	School of Medicine Graduate Biomedical Education (GBE) GBE Student Policies and Resources	<i>Policy Number</i>	GBEPR003	
		<i>Approval Date</i>	N/A	
		<i>Effective Date</i>	04/21/2025	
	<i>Subject</i>	Procedures for Graduate Student Leave and Leave of Absence	<i>Page</i>	1 of 3
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I. PURPOSE

The procedures described below apply to all graduate students enrolled in Master's and PhD programs at the School of Medicine, WITH THE EXCEPTION of students who are funded by grants/fellowships that have their own leave policy. In those cases, the students will follow the policy of the granting/fellowship agency.

For PhD students covered by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between Johns Hopkins University and the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, the stipulations of the CBA supersede those in this document.


II. PROCEDURES

A. Paid Leave (vacation)

1. 15 days (three weeks) paid leave per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), in addition to [Johns Hopkins University holidays](#).
2. The School of Medicine does not provide paid time off for academic calendar breaks, such as Spring breaks, that are not formal JHU holidays; however, paid leave may be taken during times normally associated with these breaks.
3. Paid leave is distinct from sick leave (covered below) and sick leave should not be deducted from paid leave.
4. Unused days of paid leave may not be carried over into the following 12-month period and are not payable upon departure.
5. Notes:
 - a. Graduate students must provide reasonable advance notice in writing of their intention to use paid leave and must receive consent in writing from the faculty supervisor.
 - b. Teaching assistants may not use paid leave to diminish or delay any instructional duties.
 - c. Time spent traveling to and attending academic conferences approved by the faculty supervisor is not considered paid leave.

B. Sick Leave

1. 15 days (three weeks) paid leave per year. Unused days may not be carried over into the following 12-month period and are not payable upon departure. Sick leave may not be subtracted from any paid leave earned through the policy above.

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- a. When a student takes sick leave, they should notify their faculty advisor and keep them up-to-date daily or as feasible. At its discretion, the graduate program may require the student to submit verification of the need for sick leave from their healthcare provider to the University Health Service Center for review. Any documents containing a student's medical information must be kept separate from their academic file.
- b. Extended absences (more than two weeks) must be reported by the student and the advisor to the program administrator as quickly as possible. If the illness requires an extended absence, the student may apply for a leave of absence, as described below.

C. New Child Accommodation

1. Parental leave may be granted in accordance with the JHU [New Child Accommodation for Full Time Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Trainees](#). Graduate students must complete and submit the [parental leave form](#) (see link to Appendix B in Table of Contents above).

D. Voluntary Leave of Absence (LoA)

1. **Initiating a LoA:** School of Medicine PhD and Master's programs follow the JHU [Student Leave of Absence Policy](#). To request approval for a leave, the student must complete the [University Leave Request Form](#) and upload the documentation listed below.
 - a. **For LoA due to Medical, Military or Personal Reasons:** The student should first contact their faculty or thesis advisor and complete the form [Letter of Intent for Voluntary Leave of Absence](#) (see link to Appendix A in Table of Contents above). This letter should be submitted by the student to the program director along with any relevant documentation. Additionally, the student and advisor should schedule a joint meeting with the program director to discuss the LoA request, prior to the proposed start date for the student's leave.
 - Following this meeting, if the request for LoA is approved by the program director, the director completes a [Student Change of Status](#) form signed by the director and by the student.
 - If no faculty or thesis advisor exists or the circumstances otherwise warrant, the program director will retain the right to approve a student's request for LoA without signatory approval from a student's advisor. In such circumstances, the program director will work with the student on placement with a new advisor if necessary upon the student's return.
 - The completed Letter of Intent, the Change of Status form, and any other required documentation based on the type of leave requested are uploaded as part of the documentation on the [University Leave Request Form](#).
 - b. **Review and Approval:** The Associate Dean for Graduate Biomedical Education receives the University Leave Request Form and notifies the student, advisor, and program director and the Office of the Registrar of their decision. If the leave is approved, the attached documentation will be used to update the student status in the Student Information System (SIS).
 - c. **Extension:** The student may request an extension by submitting the [University Leave Extension Request Form](#) along with any relevant documentation.
2. **Returning from a LoA:**
 - a. The student will notify the program director of their intent to return to full time status, at least six weeks in advance, and will submit the [University Return from Leave Request Form](#) after uploading any required documentation based on the type of leave.
 - b. The program director will contact the advisor to whom the student is to return, and confirm the student's return date.

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- c. If the request to return is approved, the program director will complete and submit a [Student Change of Status](#) form, signed by the director and the student, to notify the Registrar that the student's LoA has ended.

3. Student Insurance Extension Process

Students on a medical leave of absence (MLOA) are eligible to remain enrolled in the JHU health insurance coverage for up to two additional semesters:

- a. Coverage Extension for MLOA: Students on a medical leave of absence (MLOA), will be automatically enrolled in health insurance coverage for the following two semesters. Enrollment into coverage for the next semester will automatically occur a month before the start of the next semester.
Examples: If a student's MLOA begins in Spring, they will be enrolled in coverage for the upcoming Fall and the following Spring semester.
- b. Coverage for Non-MLOA Leave: If the student's leave of absence is not a Medical Leave of Absence, the student will remain enrolled in coverage through the semester that their leave began. After this period, they have the option to enroll in a 3-month extension of coverage or explore enrollment in a marketplace plan such as [Mercer Indigo](#).
- c. Waived Coverage: If the student was not enrolled in the University-offered Student Health Insurance Plan or had waived coverage at the time their MLOA started, the student is not eligible for the coverage extension. However, the student will remain in a waived status for up to two additional semesters.
- d. Waiving Coverage During MLOA: Students who were enrolled in the student health insurance plan and subsequently go on a medical leave of absence will have the option to waive coverage during the next open waiver period. The student will need to provide proof of comparable coverage to be granted a waiver. Waivers are submitted online through the [Academic Health Plans portal](#).
Note: Students who return to their home country for medical care or obtain coverage outside of the student health plan will be able to submit an appeal to waive coverage while on leave. Appeals must be sent to JHUStudentBenefits@jhu.edu for review and processing.
- e. Cost Considerations: The cost for health insurance during a medical leave of absence will remain the same rate as for active students. The charge for health insurance will be billed to the student's SIS account at the beginning of each insurance period (August for Fall coverage and January for Spring coverage).
- f. Semester Coverage Dates:
 - Fall Coverage: August 15 – December 31
 - Spring Coverage: January 1 – August 14
 - New students enrolled in summer courses: Coverage begins May 15, June 1, or July 1 based on matriculation date
- g. If you have any questions or need further clarification regarding student health insurance coverage, please contact JHUStudentBenefits@jhu.edu

E. Required Leave of Absence

1. School of Medicine PhD and Master's programs follow the procedures for Required Leave of Absence outlined in the JHU [Student Leave of Absence Policy](#).