

## **Mandatory Medical Leave of Absence Policy**

John Cabot University is committed to the well-being and safety of its community members and the integrity of its learning environment. A crisis occurs when someone's behavior or actions are putting themselves or others at risk. The situation is so extreme and disruptive that it needs to be contained promptly to avoid injury to the student or others.

JCU is committed to managing such events with the aim of protecting the safety and wellbeing of the community, with the assistance of qualified specialists and infrastructures. JCU's mission is not to investigate the clinical, social and psychological causes of a behavioral crisis, but to implement the appropriate measures to avoid harmful events for the student and the community, while preserving the continuity of the educational project.

In some circumstances, a student who displayed behavioral crisis may require the implementation of a customized study program/supporting measures. The related assessment will be carried out by JCU Medical Advisor and/or by the Head Counselor and may result in a mandated leave of absence.

In some circumstances, the University may require a student to take a medical leave of absence. This action would only be taken after an individualized assessment concludes that (i) there is a significant risk to the student's health or safety, or to the health or safety of others, or that the student's behavior severely disrupts the University environment, and (ii) that no reasonable accommodations can adequately reduce the risk or disruption.

The individualized clinical assessment is carried out by the JCU Medical Advisor and/or the Head Counselor, who will provide their expert opinion to the Dean of Students. A student may also be placed on a mandatory medical leave of absence if they refuse to cooperate with the measures deemed necessary by the JCU Medical Advisor and the Head Counselor, or when it has been assessed that the student's behavior poses a threat to the safety and wellbeing of the JCU Community.

The Dean of Students' decision to place a student on a mandatory medical leave of absence will be in writing and will include:

- the basis for the decision
- a timeline for the student's departure from campus.
- If possible when the student may be eligible for return as per the doctor/counselor recommendation
- any conditions the student must satisfy before returning to the University.
- It will also include information about the appeal process.

Once mandatory medical leave evaluations by the JCU Medical Advisor and/or Head Counselor begin, a student may not be granted an ordinary leave of absence without being subject to re-entry requirements.

A student who is required to take a medical leave of absence will have five (5) calendar days from the date of notification to appeal the decision in writing to the President. During the appeal process, the student is expected to comply with the leave of absence requirements which will be specified in the notification letter.

When deemed necessary for the safety of the student and of the JCU Community, immediate suspension from all University activities, including classes and extracurricular activities, may be instituted pending the appeal

- **Coursework in Process:** Students on a mandatory medical leave of absence may not attend classes or submit additional coursework as of the date of their leave. Based on the amount of coursework completed at the start of their leave, students may be withdrawn from all courses in progress;
- Be granted INC grades in one or more courses;
- Be evaluated based only on the work already completed.

The Dean of Academic Affairs' office will work with students and their instructors to determine the best resolution to the interrupted semester.

**Duration of Mandatory Medical Leaves of Absence:** The recommendation for the length of the leave will be individualized and based on a clinical assessment. Students may remain on a medical leave of absence for a longer period, if they wish. The medical leave is intended to allow students to achieve the level of sustained stability needed to support a successful return, and students are encouraged to take the time they need.

**Activity While on Leave:** Students on a medical leave of absence are expected to receive appropriate medical treatment for the condition(s) that resulted in the leave. Many students also find it helpful to engage, when possible, in other focused activities — e.g., part-time volunteering or employment, and so on—but this is not required in most situations. Students are encouraged to prioritize medical treatment.

**Finances:** The financial consequences of the medical leave of absence will depend on the timing, and on whether the student purchased tuition insurance. See JCU Tuition Refund Policy. Students receiving financial aid should contact the Financial Aid Office upon receipt of a decision requiring a medical leave. The office will help answer questions students may have regarding if and how their leave might affect financial aid and help identify any impacts to their financial obligations (including student loan information). Students required to take a medical leave of absence who have received long-term loans will be sent information about loan repayment obligations, which in most cases begin six (6) months after the last day of formal enrollment at JCU.

**Campus Access:** Students on involuntary medical leave of absence may not be present on JCU's campus and activities, even as guests/visitors nor remain a resident in JCU Housing.

**Email and Library Access:** Students on leave ordinarily retain remote library privileges and email access for three (3) years from the date of their leave.

**Campus Employment:** Students on mandatory medical leave may not hold student employment jobs or work at JCU in other employment categories.

**Disciplinary Violations:** A mandatory medical leave of absence does not preclude students from being charged with disciplinary violations of the Student Code of Conduct or other University policies and regulations in relevant circumstances.

**Emergency Contact Notification:** For all students, JCU will notify emergency contacts, or guardians in the case of minor students, when a student is prescribed a mandatory medical leave of absence.

**JCU Summer Session Classes:** Students on a mandatory medical leave of absence are not eligible to enroll or return during JCU Summer Session courses.

### **Returning from an Involuntary Medical Leave of Absence**

Medical leaves are intended to give students time to receive appropriate treatment and focus on their health and wellbeing. The medical clearance process (see materials below) by which students return is intended to allow

students to demonstrate that they will be able to adequately monitor their own health and function effectively in the autonomous student environment at JCU, without significant disruptions to others in the campus community. The goal is for students to be able to return to campus and be successful in their academic, co-curricular, and extra-curricular pursuits.

A student on medical leave from JCU with pending disciplinary charges will not be eligible to return to JCU or to receive a JCU degree until the student's case has been adjudicated in accordance with University disciplinary policies and procedures.

**Deadlines for Requesting Reinstatement:** To return for a fall term, reinstatement requests and all accompanying materials must be submitted by 5 p.m. (CST) on June 1. To return for a Spring term, reinstatement requests and all accompanying materials must be submitted by 5 p.m. (CST) on November 1. Students who have missed the deadline may send inquiries to [deanofstudents@johncabot.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@johncabot.edu); permission for late requests is granted only in exceptional circumstances.

**Materials to be Submitted at this link:**

The *Online Reinstatement Request* form is located on the Registrar's [Forms and Petitions](#) page which requires the following information.

1. Brief Statement (approximately 500-750 words) describing the circumstances that led to the medical leave, the treatment received while on leave and any other activities the student deems relevant, and the student's own sense of their readiness to return to JCU.
2. Name and contact information for the clinician who will be submitting the documentation.
3. **Medical letter from the relevant specialist, attesting to the student's readiness to resume academic activities and university life.**

The medical letter should include:

- a. The clinician's credentials and clinical setting;
- b. The nature of their work with the student, including the duration and frequency of their contact;
- c. Any observed progress in the student's recovery from the medical condition that led to the leave of absence;
- d. The clinician's assessment of the student's clinical status and their readiness to successfully resume academic activities and university life;
- e. The justification for their assessment of the student's readiness.

**Meeting:** Once the above documents, including the Medical Letter have been received, a meeting will be scheduled with JCU's Medical Advisor, the Head Counselor, or their official designee(s). The Medical Advisor or the Head Counselor, or their official designee(s), will provide a recommendation to the Dean of Students and Dean of Academic Affairs as to whether the student is ready to successfully resume academic and university life.

**Individual Assessment of Request:** The Dean of Students and Dean of Academic Affairs will review all the information provided, make an individualized determination as to whether the student has met the criteria to be cleared for return, and notify the student accordingly. When the Dean of Students and Dean of Academic Affairs clear a student for return, they will assess the number of remaining course credits and allocate additional terms of enrollment (beyond the standard eight terms) as necessary. Reinstated students are not required to take these additional terms but are encouraged to do so in order to avoid taking an academic overload. Students should check with Financial Aid regarding loan disbursements or other financial implications.

If a student is not cleared for return, the Deans will provide a written explanation to help the student understand the reasons behind their decision and will recommend steps the student might take to be more successful in future requests.

**Appeal Process:** Students who are not cleared to return may appeal the decision. The appeal must be made in writing to the Dean of Students no later than five (5) calendar days from the date on which the student is notified of the decision. The University President or designee shall decide the appeal.