



**QUILLEN**  
**COLLEGE of MEDICINE**  
 EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy Name: **QCOM Leave of Absence Policy**

Policy Replaces a Previous Policy [Yes/No] (*this includes change in policy name*): **No**  
 If so, list name of previous policy (*include policy number if different*):

Policy Number: **ADMIN-0921-20**

Policy Owner (*Individual, Department, or Committee/Chair*): **Deidre Pierce, MD / Associate Dean of Student Affairs**

Committees, Departments, or Individuals Responsible for Implementation: **Offices of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs**

Original Approval Date and Who Approved by: **9-23-2022 / Beth Anne Fox, MD, MPH-Vice Dean**

Revision Date(s) (*include a brief description*) and Who Approved by (*made by Policy Owner and/or Policy Advisory Committee*): **11/9/2023 – updated language for name change of Transitions to Bridge to Clinical Clerkships and added students must also meet with the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs to discuss academic implications / Beth Anne Fox, MD, MPH-Vice Dean;**

Effective Date(s): **2022-23 AY; 11/9/2023**

Administrative Edits (*briefly describe*) by Staff and/or the Policy Advisory Committee and Date (*these revisions do not require voting/approval by a committee and/or individual*):

Exemption(s) to Policy (*date, by what committee or individual, and brief description*):

LCME Required Policy [Yes/No]: **No**  
 LCME Element(s) Affiliated with Policy (*include Element number/name/statement*):

***All policies will be reviewed by the Policy Advisory Committee every three years unless an earlier review is identified.***

Date of Review:

Revisions Made:  **Yes** /  **No** If yes, list revisions made:

Revisions Require Approval by Policy Owner:  **Yes** /  **No**

**(A.) Policy Statement:**

A leave of absence is a period during which a student is not taking part in the College of Medicine’s required educational program. A leave of absence is granted for a maximum of one (1) year except in cases of military leave. Students may be required to produce documentation to support a leave of absence request.

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**(B.) Purpose of Policy:**

Medical students may apply for or request a leave of absence via the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Student Affairs. In some circumstances, a leave of absence may be recommended/required by the Dean. All students requesting or determined to require a leave of absence must have a [Leave of Absence Form](#) completed and on file in the Registrar's Office.

**(C.) Scope of Policy (*applies to*):**

All Quillen College of Medicine medical students.

**(D.) Policy Activities:**

Permission for a leave of absence is not guaranteed, unless the leave is required by law, or as indicated below. Students should submit requests as soon as reasonably possible for medical or military leave. Supporting documentation may be required to evaluate this type of request.

Upon the initiation of a leave of absence, a designation of Withdrew Passing (WP), Withdrew Failing (WF) or Incomplete (I) will be recorded on the transcript for any course that has not received a final grade. If an Incomplete (I) is recorded, it must be resolved prior to the student's advancement to the next level of training. If a Withdrawal (WP or WF) or a final grade of Fail (F) is recorded, the student is required to repeat that course to be eligible for advancement or graduation.

Students requesting a leave of absence must meet with the Office of Financial Services to review any financial implications of the leave, including a review of Veterans Administration Educational Benefits if applicable. The student must also meet with the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs to discuss academic implications and any potential changes to their medical education progress.

The Offices of the Dean, Academic Support, Student Affairs, and Academic Affairs, as well as the Student Promotions Committee, may mandate and arrange any re-entry conditions, which may include but not be limited to: repeating some or all previously completed course work, or obtaining fitness for duty examination or medical clearance following a medical leave.

The student must note that the timing of re-entry to the College of Medicine is not guaranteed following any leave of absence. As soon as possible prior to the end of the leave of absence, the student must submit a request to return, in writing, to the Office of Student Affairs or the Office of Academic Affairs. Any student wishing to request an extension to their leave must submit a new request form to the Office of Student Affairs or the Office of Academic Affairs as soon as possible in advance of the original date of return. The approval process for an extension will follow the same protocol as the original leave request. If an extension is not granted, a student on a leave of absence may have his/her matriculation terminated.

The Office of Academic Affairs will confirm acceptance, extension, or termination of leaves of absence with the student. Medical students granted a leave of absence for any reason are responsible for maintaining contact with the Offices of Admissions, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs by responding to emails, phone calls, or letter communication.

- All leaves will be noted in the student's academic history section of the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE). An Administrative Leave of Absence will be noted in the Adverse Action section.

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There are five different types of leaves of absences, and they are defined below: academic, administrative, medical, military, and personal.

### Academic Leave of Absence

- A voluntary leave to pursue research, an externship, a degree-granting program outside the College of Medicine, or any other career advancing activity.
- A student must apply for and receive approval to receive course credit for a research project taking place during an Academic Leave of Absence.
- A student granted permission to take an Academic Leave of Absence to participate in a degree-granting program will not be enrolled at the College of Medicine for the duration of the leave.
- To return from an Academic Leave of Absence of six months or greater, a healthcare professional must provide written documentation to the Office of Student Affairs indicating that the student is mentally and/or physically able to continue his/her medical studies on request as is customary for entry into medical school per the [Fitness for Duty Policy](#).

### Administrative Leave of Absence

- A school-mandated leave to address a single or multiple academic, professionalism, or technical deficiencies.
- The College of Medicine may require a student to take an Administrative Leave of Absence if he/she has academic, professionalism, or technical deficiencies not addressed by other types of leaves.
- A student placed on an Administrative Leave of Absence will be removed from classes and/or clinical duties. The College of Medicine may also require that the student be prohibited from any academic facility or institutional event. Violations of the prohibitions set forth by Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and/or the Student Promotions Committee will result in the student's forfeiture of remaining appeal processes or rights.
- Students placed on an Administrative Leave of Absence may return to active student status contingent upon satisfactorily meeting the conditions set forth by the College of Medicine. Students who are not permitted to return will be dismissed.
- To return from an Administrative Leave of Absence of six months or greater, a healthcare professional must provide written documentation to the Office of Student Affairs indicating that the student is mentally and/or physically able to continue his/her medical studies on request as is customary for entry into medical school per the Fitness for Duty Policy.

### Medical Leave of Absence

- A leave to pursue medical care with supporting documentation from the student's healthcare provider, including maternal or parental leave for the birth of a child, adoption, or foster care placement.
- A student taking a Medical Leave of Absence will not be enrolled at the College of Medicine for the duration of the leave.
- To return from a Medical Leave of Absence, the attending health care professional must provide written documentation to the Office of Student Affairs indicating that the student is mentally and/or physically able to continue his/her medical studies. See the Fitness for Duty Policy.

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### Military Leave of Absence

- A leave to meet military service requirements.
- All military leaves of absence and requests for military leaves of absence will be conform to the requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (“USERRA”).
- A student taking a Military Leave of Absence will not be enrolled at the College of Medicine for the duration of the leave.
- A Military Leave of Absence excludes a student from the six-year rule for completing the Doctor of Medicine degree.
- Qualified students who seek to take a leave of absence to perform military service should give notice of service as far in advance as is reasonable under the circumstances unless military necessity prevents advance notice.
- Students must provide verification to the Office of Admissions that they performed military service upon returning to the College of Medicine.
- When students wish to be readmitted, they should give notice of their intent to return. Veterans will be entitled to be readmitted and will be readmitted with the same academic status as when they last attended so long as:
  1. There is no disqualifying event, such as a dishonorable or bad conduct discharge,
  2. The cumulative length of absence and all previous absences for military service (service time only) does not exceed the established time period for such leave (generally five [5] years); and
  3. The student notifies the College of Medicine of his or her intent to return within three (3) years from the completion of the period of service, or, if recovering from a service-related illness or injury, no later than two (2) years after the recovery.
- The College of Medicine is committed to assist those service members seeking readmission. When necessary, and as determined on a case by case basis, the University will offer appropriate academic services, free of charge, to help students become prepared to resume their studies with the same academic status where they left off or to help the student be prepared to complete the program.

### Personal Leave of Absence

- A voluntary leave to pursue additional concentrated support to achieve a specific academic goal such as study for Step examinations.
- A voluntary leave to pursue personal matters that fall outside the definitions of other types of leave.
- A student taking a Personal Leave of Absence will not be enrolled at the College of Medicine for the duration of the leave. To return from a Personal Leave of Absence of six months or greater, a healthcare professional must provide written documentation to the Office of Student Affairs indicating that the student is mentally and/or physically able to continue his/her medical studies on request as is customary for entry into medical school per the Fitness for Duty Policy.

### Step 1 Requirements:

Students who take a leave of absence immediately following the M2 year, including those enrolled in a dual-degree program, must have a passing USMLE Step 1 score prior to the beginning of the required M3 Bridge to Clinical Clerkships course. Students are to take the Step 1 exam

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at least one month prior to the M3 Bridge to Clinical Clerkships course to ensure a score is received before the course begins. Students who participated in the Bridge to Clinical Clerkships course the prior year are expected to participate in the current course with their new class.

- Students granted a leave of absence are required to complete the MD degree by the sixth graduation date following their date of matriculation.

Reference:

*Policy on leaves of absence.* Policy on Leaves of Absence | Zucker School of Medicine. (n.d.). <https://medicine.hofstra.edu/policy/policy-student-affairs-loa.html>.

Policy Review and/or Revision Completed By <i>(if applicable)</i>		Date(s)	
		Reviews	Revisions
	University Compliance		
	Office of the Dean		
X	Policy Advisory Committee	4/14/22, 7/15/22, 8/11/22, 9/8/22; 11/9/23	
	Associate Dean for Accreditation Compliance		
X	Vice Dean for Academic Affairs	9/23/22; 11/9/23	
X	Academic Affairs <i>(this includes the four-year reviews by administrative staff)</i>	9/23/22; 11/15/23	
X	Student Affairs	11/9/23	
	Medical Student Education Committee		
	Student Promotions Committee		
	Faculty Advisory Council		
	Administrative Council		
	M1/M2 Course Directors		
	M3/M4 Clerkship/Course Directors		
	Student Groups/Organizations <i>(describe)</i> :		
	Other <i>(describe)</i> :		

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<b>Notifications of New or Revised Policy (<i>if applicable</i>)</b>		<b>Date of Email Notifications</b>
X	Medical Education Director for Posting on Educational Policies Website	11/15/23
X	Policy Owner	11/15/23
X	Admissions Office for Catalog	11/15/23