need to leave the University during the semester without completing their course work or to withdraw from the University for no longer than two consecutive semesters.

### ***1. Return to Campus***

Students on medical leave are not regarded as having permanently withdrawn from the University and need not apply for readmission through the Admissions Office. However, students must be approved for fitness to return to campus through the process described in the policy.

### ***2. Medical Leave Incomplete***

A student may receive a more limited medically excused status if they are approved for leave in the final 40 percent of a semester and the student has received faculty approval for at least one incomplete.

### ***3. Initiation of Request for Medical Leave***

A student requesting medical leave must make the request in writing to the Medical Director (for physical health reasons) or the Director of Counseling Services (for mental health reasons). The request may be for either one or two semesters. The director will notify the Registrar of the request and will direct the student to provide appropriate documentation from a physician, therapist, or other qualified caregiver.

### ***4. Determination of Request***

a. A decision approving or disapproving the medical leave request will be made by the Medical Director or the Director of Counseling Services. If there is a pending academic or disciplinary proceeding that could result in a suspension from the University, medical leave requests will not be considered until the proceeding has been concluded. The director will provide a copy of the decision to the Registrar. The Registrar will notify appropriate offices on campus of the student's status and send a copy of the decision to the student for their records.

b. Copies of the decision will be maintained in the student's academic and student life files. Original documentation from the student's medical records will be maintained by the Medical Director or the Director of Counseling Services.

### ***5. Deadline for Application for Medical Leave Status***

Deadline to apply for medical leave for the current semester is the Monday prior to the first day of finals in the Fall or spring semester. No retroactive medical leave applications will be considered.

#### ***6. Effective Date of Medical Leave Status***

A student whose request for medical leave is approved during the first 60 percent of the semester will be deemed to have medical leave status as of the date on which their request was made to the Medical Director or the Director of Counseling Services. The student will remain on medical leave status for the balance of that semester and may request an extension for the next semester by filing a request as described below.

#### ***7. Extension of Medical Leave Status***

a. A student on medical leave status may request a one-semester extension by providing new documentation to the Medical Director or the Director of Counseling Services by August 1 for the fall semester or December 1 for the spring semester. A decision approving or disapproving the request will be made by the Medical Director or the Director of Counseling Services. The director will provide a copy of the decision to the Registrar.

b. Medical leave status may continue no longer than two consecutive semesters. After this time, a student who does not return to the University will be deemed officially withdrawn (see Withdrawal from the University policy below).

#### ***8. Grades and Completion of Academic Work***

a. A student whose request for medical leave is approved during the first 60 percent of the semester will be given a grade of "W" (Withdrawal) in each course for which they are registered. No "I" (Incomplete) grades will be given. No credit will be earned for any course, and a prorated refund of charges will be made.

b. A student whose request for medical leave is approved during the final 40 percent of the semester may, with the approval of his/her instructor(s), take a Medical Leave Incomplete for one or more courses. In this case, the grade of "MI" will be entered by the Registrar's Office (when a Medical Leave Incomplete is not deemed feasible, a grade of "W" will be given). No refund of charges will be made for courses in which a grade of "MI" is given. To receive academic credit for a Medical Leave Incomplete, the student must complete their incomplete work by the final day of the semester following that during which medical leave was approved. It is the responsibility of the student to contact individual instructors to arrange for the timely completion of course work. If the student does not complete work in a course within this time, the grade of "MI" for that course will be changed to a "W."

#### ***9. Required Medical Leave Under Extreme Circumstances***

Under extreme circumstances, a student experiencing emotional or illness so that they are deemed to be a danger to themselves or others may be required to withdraw from the University and will be given medical leave status.

#### ***10. Determination of Fitness for Return to Campus***

a. A student requesting to return from medical leave will be asked to sign a release allowing the Medical Director or the Director of Counseling Services to communicate with the physician, therapist, or other caregiver, as well as with other persons at Messiah University involved in determining the student's fitness to return.

b. The student must provide documentation from their physician, therapist, or other caregiver concerning current medical status by August 1 to be considered for approval to return for the fall semester, or by December 1 to be considered for approval to return for the spring semester. The student also may be required to have an interview with the Medical Director or the Director of Counseling Services and/or the Director of Academic Accessibility. All information will be reviewed, and a decision regarding fitness to return will be made by the Medical Director or the Director of Counseling Services, who will notify the Deans and the Registrar. The Registrar will notify the student and appropriate offices on campus if approval is given.

c. The granting of medical leave by the University does not guarantee that the student will be allowed to return.

#### ***11. Registration and Housing for Returning Students***

A student on medical leave will retain all accrued seniority for housing and registration purposes and may register conditionally for courses if they intend to return for the following semester. Any money paid to the University as deposits against tuition or charges anticipated for the following semester will be refunded in full if the student is not approved to return. Documentation for determination of fitness to return must be received by the deadlines listed above and approval to return granted in order for registration to be considered final. Seniority for housing preferences cannot be guaranteed for students who do not meet these requirements.

#### ***12. Financial Aid Implications***

It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Financial Aid Office individually to discuss the implications of medical leave for their financial aid.

#### ***13. Refunds of Tuition and Fees***

Refunds for students who are granted medical leave during the first 60 percent of a semester are determined as follows:

a. Refunds on all charges, including tuition, room, board, and special fees will be prorated on a per diem basis based on the boarding calendar.

b. Refunds and adjusted bills will be sent to the student's home address following withdrawal for medical leave. No refunds will be given for students who are granted medical leave during the final 40 percent of the semester.