Medical Leave of Absence: Handbook for Hopkins Students and Parents
A Medical Leave of Absence (or MLoA) is a temporary break from enrollment to allow students to devote their attention to medical treatment.

A student’s academic journey is sometimes disrupted by physical or mental health difficulties that make it difficult or impossible to participate in academics and complete the current semester. In such an instance, the student may file for MLoA.

The Office of the Dean of Student Life is committed to supporting students throughout their time at Johns Hopkins, including during the MLoA process. Case managers in the Office of the Dean of Student Life help students manage physical and mental health concerns, personal and family emergencies, financial issues, and other obstacles that may arise during their college experience. Each undergraduate student has access to a Case Manager whose job is to provide guidance and logistical support. Most students who take MLoA do come back, and the university is committed to making the process as smooth as possible.

This brochure is designed for use by anyone considering taking MLoA or already in the process, and for their parents. If you have a question that is not answered here, please call the Office of the Dean of Student Life for further assistance or see our website (https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/student-life/support-and-assistance/).
Should You Take a Medical Leave of Absence? Some Considerations

What is a medical leave of absence (MLoA)?
An MLoA is a temporary break from enrollment granted to students whose physical or mental health difficulties are impeding their functioning at school. MLoA allows students an opportunity to step away from academic stress and prioritize their treatment.

MLoA is different from a Personal Leave of Absence. Personal LoAs, offered through the KSAS and WSE advising offices, are intended to be used to pursue an experience away from campus such as working on a political campaign, caring for a sick relative, or entering military service. For students who need treatment themselves, the MLoA process is a voluntary process built to assure students have the support they need, and to help mitigate the factors contributing to the need for leave.

Whom do I contact to request an MLoA or to discuss the possibility?
A case manager in the Office of the Dean of Student Life can assist you with a medical leave of absence, even if you aren’t sure it will be necessary. Sometimes leave can be forestalled through discussion and referral. If you have been working with a staff member in the Student Health and Wellness Center or Counseling Center, you may want to discuss the possibility of a medical leave with your provider.

When can I request an MLoA?
To take MLoA for a future semester, you may meet with a Case Manager at any time. To take a leave for the current semester, your request must be submitted by your Case Manager no later than the last day for course withdrawal, typically in week 12, as noted on the Academic Calendar (studentaffairs.jhu.edu/registrar/academic-calendar).

What are the financial implications?
Financial Aid can answer any questions about how your leave may impact your aid for the current and future semesters. The Office of Student Financial Services is required by federal statute to recalculate federal financial aid eligibility for students taking a leave of absence prior to completing 60 percent of a payment period or term. More information about this policy is available at finaid.jhu.edu/r2t4.

Students placed on any type of leave

“My medical leave was one of the most important decisions I think that I’ve made since coming to Hopkins. It gave me time to work on myself and grow as a person without the constant stress of school.”

—STUDENT

“My case manager really made it easy to go on leave. I was already dealing with a lot at the time to necessitate medical leave and I remember feeling very stressed about the potential bureaucratic process of leaving. I was pleasantly surprised (and extremely relieved) to find that was not the case at all. The case manager took care of everything. I just had to focus on getting better.”

—STUDENT
are considered as not enrolled and are reported to the National Student Clearinghouse as withdrawn from JHU. Federal loans will go into repayment after a 6-month grace period (unless the 6-month grace period has been used previously, in which case there is no grace period).

Students on leave will be evaluated per the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy and may lapse into Financial Aid Warning or Suspension. Please see finaid.jhu.edu/undergraduate-aid/apply-for-aid/undergraduate-sap

Depending when the leave is put in place, students will be refunded between 0 and 100% of tuition, in accordance with the university’s refund policy (https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/student-accounts/tuition-fees).

On-campus housing and dining fees will be adjusted as well, based on when the student vacates the room and terminates a dining contract.

What happens to my health insurance?
Students are able to maintain their present health insurance if a new plan year has begun. Students wishing to waive their insurance must do so by the end of the open enrollment period at the start of each semester. Please direct any questions about your Student Health Insurance coverage to the Registrar’s office.

What will my transcript say?
Your transcript will note ‘Leave of Absence’ for the semester. In the case of MLoAs that begin after the deadline to drop courses for a semester, you may also have W’s on your transcript. The transcript does not indicate a reason for the leave of absence.

How long is MLoA?
To allow you enough time to seek treatment and prepare for a successful return to school, the minimum length of time for a leave is a full semester; summer and intersession do not qualify as full semesters. A case manager will discuss your individual circumstances and timeline with you.

There is no limit to how long you can be on medical leave, but JHU requires undergraduates to complete their degree within 10 years of matriculation (http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/undergradstudents/academic-policies/requirements-for-a-bachelors-degree).

How will going on MLoA affect my planned graduation date?
Sometimes students are able to take a medical leave and still graduate at their planned graduation date. To do so, you may need to take summer courses, if relevant courses are available. Other times, graduation dates are pushed back due to the length of time of the leave. Please contact your academic advisor to discuss your remaining courses required for graduation.

Taking a Medical Leave of Absence: How the Process Works
The medical leave process is intended to enable students to leave JHU quickly and smoothly to receive needed treatment. A few steps are vital to the success of this process, which typically takes no more than a week to complete.

Speak with a Case Manager
If you wish to take MLoA, you must discuss your request with a Case Manager, either in person or by phone. The Case Manager may suggest other interventions in lieu of a leave, if appropriate, or may ask you to speak to other offices, such as Advising, Financial Aid, Counseling, or Student Health and Wellness, while considering whether MLoA is the best option.

If MLoA is determined to be the best choice, you and your Case Manager will discuss logistics and related concerns, such as financial implications and changes to your academic plan.

Provide documentation as needed
Proof of illness or documentation from a medical provider is not a requirement, but you should discuss your situation with a case manager prior to taking leave. In some cases, particularly if you have not been treated at the Student Health and Wellness Center or Counseling Center prior to going on MLoA, you may be asked by the Counseling Center or the Student Health and Wellness Center to provide some documentation for your situation. Such documentation can be helpful upon your return, so that a provider can best assist you.

Complete the online MLoA form with your Case Manager
The decisive step in taking MLoA is to complete the online MLoA form (tinyurl.com/yb9w825g) with your Case Manager. Doing so officially registers your intent to leave and triggers the Case Manager’s memo to campus partners notifying them of your leave.

Case Manager notifies faculty and campus partners
Once you have submitted the online MLoA form with your Case Manager, the Case Manager will contact your faculty to confirm the last day that you attended class. This date is used to determine any tuition refund, if applicable.

The Case Manager will then send a memo to you and to the following campus partners:
- Student Accounts
- Registrar
- Academic Advising
- Housing
- Financial Aid
- Office of International Services
- Student Health and Wellness Center
- Counseling Center
- J-Card

This email memo indicates your date of departure and expected return date,
**While on Leave**

**How will I spend my time while on leave?**
The only requirement of you when on MLoA is to pursue treatment for the health issue that necessitated your leave. Should you need assistance with locating a treatment provider(s), ask your Case Manager to connect you with a staff member in the Health and Wellness or Counseling Center who can assist with referrals.

Structure is helpful for most students while on medical leave. While your first priority should be your health, it is recommended that you consider getting involved in an activity while away if your health permits. Some students choose to volunteer or work a part-time job.

Please note, credits from courses taken at another university while on leave cannot be transferred to your Hopkins academic record.

**What is my student status while on leave?**
Your status as a Hopkins student while on leave is “active student, not enrolled.” Practically, this means that your email remains active, but you have no student privileges requiring a J-Card or services for enrolled students, including access to university services, facilities, and student employment.

**How do I enroll in classes while I’m on MLoA?**
You may not register for classes until you are cleared for reinstatement by the Office of the Dean of Student Life office and have any relevant holds, including the Registrar’s, removed from your account. If you are already enrolled in classes for the following semester when you go on leave, you will be dropped from those classes.

If registering early is important to you, you should begin the reinstatement process as early as possible within the scheduled time window (see Deadlines for Reinstatement Applications).

**When can I return from MLoA?**
Your medical provider must attest to your readiness to return, and any ongoing treatment needs. Everyone wants you to be healthy enough to participate in the academic environment at JHU.

Requests for reinstatement must be submitted within a particular time window. These dates are given in the next section.

Your discussion with your Case Manager before taking Leave should have included your earliest possible reinstatement date. If uncertain, please contact your Case Manager.

**Returning from Leave: How the Reinstatement Process Works**
To ensure that you are set up for success, the Office of the Dean of Student Life requires proof of readiness to return from MLoA. You are not required to be “cured” before returning from a medical leave; many students continue treatment in some manner after coming back. The goal of the reinstatement process is to allow you to be healthy enough to continue your JHU education.

The Office of the Dean of Student Life is eager to support students in transitioning back by helping to ensure that any ongoing health needs are met.

Reinstatement from medical leave is a process that typically takes several weeks. The Office of the Dean of Student Life will work as quickly as possible to facilitate your return, but it is important to allow adequate lead time from submission of forms to clearance for reinstatement—six weeks at minimum—as students frequently need to communicate with many offices to make arrangements, such as Student Health and Wellness or the Counseling Center, Financial Aid, Housing, Academic Advising, and Disability Services.

If you still have some of your residency requirement or want to live on campus, you should allow eight weeks. Bear in mind that the process is slower when the university is closed, such as over breaks. The steps toward reinstatement are outlined below or refer to appendix.

if known. It also indicates any refund that you can expect to receive and will prompt the registrar to place a hold in the Student Information System (SIS), to be removed upon reinstatement.

**Contact Financial Aid and Student Accounts**
It is recommended that students speak with their financial aid advisor before going on leave to discuss the impact on financial aid, including grants, scholarships, and the potential for entering repayment on student loans.

**International students: Contact the Office of International Services**
Per the Office of International Services (OIS), all international students on F-1 or J-1 visas must see an advisor in the OIS before taking leave to avoid potentially serious immigration issues concerning both departure from the U.S. and return.

**Housing contracts**
Residential students will be asked to vacate their on-campus residence in a prompt manner, usually within 5-7 days. Please contact the Housing Office to set up a time to drop off your keys.

Nonresidential students may want to sublet the remaining term of their lease. The university has no authority over your lease, but in some cases Off-Campus Housing may be able to assist with subletting. Contact Off-Campus Housing for more information.
Connect with a case manager
Notify your Case Manager of your intent to return, and fill out the online MLoA reinstatement form (tinyurl.com/yb9w825g).

Provide documentation
Every student applying for reinstatement, regardless of the reason for the MLoA, must submit the following documentation: 1) Release(s) of Information, 2) Student Questionnaire, and 3) Treating Provider Letter. Deadlines for submission of documentation are included below. The documentation is available at https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/student-life/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2018/09/MLoARestatementPaperwork1.pdf or through your Case Manager. The release of information permits the Office of the Dean of Student Life to speak with the Health or Counseling Center regarding their recommendation on your readiness to return. The student questionnaire asks for information from you about your health and readiness to return to school. The provider letter conveys clinical information on your wellbeing from your off-campus provider to the Health or Counseling Center.

Consult with the Counseling Center or Student Health and Wellness Center
After documentation is completed and submitted, the Counseling Center or Student Health and Wellness Center will interview you by phone to discuss your treatment while on leave and your plan for continued health upon return to the university.

The Counseling Center or Student Health and Wellness Center makes a recommendation
After their consultation with you, the Counseling Center or Student Health and Wellness Center will make one of the following recommendations to you and your case manager: (1) the student is cleared to return (with or without recommendations); or (2) the student is not recommended for return at this time and should apply again at a later date.

Consult with your case manager
After the recommendation is received, the Assistant Director of Student Support will contact you to schedule a meeting or phone call to discuss your anticipated transition back and any ongoing support you may need, and to provide guidance on other steps to take with the university, such as having holds lifted from your account or registering with Student Disability Services for accommodations.

The reinstatement decision is made
The student questionnaire, the provider letter, and your consultations will all be considered to determine your readiness for reinstatement. The Office of the Dean of Student Life will notify you by phone...

“Everyone included in the process was very supportive. There wasn’t a time when I was talking to someone that I felt as if they didn’t care.”

—STUDENT

“Medical leave is 100% worth it as long as you use that time wisely and truly to just heal, not just escape. It’s not just a semester, a year, or two off to pretend like your problems don’t exist. It’s time to face your problems and overcome.”

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or email as to the decision regarding your reinstatement.

If you are cleared for reinstatement, your Case Manager will work with you to complete the reinstatement process. This process includes 1) notification of campus partners via a memo from the case manager confirming your date of return and 2) an appointment with your Case Manager upon your return to discuss strategies for success and coordination of any ongoing care.

Reinstatement decisions are individualized, and most students are cleared. If you are denied reinstatement for a particular semester, you are encouraged to apply again the following semester.

**Denial of reinstatement can be appealed**

If you are denied reinstatement and object to the decision made by the Office of the Dean of Student Life, you may appeal the decision in writing to the Senior Associate Dean or the Dean’s designee.

The Dean will review the record and any additional information submitted by the student and will render a written decision to the student within five business days of receiving the appeal. The Dean’s decision will be final.

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**Applying for Reinstatement: Important Information**

**Deadlines for to apply for reinstatement**

The table below shows deadlines for submission of complete reinstatement documentation. If your health allows it, it is recommended that you complete the reinstatement materials by the earliest submission dates so that you can be cleared to register for classes sooner, before classes become full.

Please see the table below to assist you in planning to submit your reinstatement materials. Please note, the Latest Submission Date is the date documentation must be received by the Office of the Dean of Student Life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Semester of Return</strong></th>
<th><strong>Earliest Submission Date</strong></th>
<th><strong>Latest Submission Date</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>July 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersession*</td>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>November 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>December 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer*</td>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>May 1**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Contact the Office of Student Financial Services**

Before returning from leave, notify the Office of Student Financial Services of your intent to return. Students must complete all financial aid requirements (FAFSA, CSS Profile, tax documents) by the returning undergraduate application deadline to be considered for aid for the next academic year. Institutional grants are available on a funds-available basis. Your aid cannot be renewed until you are cleared for reinstatement.

Returning student aid application procedures and deadlines can be found on the Financial Aid website, finaid.jhu.edu.

**International students: Contact OIS**

Per the Office of International Services, all international students on F-1 or J-1 visas must see an advisor in the OIS to avoid potentially serious immigration issues, concerning both departure from the U.S. and return.

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**Back on Campus After Medical Leave**

The Office of the Dean of Student Life is committed to helping students transition back to academic life from a medical leave. There are several support options on and off campus that can help ease this journey, and your Case Manager can help connect you with these.

**Disability Accommodations**

If you have a disability and need accommodations, you should register with Student Disability Services. You will need documentation from a treating provider in order to do so. A case manager can also work with you to identify any other relevant support you may need on campus.

**Housing and Residence Life**

To satisfy JHU’s two-year on-campus housing requirement, you must complete four full semesters in on-campus housing. In some cases, Housing will release from the residence requirement a student who has resided on campus for three full semesters prior to going on leave. If you have questions about the requirement or are unsure whether you have fulfilled it, feel free to reach out to Housing directly to inquire.

Contact Housing directly before

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*It is generally recommended that you return in fall or spring, rather than intersession or summer, but applications for those terms will be considered. Be sure to check the course catalog and consult with your academic advisor about whether the courses you need are offered during those terms.

**May 1 may be too late to begin the reinstatement process for Summer Session I courses, but does allow enough time for you to register for Summer Session II.
who need additional care. These services include referrals to local providers for students seeking medical, psychological, and behavioral services, such as individual therapy, group therapy, and psychiatric consultations. The Center has the resources to provide individual therapy, group therapy, psychiatric consultations, and referrals to local providers for students who need additional care. These services are free of charge.

The Student Health and Wellness Center and the Counseling Center

Ongoing, consistent treatment is important for maintaining your health. It is recommended that you schedule regular appointments with the Student Health and Wellness Center or the Counseling Center. These are primary care resources and can also help coordinate other ongoing care services they may need, such as referrals to local specialists.

The Student Health and Wellness Center staff consists of physicians, nurse practitioners, a dietitian, registered nurses, medical assistants, and a women’s health nurse practitioner. Services offered include acute and chronic illness care; alcohol/drug problem assessments; allergy injections; eating behavior concerns; weight and nutrition; reproductive health care; and specialist referrals when needed.

The Counseling Center provides services to assist students in meeting their personal and mental health needs and goals. The Center has the resources to provide individual therapy, group therapy, psychiatric consultations, and referrals to local providers for students who need additional care. These services are free of charge.

Case Management

Case managers provide one-on-one support, including interventions, advocacy, referrals and follow-up services for students who are experiencing significant difficulties related to mental health, physical health, family emergencies and/or other areas of concern. The Case Management staff is committed to assisting undergraduate students in successfully navigating the Johns Hopkins University-Homewood campus. Their goal is to help students manage physical and mental health concerns, personal and family emergencies, financial issues, and other obstacles that may arise during their college experience. They provide resources and information to help students navigate university systems and policies while prioritizing their wellbeing and academic success. Additionally, they assist students in making connections with other faculty, staff, and offices that can collaborate with them to make sure their needs are met. Lastly, they encourage students to develop self-advocacy skills that prepare them for involvement in the larger community and life beyond college.

Academic Advising

Academic Advising helps ensure that students have access to the support, resources, and information they need to make the most of their academic careers. The staff provide general academic support to all undergraduate liberal arts and sciences and engineering students; coordinate the undergraduate faculty advising program; and are always happy to answer questions.

Checklists

Going on Leave

- Speak with a case manager about MLoA or possible alternatives
- Provide documentation if requested
- Discuss plans with parents and/or support network
- Contact Student Financial Services about the impact a medical leave could have on your grants and loans
- International students: contact OIS
- Submit online MLoA request with your case manager
- Contact Student Accounts about possible tuition refund
- Request referrals to providers at home, as needed, from SHWC or CC
- Contact Housing Office or Off-Campus Housing
  - Campus housing: vacate within 5-7 days, drop off keys
  - Off-campus housing: sublet
- Develop a structure for your time on leave
- Pursue treatment

Reinstatement

- Check the dates for requesting reinstatement; Plan to submit the online MLoA reinstatement form at least six weeks before term begins (eight weeks if you plan to live on campus)
- Notify your case manager of your intent to return; submit the online MLoA reinstatement form
- Provide documentation: 1) Release(s) of Information, 2) Student Questionnaire, and 3) Treating Provider Letter
- Consult with the Counseling Center or Student Health and Wellness Center
- Consult with the Assistant Director for Student Support
- Once notified of reinstatement decision by the Office of the Dean of Student Life:
  - If cleared, confer with case manager regarding necessary steps to remove holds and prepare for transition back to campus; case manager’s memo to campus partners confirms your date of return
  - If denied, plan to reapply for the following semester or appeal Dean’s decision
- Register for classes once reinstatement is confirmed and all holds are lifted from your account
- Confer with your Academic Advisor and/or Faculty Advisor to discuss course selection and degree completion
- Refill prescriptions before returning to campus so you don’t run out of medication during the semester

Returning to Campus

- Make appointment with case manager to discuss strategies for success and treatment needs
- Contact Financial Aid
- International students: contact OIS
- Contact Housing to discuss residence requirement
- Contact Disability Services for accommodations, as needed; documentation from a treating provider is required
- Make appointments with Student Health and Wellness Center and/or Counseling Center
- Make appointments with specialists ahead of time
For Parents

The Office of the Dean of Student Life and Case Management serve students experiencing difficulty at Johns Hopkins, and also their parents. You are welcome at any time to contact a Case Manager to learn more about the medical leave process. Below are answers to some common concerns you may have as the parent of a student taking a medical leave.

What information can the university share with me about my student’s condition and the MLoA decision making process?
In accordance to FERPA, Johns Hopkins cannot share information regarding a student’s status unless written permission to do so is provided by the student. Students are always encouraged to notify parents and supporting adults of their situation when going through the medical leave process.

To whom I should address my questions and concerns?
Any concerns regarding the medical leave process can be directed to a case manager or to the Assistant Director for Student Support in the Office of the Dean of Student Life. We are happy to work with you throughout the process.

Can I intervene to keep my student from returning to school if I don’t feel they are ready?
Students returning from medical leave are assessed by multiple providers and by the Office of the Dean of Student Life. Parental consent is not needed for a student to return from MLoA.

Can I get a refund on my student’s tuition/housing/meal plan?
Each of these refund processes works differently and depends on the last date your student received those services, or how much of the services were used overall. For example, the tuition refund is calculated based on the last day a student attended class. Please contact Student Accounts and/or Residential Life for more information.

Why didn’t I know my student’s situation before a medical leave was the only option? How do I know it is the best option for my student?
If students are an imminent danger to themselves or others, JHU is obligated to contact families. Otherwise, FERPA regulations stipulate that students’ academic statuses and personal situations cannot be shared with parents or guardians, unless students waive their FERPA rights.

Students may receive several outreaches by concerned staff or faculty members, before discussing Leave as an option. Should students want to continue their studies with support on-campus before taking a Leave, they are able to do so.

“The process was easy for us. There was enough information available and staff to guide us that all of our questions were answered.”
—Parent

“Nobody really wants to take medical leave, but the process worked. I felt supported, and that everything that could be done to help me was being done.”
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**APPENDIX: Medical Leave Reinstatement Process**

Applying for reinstatement and returning to the University after a medical leave can feel overwhelming. The University’s goal is to support you in your transition back to academic studies by making sure you have the academic and health-related support you may need in order to return. Part of this process involves a clinical conversation with a provider in the Student Health and Wellness or Counseling Center, which can help you identify whether your ongoing treatment needs can be met on or off campus when you return to the University. Another component is a conversation with the Assistant Director of Student Support in the Office of the Dean of Student Life; this is to help make sure you have a holistic plan in place and are connected to any University resources you may want to take advantage of upon your return. This flowchart is designed to help you visualize the steps you need to take in order to be reinstated.

**Complete MLOA Reinstatement Form (Online)**

Completion of this form notifies the office of the Dean of Student Life of your intention to return to school.

**Complete Forms by appropriate Deadline**

Complete and submit the reinstatement packet, which consists of:

1. **Release Of Information (ROI) form** - grant the Office of the Dean of Student Life permission to speak with the Health or Counseling Center regarding their recommendation on your readiness to return.
2. **Student Questionnaire** - Complete this form yourself.
3. **Treating Provider Letter** - Ask your off-campus treatment to submit a letter which providers at the Health or Counseling Center will review.

All paperwork must be received by The Dean of Student Life office by the deadline for the semester which you intend to return.

**On-Campus Provider Consultation**

When your documentation has been received, contact the Student Health and Wellness or the Counseling Center for a consultation.

Attend your clinical consultation (can be in person or by phone). You and the clinician will review your time away on Leave, your treatment, and ongoing needs you may have should you return to the University.

After your conversation, the Health or Counseling Center will make a recommendation on your return to the Office of the Dean of Student Life.

**Consultation with Case Management**

After receiving a recommendation from the Health or Counseling Center on your return, the Assistant Director for Student Support will contact you to set up a meeting (can be in person or by phone).

Should you be recommended for reinstatement, the Assistant Director for Student Support will meet with you to discuss your transition back and any support you may need.

If your reinstatement is approved, the Office of the Dean of Student Life will notify Campus Partners and discuss a long-term plan for support. The Registrar will lift your registration hold from your account.

If your reinstatement is denied, you will have five (5) business days to appeal the decision in writing to the Senior Associate Dean of Health and Wellness.