



Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine

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Policy Title: OCOM Student Leave of Absence Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a structured leave of absence process for students who take a leave not greater than 180 days from Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine (OCOM).

A leave of absence is defined as a temporary separation from OCOM, for a period of time greater than 7 consecutive days and may not last longer than 180 calendar days.

Process

All Leave of Absences (LOA's) are granted by the Dean. LOA's require pre-approval and students should follow the application process as outlined within this policy. Acceptable reasons for an LOA include, but not limited to academic, personal, medical and military service.

The LOA should be requested in writing, addressed to the Dean but delivered to the Associate Dean of Student Services who will then provide this to the Dean.

The student's written request, signed, and dated formal request to the Office of the Dean delineating the reason for the request as well as the anticipated date of return.

A student requesting an LOA will be expected to first meet with the Associate Dean of Student Services. The student will be informed of the ability to graduate within the



required outlined in the Maximum Length of Completion Policy D024. Before the final approval of the LOA the student may be asked to meet with the Dean. Due to the nature of the clinical curriculum, if a student is requesting a LOA in years three and four the student should meet with the Associate Dean of Clinical Education before taking the LOA

Students should be made aware of any impact the leave will have on financial aid and other relevant areas. The student must schedule meetings and acquire signatures from the Office of Financial Aid and the Finance Office as part of their separation request and process.

If the Leave of Absence is granted, the Associate Dean for Student Services will assist the student in coordinating and completing the Leave of Absence process.

Students should complete the OCOM Leave of Absence form.

Once the Dean approves the LOA the form will be given to the registrar for processing the LOA request. The Registrar the necessary departments of the approved LOA.

Students who take an LOA, that at a minimum extends through the end of the semester, shall be considered withdrawn from courses, for the purposes of grading and tuition only, but not withdrawn from OCOM.

Once a student goes on a 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.

Types of Leave of Absence.

Academic Leave of Absence.

An Academic Leave of Absence is a unique situation, usually of a one-year duration between the second and third year or third and fourth year of the program, which allows students to pursue a separate opportunity, such as a research opportunity or complete a one-year post-secondary degree. Upon completion of this additional educational, experiential activity or scholarly pursuit, the student must submit a complete Petition of Re-instatement form, submit a letter of enrollment verification, Background Check, and

Controlled Substance Screen within a timeframe designated by OCOM. A student requesting an Academic Leave of Absence must be in good academic standing. Students who take an academic leave must schedule their COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE exam before the official leave from OCOM begins. If approved the student is not actively enrolled at OCOM and therefore will not be able to access OCOM applications and services.

Personal Leave of Absence A Personal Leave of Absence, granted by the Dean , may not last longer than 180 calendar days. A Personal Leave of Absence is available to address situations such as a death of a spouse, child, or such other circumstance that would interrupt a student's education. A Personal Leave of Absence lasting longer than 180 days automatically becomes a Withdrawal.

Medical Leave of Absence

(Absence Less than 180 Calendar Days) A Medical Leave of Absence may be granted to students who provide acceptable supporting documentation indicating a valid medical reason requiring a leave of less than 180 calendar days and an anticipated date of return. Decisions regarding the granting of a medical leave are determined by the Dean. A Medical Leave of Absence may last no longer than 180 calendar days; if the leave extends beyond 180 calendar days it will automatically become a Withdrawal. In order to return from an approved medical leave, the student must provide the Dean with documentation from a healthcare provider approving/releasing the student to return as a full-time student in the curriculum. Any LOA in this category will likely extend that graduation date secondary to the timing and availability of the cohort's courses/rotations.

Parental Leave of Absence

OCOM may grant leave for students who become parents (whether by childbirth or adoption) while enrolled in the curriculum. A Parental Leave of Absence may be granted on a case-by-case basis. Students requesting a parental leave of absence must provide appropriate documentation. Additionally, students requesting a Parental Leave of Absence must meet with the Associate Dean for Student Services at the earliest available time to discuss the anticipated Parental Leave. A Parental Leave of Absence may be up to four (4) weeks for nonbirth parents following the birth, or adoption, of a child. Following the birth or adoption, the student will provide the OCOM Office of Student Affairs with an anticipated return-to-school date, not to exceed 4-weeks from the beginning of the leave. Students unable to return from a Parental Leave of Absence



within four (4) weeks following the birth, or adoption, of a child will be required to request a Personal Leave of Absence, which may last up to a total of 180 days. A Personal Leave of Absence extending more than 180 calendar days will require the student to file a request for a Withdrawal. Any LOA in this category will likely extend that graduation date secondary to the timing and availability of the cohort's courses/rotations. Additional details on the parental leave of absences can be found in [Policy D062](#) on the [OCOM Policies website](#).

Returning from a Leave of Absence

Students approved for a leave of absence may return to the OCOM and to classes without reapplying to the College of Osteopathic Medicine, if the return is within the approved time frame as recorded in the Leave of Absence Approval letter.

Prior to returning to the OCOM students are required to comply with all conditions for the student's return as stated in correspondence to the student by OCOM and ensure any prior outstanding balances are paid and student accounts are current. A student granted a LOA with conditions may be required to meet with the Associate Dean of Student Services before returning to OCOM. For LOA, students must submit written notification to the Associate Dean of Student Services and complete the Petition for Reinstatement form to the Registrar of their intent to return to the University Registrar within thirty (30) calendar days of the anticipated return to the pre-clinical portion of the curriculum and thirty (30) calendar days for the clinical curriculum, It is the student's responsibility to duly inform the administration of any delays to their return or needs for further extensions.

If a student anticipates a delay in their original expected return date, the student must contact the Associate Dean of Student Services.

If the leave extends beyond 180 days, the Leave of Absence automatically shifts into a Withdrawal, as discussed in the Student Catalog.

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