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ORLANDO COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Policy Title: OCOM Student Pregnancy/New Parent Leave of Absence Policy
Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a structured leave of absence process for students who take a leave of absence of duration less than 180 days related to pregnancy/New Parent from the Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine (OCOM).

A leave of absence is defined as a temporary separation from OCOM, which may not last longer than 180 calendar days.

OCOM adheres to and follows federal guidelines for granting leave for students who give birth, or whose significant other gives birth, while enrolled in the curriculum.

A student *Pregnancy Leave of Absence* may be granted to students who are in good academic standing, and who provide acceptable supporting documentation from their treating physician indicating a need to take a leave of absence because of the student's pregnancy. The required period of leave may include time before the delivery, after the delivery, or both. When possible, this documentation should include an estimated date of delivery or, if a leave must continue beyond delivery, the date the delivery occurred.

A student returning from a student *Pregnancy Leave of Absence* must provide a letter from their treating physician clearing them to return to OCOM on a full-time, unrestricted basis. Decisions regarding the granting of pregnancy leave of absence are determined by the Dean.

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A *New Parent Leave of Absence* may be granted on a case-by-case basis. Students requesting a *New Parent Leave of Absence* must be in good academic standing and provide appropriate documentation. A *New Parent Leave of Absence* may be up to four (4) weeks for non-birth parents following the birth, or adoption, of a child.

This policy outlines the processes undertaken and followed to allow for a smooth transition for students entering a formal student Pregnancy/New Parent Leave of Absence.

Process

The student will meet with either the Associate Dean for Pre-Clinical Education (OMS-I & OMS-II) or Associate Dean for Clinical Education (OMS-III & OMS-IV), and the Associate Dean of Student Services at the earliest available time to discuss the anticipated Student Maternity/Parental Leave.

The student provides the Associate Dean of Student Services with a proposed timeline for the requested leave. The student must schedule meetings and acquire signatures from the Office of Financial Aid and the Finance Office as part of their leave request. These meetings and signatures must be completed prior to filling out a formal request for leave to avoid any ambiguity with the effect the Leave may have on a student's financial aid.

Once the anticipated dates of the leave are determined, the student will complete the OCOM *Leave of Absence Request Form* and obtain the necessary signatures prior to the final signature from the Dean. The student must meet with the Registrar, the Office of Financial Aid, and the Finance Office.

The Office of Student Affairs must notify the entities listed below of the Leave of Absence and provide a copy of the approved signed *Leave of Absence Request Form*.

- Registrar's Office
- Financial Aid Office

Once a student delivers, the student will provide the Office of Student Affairs with a medical note from the medical provider with an anticipated return-to-school date.

In the case of a new parent, following the birth or adoption, the non-birth parent will provide the Office of Student Affairs with an anticipated return-to-school date.

Once an anticipated return date is identified, either the Associate Dean for Pre-Clinical Education for OMS-I & OMS-II students or the Associate Dean for Clinical Education for OMS-III & OMS-IV students will develop a proposed Modified Course of Study Schedule. The Associate Dean for Pre-Clinical or Clinical Education will work with the Course Directors, any clinical clerkship site staff, and the Office of Student Affairs to develop the Modified Course of Study Schedule. The Associate Dean for Clinical Education will work with the student's Clerkship Coordinator, Registrar, and Student Affairs to develop the Modified Course of Study Schedule.

The student will meet with either the Associate Dean for Pre-Clinical Education (OMS-I & OMS-II) or Associate Dean for Clinical Education (OMS-III & OMS-IV) and the Director of Student Affairs to review and discuss the proposed Modified Course of Study Schedule.

The Associate Dean for Pre-Clinical Education (OMS-I & OMS-II) will contact and inform the appropriate Course Directors and the Executive Director for Medical Education Operations for the affected courses of the Modified Course of Study Schedule, and the Associate Dean for Clinical Education (OMS-III & OMS-IV) will contact and inform the appropriate Clerkship Coordinator and the Executive Director for Medical Education Operations of the Modified Course of Study as it relates to their Clinical Clerkship Schedule.

Once a student goes on Pregnancy/New Parent Leave of Absence, the student is no longer an actively enrolled student at OCOM and therefore will not be able to access OCOM applications and services.

Return from Student Pregnancy Leave of Absence

In the case of a student returning from pregnancy, the student must provide medical documentation to the Office of Student Affairs from the student's medical provider documenting full medical clearance to return to medical school as an active, full-time student.

Notification to Office of Student Affairs

- If a student anticipates a delay in their original expected return date, the student must contact the Office of Student Affairs at least two (2) weeks prior to the original date of return.
- If the leave extends beyond 180 days, the Student Pregnancy/New Parent Leave of Absence automatically shifts into a Withdrawal as discussed in the Student Catalog.

A student's anticipated graduation date from OCOM may be impacted depending on the length of the requested leave of absence.

This policy shall be posted to https://ocom.org/policies