



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
School of Medicine™
Policy and Procedure

SOMOP 40.09: Leave of Absence Policy

PURPOSE: The purpose of this School of Medicine (SOM) Policy and Procedure is to describe the procedure related to student leaves of absence from the School of Medicine curriculum.

REVIEW: This SOM Policy and Procedure will be reviewed within each even-numbered fiscal year by the Student Promotions and Professional Conduct Committee (SPPCC). Revisions will be forwarded to the Office of the Dean for publication.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. General

This policy is intended to define the different categories of Leaves of Absence (LOA) available to students in the School of Medicine and to describe the procedures necessary for approving requests for Leaves of Absence.

2. Categories of Leaves of Absence

2.1 Administrative Leave of Absence

2.2 Medical Leave of Absence

2.3 Short-term Leave of Absence

3. Procedures for Granting Leaves of Absence

3.1 Administrative Leave of Absence

All requests for an administrative leave of absence must be submitted, in writing, to the student's home campus Student Affairs office.

a) Student Progressing as Expected (as defined in [SOM OP 40.04](#) and [SOM OP 30.01](#)):

Administrative leaves of absence for periods not to exceed one academic year may be granted by the responsible Student Affairs Dean (based on student's home campus). The student will be notified in writing of the specific conditions for consideration to return to the curriculum.

b) Student Not Progressing as Expected (as defined in [SOM OP 40.04](#) and [SOM OP 30.01](#)):

The request for leave of absence will be forwarded to the SPPCC for consideration and disposition. If the need for a LOA decision is urgent (e.g., prior to when a SPPCC subcommittee meeting can be convened), the Student Promotions and Professional Conduct Executive Committee (Executive Committee), may disposition the LOA request on behalf of the responsible SPPCC subcommittee, including determining the conditions for the student's re-entry to the curriculum. The student will be notified in writing of the SPPCC's (or Executive Committee's) decision along with the specific conditions for consideration to return to the curriculum.

c) Extended Administrative Leave of Absence:

An administrative leave of absence in excess of one academic year necessitates withdrawal of the student from the School of Medicine. Application for re-admission for a student who has withdrawn due to an extended administrative leave of absence shall be through the School of Medicine Admissions Committee's regular process for consideration of applicants for entry into the School of Medicine. A student who does not withdraw from the School of Medicine following a leave of absence greater than one academic year will be administratively dismissed.

3.2 Medical Leaves of Absence

All requests for a medical leave of absence must be submitted, in writing, to the student's home campus Student Affairs office.

a) Student Progressing as Expected (as defined in [SOM OP 40.04](#) and [SOM OP 30.01](#)):

A medical leave of absence (MLOA) for periods less than one academic year may be granted by the responsible Student Affairs Dean.

1. Requests for a MLOA must include a written statement from the student's health care provider(s). The provider(s) must be licensed to practice independently in the United States within their specialty field. The health care provider(s) must currently be providing care to the student (within the three months prior to the date of the requested MLOA) and state that a medical leave is indicated in the best interest of the student.
2. The written request for an MLOA from the student and substantiating information from the licensed health care provider(s) will be considered by the responsible Student Affairs Dean.
3. The student will be notified in writing of the specific conditions for consideration to return to the curriculum.

- b) Student Not Progressing as Expected (as defined in [SOM OP 40.04](#) and [SOM OP 30.01](#)):
Requests for a MLOA must include a written statement from the student's health care provider(s). The provider(s) must be licensed to practice independently in the United States within their specialty field. The health care provider(s) must currently be providing care to the student (within the three months prior to the date of the requested MLOA) and state that a medical leave is indicated in the best interest of the student. The request for MLOA will be forwarded to the SPPCC for consideration and disposition. If the need for a MLOA decision is urgent (e.g., prior to when the responsible SPPCC subcommittee meeting can be convened), the Student Promotions and Professional Conduct Executive Committee (Executive Committee), may disposition the MLOA request on behalf of the SPPCC, including determining the conditions for the student's re-entry to the curriculum. The student will be notified in writing of the SPPCC's (or Executive Committee's) decision along with the specific conditions for consideration to return to the curriculum.
- c) Return from Medical Leave of Absence: Upon completion of a MLOA, the responsible SPPCC subcommittee will determine if the conditions for return to the SOM curriculum have been met. All students requesting a return to the SOM curriculum from a MLOA must:
1. Submit written report(s) from a current health care provider indicating:
 - a) the status of the student's medical issue for which the MLOA was requested; and
 - b) student's physical, mental, and/or psychological fitness to return to the SOM as a full-time student (SOM Standards for Curricular Completion used as a guide for addressing fitness to return to SOM curriculum). Provider(s) submitting documentation on a student's behalf to return to the SOM curriculum from an MLOA must be licensed to practice independently in the United States within their specialty field and must currently be providing care to the student (within the 30 calendar days prior to the date of the letter of support for the student to return to the curriculum).
 2. Meet with the SPPCC to review a student's physical, mental, and/or psychological fitness to return to the SOM curriculum as a full-time student.
- d) Extended Medical Leave of Absence:
A medical leave of absence in excess of one academic year necessitates withdrawal of the student from the School of Medicine. Application for re-admission for a student who has withdrawn due to an extended medical leave of absence shall be through the School of Medicine Admissions Committee regular process for consideration of applicants into the School

of Medicine. A student who does not withdraw from the School of Medicine following a medical leave of absence greater than one academic year will be administratively dismissed.

3.3 Short-Term Leave of Absence

- a) Short-term leaves of absence (four academic weeks or less) may be granted by the responsible Student Affairs Dean including any conditions for return to the curriculum following the short-term leave of absence. The Office of Student Affairs will inform the appropriate faculty and departments of such leaves. The student will be responsible for completing any missed curricular content per the expectations of the responsible Course Director.

4. Appeal of Withdrawal or Dismissal Due to Extended Leave of Absence

4.1 Appeal for administrative leave of absence beyond one academic year

- a) Written request to appeal for approval of administrative absence greater than one academic year must be submitted in writing to the SPPCC for consideration and disposition. The written appeal for an extended administrative leave of absence must be submitted to the SPPCC in accordance with the notification deadline established in the letter approving the initial administrative leave of absence. The process for reviewing and dispositioning an appeal for an extended administrative leave of absence will be the same as is followed in section 3.1.b above.

4.2 Appeal for medical leave of absence beyond one academic year

- a) Written request to appeal for approval of an MLOA greater than one academic year must be submitted in writing to the SPPCC for consideration and disposition. The written appeal for an extended medical leave of absence must be submitted to the responsible SPPCC subcommittee in accordance with the notification deadline established in the letter approving the initial medical leave of absence. The process for reviewing and dispositioning an appeal for an extended administrative leave of absence will be the same as is followed in section 3.2.b above.

5. Appeal of Denial of Leave of Absence or Request to Return to Curriculum

In the event a student's request for a leave of absence, appeal for an extended leave of absence, or return to the curriculum is denied the student may appeal the denial.

a.1 Appeal Procedure

- a) Appeals must be made to the Dean of the School of Medicine within five (5) business days of written notification of the denial, must be in writing, and must cite grounds for the appeal. The appeal may be submitted through the student's home campus Office of Student Affairs.
- b) The Dean will either issue a decision or appoint an Appeals Committee comprised of three members of the senior faculty within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written appeal. The senior Student Affairs personnel on the student's home campus will serve as an ex-officio member of the Appeal Committee.
- c) The Appeals Committee will be convened by the senior Student Affairs personnel on the student's home campus within ten (10) business days after appointment to consider the student's appeal.
- d) The student may appear in person and/or present a statement to the Appeals Committee relative to the appeal. The procedures for the committee hearing shall follow those of the Student Conduct Board described in the [TTUHSC Student Handbook](#).
- e) The Appeals Committee will report their recommendation to the Dean within five (5) business days. The Dean will take the Appeals Committee's recommendations under advisement and render a final decision. The student and the senior Student Affairs personnel on the student's home campus will be notified of the outcome in writing by the Dean. The Dean's decision is final.