

Voluntary Health Related Leave of Absence Policy – Policy Revision Proposal

I. Overview

A voluntary health related leave of absence (HRLOA) may be appropriate for students who experience a medical (including a mental health/psychological concerns) event that significantly limits their ability to function successfully or safely in their role as students. This policy describes the process by which a student may request a HRLOA, and the process by which a student may request to return to St. John's University after a HRLOA.

Note:

Students may also be eligible to take other types of leave from their academic program.

- Undergraduate students should consult the Undergraduate Bulletin, available at <https://www.stjohns.edu/academics/academic-resources/bulletins/undergraduate-bulletin>, and contact their academic Dean's office for more information.
- Graduate students should consult the Graduate Bulletin, available at <https://www.stjohns.edu/academics/academic-resources/bulletins/graduate-bulletin>, and contact their academic Dean's office for more information.
- International students should consult with the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO), before taking a Health Related Leave of Absence in order to understand the impact of taking a Health Related Leave of Absence on their visa status.
- Furthermore, all students should contact Student Financial Services to determine how the HRLOA process could impact their financial aid package (i.e., loans, scholarships, etc.).

II. Advantages of Taking a Health Related Leave of Absence

Students who take a HRLOA may be eligible to receive the following advantages that may not be afforded by another type of leave of absence:

- A. For undergraduate and graduate students, a HRLOA does not necessarily disrupt the student's guarantee of scholarships or funding.
- B. A HRLOA may allow a student to initiate a leave of absence and withdraw from classes later in the semester than is normally permitted for personal leaves of absence.
- C. The length of time a student may take to recover while on a HRLOA is typically longer than the length of time permitted by an academic program for a personal leave of absence.

III. Applying for a HRLOA

- A. Submit a completed "Student Form – Request for Health Related Leave of Absence" using the following link https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?StJohnsUniv&layout_id=50.
- B. Please have your provider submit a completed "Provider Form – Request for Health Related Leave of Absence". This form can be found at www.stjohns.edu/HRLOA. This form should be emailed, faxed, or mailed to the Health Related Leave of Absence Committee:

Health Related Leave of Absence Committee
 St. John's University
 8000 Utopia Parkway
 Marillac Hall, Room 130
 Queens, NY 11439
 718-990-2609 (Fax)
healthrelatedleave@stjohns.edu

C. Submit a signed Release of Information form to authorize the HRLOA Committee to communicate with your providers and the following offices regarding your HRLOA application and eventual return from a HRLOA leave:

- Academic Dean
- Student Financial Services
- Office of the Registrar
- Your Parent or guardian
- Your health care provider
- Residence Life (*If applicable*)
- Office of International Student and Scholar Services (*If applicable*)
- Veterans' Success Center (*If applicable*)

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D. Students should apply for a HRLOA at the time that they experience a medical (including a mental health/psychological concerns) that significantly limits their ability to function successfully or safely in their role as students.

Note: Absent extenuating circumstances, the HRLOA Committee will not approve a HRLOA for the semester in which the student has completed final exams, *e.g.*, student completes Fall 2019 final exams and requests a HRLOA for Fall 2019 semester. Examples of extenuating circumstances may include: (a) evidence the student was unaware of the HRLOA process; (b) evidence the student was unable to function successfully or safely at the University prior to the final exam period and the student's failure to apply for a HRLOA at that time was reasonable; or (c) evidence the student withdrew completely from the University during or immediately after the semester in which a HRLOA is sought.

III. **Evaluating an Application for a HRLOA**

- A. Requests for a HRLOA are evaluated by the HRLOA Committee, which is comprised of employees from the Center for Counseling and Consultation and Student Health Services.
- B. The HRLOA Committee's approach considers the student's individual circumstances and gives significant weight to documentation of the opinion of the student's treatment provider regarding the student's ability to function academically at the University with or without accommodations.
- C. The HRLOA Committee reserves the right to require additional documentation from the applicant and/or provider.

- D. The HRLOA Committee will review a completed application and endeavor to render a decision within 14 business days.

IV. **Result of HRLOA**

- A. Within 14 business days of receipt of your complete application (i.e., Release of information form, Student and Provider HRLOA Forms) you will be notified by the HRLOA Committee via your St. John's email if your HRLOA application has been approved or denied by the University.
- B. If your request for a HRLOA is approved, the HRLOA Committee will communicate this decision with the following offices, which will take appropriate action related to your temporary separation from the University:
 - (1) Your Academic Dean (who will advise you the HRLOA Committee has approved your HRLOA);
 - (2) The Office of Student Financial Services;
 - (3) The Office of the Registrar;
 - (4) The Office of Residence Life (*If applicable*);
 - (5) The International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) (*If applicable*); and
 - (6) Office of Veterans' Services (*If applicable*).
- C. Students who are granted an HRLOA will be withdrawn from **ALL** courses for the semester that they have requested an HRLOA.
- D. A "WD" notation will be entered by your Dean on your transcript for the courses you were enrolled for the semester that an HRLOA was granted, reflecting a separation from the University.
- E. If you have registered for an upcoming semester you will be unregistered for these classes and will have to re-register once your application to return from a HRLOA has been approved.
- F. A hold will be placed on your account limiting your ability to enroll in any future courses
- G. You are unable to be employed by the University while you are on a HRLOA.
- H. If the HRLOA Committee had denied your request for a HRLOA you may appeal this decision by contacting in writing:

Luis G. Manzo, Ph.D.
Executive Director of Student Wellness & Assessment
St. John's University
8000 Utopia Parkway
Bent Hall, Garden Level
Queens, NY 11439
(718) 990-6911
manzol@stjohns.edu

IV. Applying to Return to the University at the Conclusion of a HRLOA

- A. Submit a completed “Student Form – Request to Return Health Related Leave of Absence” using the following link https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?StJohnsUniv&layout_id=51.
- B. Please have your provider submit a completed “Provider Form – Request to Return for Health Related Leave of Absence”. This form can be found at www.stjohns.edu/HRLOA. This form should be emailed, faxed, or mailed to the Health Related Leave of Absence Committee:
- St. John's University
8000 Utopia Parkway
Marillac Hall, Room 130
Queens, NY 11439
718-990-2609 x)
healthrelatedleave@stjohns.edu
- C. Submit a signed Release of Information form to authorize the HRLOA Committee to communicate with your providers and the following offices regarding your HRLOA application and eventual return from a HRLOA leave:
- Academic Dean
 - Student Financial Services
 - Office of the Registrar
 - Your Parent or guardian
 - Your health care provider
 - Residence Life (*If applicable*)
 - Office of International Student and Scholar Services (*If applicable*)
 - Veterans’ Success Center (*If applicable*)

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- D. The deadlines to submit these forms are as follows:
- (a) July 1 for the Fall Semester
 - (b) November 1 for the Winter Session
 - (c) December 1 for the Spring Semester
 - (d) April 1 for the Summer Session.

Note: These deadlines ensure that the HRLOA Committee will have sufficient time to review the request. If materials are received shortly after the relevant deadline, the University will attempt to be flexible and review the student’s request to return for the desired semester. However, if there is missing information and/or the University needs additional time to contact the student’s treatment provider, consideration for a return may be made for the following semester rather than the semester for which they were initially seeking to return.

- E. Once you have submitted your application to return from a HRLOA, students should notify their Academic Dean or Academic advisor of their intention to return for the upcoming semester.
- Students should not (nor should a Dean, Faculty member, Administrators, etc.) register for classes (i.e., re-enroll at the University) until the HRLOA Committee has officially approved a student's return to the University.
 - If you intend to live in University housing, please contact the Office of Residence Life regarding your intention to return from a HRLOA. Students should not be accepted into University housing until the HRLOA Committee has officially approved a student's return to the University.
 - If you are an International Student you must contact the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) directly regarding your intention to return from a HRLOA. Students should not return to the USA until the HRLOA Committee has approved a student's return to the University.
 - If you have a pending case with the Office of Student Conduct, please note that the case must be resolved before you return to the University. Your application to return from a HRLOA is independent of the outcome of a pending Student Conduct case.

V. Evaluating an Application to Return From a HRLOA

- A. Requests to return to the University are evaluated by the HRLOA Committee.
- B. The HRLOA Committee will review the application for evidence demonstrating the student's readiness to resume studies and be a successful member of the University community, with or without accommodations.
- C. The HRLOA Committee reserves the right to require additional documentation from the applicant and/or provider.
- D. Within 14 business days of receipt of your complete application (i.e., Release of information form, Student Form, Provider HRLOA Forms and any additional requested information) you will be notified by the HRLOA Committee via your St. John's email if your HRLOA application has been approved or denied by the University.
- E. If your request to return is approved, the HRLOA Committee will communicate this decision with the following offices, which will take appropriate action related to your return:
- (a) Your Academic Dean (who will advise you the HRLOA Committee has approved your return);
 - (b) The Office of Student Financial Services;
 - (c) The Office of the Registrar;
 - (d) The Office of Residence Life (*If applicable*);
 - (e) The International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) (*If applicable*); and
 - (f) Office of Veterans' Services (*If applicable*).
- F. If the HRLOA Committee had denied your request to return from a HRLOA you may appeal this decision by contacting in writing:

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