

Clark University Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence Policy

Introduction

Clark University recognizes that students may experience medical situations that significantly limit their ability to function successfully or safely in their role as students. In those situations, students should consider requesting a Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA), which permits students to take a break from college life and their studies, so that they may receive treatment and later return to Clark with an enhanced opportunity to achieve their academic and co-curricular goals.

Clark University has designed this policy to ensure that students are given the individualized attention, consideration, and support needed to address medical issues that arise or escalate during their time at Clark. This policy outlines a flexible and individualized process that students should follow to request a medical leave of absence to address their medical difficulties so that they can return to successfully matriculate.

Applying for Medical Leave of Absence

The following procedures provide for an individualized approach for assessing a student's eligibility to take and return from a MLOA and are designed to be reasonable and flexible. Students who are interested in taking a MLOA should contact the Dean of Students office (939 Main Street, Alumni and Student Engagement Center, Second floor; dos@clarku.edu; 508-793-7423) to initiate the process. The exit process proceeds as quickly as possible to allow students experiencing difficulties due to a medical or mental health condition to immediately step away from Clark University and receive the support they need. Students who take a Medical Leave of Absence are required to be separated from the institution for the equivalent time of a full term unless otherwise approved by the Dean of Students office.

Steps for applying for a Medical Leave of Absence:

1. Meet with a dean in the Dean of Students office and complete the leave of absence application form.
2. You will be asked to provide supporting documentation from a licensed mental health provider who is familiar with the student and the condition and is recommending to the Dean of Students that a student's request for a MLOA be approved.
 - a. NOTE: Students who are being seen at Clark's Center for Counseling and Personal Growth (CPG) should contact CPG about obtaining documentation for a medical leave of absence (501 Park Avenue, counseling@clarku.edu; 508-793-7678). Students who are being treated at Clark's Student Health Services, should contact Student Health Services about obtaining documentation for a medical leave of absence (501 Park Avenue; 508-793-7467).
3. Submit all completed paperwork to the Dean of Students office.
4. If you have an off campus medical provider, we will connect your medical provider with the appropriate office at Clark (Student Health Services and/or Counseling and Personal Growth) as part of your treatment team.

Dean of Students

Please Note: Clark University Medical Leave of Absence policy indicates that students *must be away from the university for the equivalent time of a full term* unless otherwise approved by the Dean of Students office. The goal of taking a Medical Leave of Absence is to ensure that students return to Clark with an increased opportunity for academic success and students should take the time to achieve this goal. Students who apply for a Medical Leave of Absence prior to the end of the first quarter of the semester will be able to apply for readmission for the following semester. Students who apply for a Medical Leave of Absence after the end of the first quarter must also be away from Clark in the following semester. Dates for the end of the first quarter are in line with the 50% tuition refund date: <https://www2.clarku.edu/offices/business/studentaccounts/refund.cfm>

Returning from Medical Leave of Absence

Steps for returning from a Medical Leave of Absence:

1. Contact the Dean of Students office to discuss student's interest in re-enrolling well in advance of the intended return date. The following timelines apply to those seeking to return after a Medical Leave of Absence to ensure that there is sufficient time to review the student's request and re-enroll the student. If materials are received after these deadlines, consideration for a return may be made for the following semester rather than the semester for which a student was initially seeking to return:
 - 1) Students seeking to return from a MLOA in the spring term should submit paperwork to the Dean of Students office no sooner than **November 1st** and no later than **December 1st**.
 - 2) Students seeking to return from a MLOA in the summer term should submit paperwork to the Dean of Students office no sooner than **March 1st** and no later than **April 1st**
 - 3) Students seeking to return from a MLOA in the fall term should submit paperwork to the Dean of Students office no sooner than **June 1st** and no later than **July 1st**.
2. Students will need to provide three completed forms: **1)** Return from Medical Leave Release of Information Form, **2)** Student Report for Return from Medical Leave of Absence and, **3)** Community Provider Report for Return from Medical Leave of Absence. All forms must be submitted to the Dean of Students Office, fax (508-793-8846) or mail the forms to Dean of Students, Clark University, 950 Main Street, Worcester MA 01610.
3. Students returning from a medical leave of absence are required to have a re-entry interview with staff in the center for Counseling and Personal Growth (CPG) or Clark's Student Health Services prior to the beginning of the semester in which they intend to return. This re-entry interview will be scheduled after all appropriate documentation is received by the Dean of Students.
4. Re-entry to Clark will be supported if all of the following conditions are met:
 - 1) The student is assessed to be at low risk to others.
 - 2) The student demonstrates having successfully participated in treatment with a licensed medical care provider while on medical leave.
 - 3) The licensed medical care provider recommends readmission.
 - 4) The student's ongoing treatment needs can be reasonably met while being enrolled as a fulltime student.
 - 5) Following the re-entry interview with CPG or Health Services, the director provides the Dean of Students with a written confirmation in support of the student's re-entry. The Dean of Students will remove the student's medical hold and notify the student in writing of their official readmission.