



Albert Einstein College of Medicine

Student Vacation and Leaves of Absence Policy (GRAD)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide requirements for vacation and leaves of absence for PhD and MD-PhD students enrolled in the Graduate Programs in the Biomedical Sciences ("Graduate Division").

II. Scope

This Policy applies to graduate students enrolled in the Graduate Division.

III. Policy

A. Vacation and Holidays

- First-year students may take vacation only during the winter and spring holidays as posted on the Graduate Division academic calendar—consult the academic calendar posted on the Graduate Division website. Students may not schedule time off during class or exam periods—consult the course syllabus and/or course leader.
- Students who have completed at least twelve months in the program may receive stipends during the normal period of vacation and holidays observed by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. (Visit the Human Resources website for a list of Einstein holidays). It is anticipated that students will take two weeks' vacation time each year, exclusive of the winter and spring holidays as posted on the Graduate Division academic calendar.
- All time off should be scheduled in consultation with the mentor.
- Prolonged absence from the lab, greater than time agreed upon by the mentor(s), and/or limited participation in the lab with little or no communication with mentor, advisors, the associate dean, or registrar's office, may lead to review by the Academic Affairs Committee and subsequent academic probation or dismissal from the program.

B. Leaves of Absence

The Graduate Division follows the [NIH Training Grant Guidelines \(NOT-OD-16-105\)](#) with respect to leaves.

1. General Guidelines:

- A student may request a voluntary leave of absence due to medical, personal, or academic reasons. The associate dean for graduate programs, or the MSTP director may place a student on an emergency medical leave, if necessary.

- The associate dean for graduate programs must approve all leaves of absence. Leaves of absence are recorded on the transcript, although the specific type of leave is not.
- A **Leave of Absence** form (available on the Graduate Division Forms webpage) must be submitted to the Graduate Division office.
- Medical leave of absence requires submission of a health-care providers's note in addition to the Leave of Absence form.
- A student may take a leave of absence for up to six months at a time. If more time is needed, a request must be submitted in writing to the associate dean. The maximum duration for any type of leave or any combination of leaves of absence whether continuous or discontinuous is a total of twelve months. Leaves of absence with a combined total of more than twelve months may lead to review by the Academic Affairs Committee and/or dismissal or withdrawal from the program.
- A student who fails to re-matriculate following the expiration of a leave of absence will be administratively withdrawn from the Graduate Division. The student must then apply for re-admission if they wish to re-enroll.
- A student who is absent from courses or the laboratory without notice may be subject to disciplinary actions, including referral to the Academic Affairs Committee and subsequent dismissal from the program.

2. **Student Stipend:**

- A student on parental leave or medical leave may receive a stipend for up to a maximum of sixty calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to eight weeks).
- During paid medical or parental leave, the student will continue to be supported on their current funding source for up to 8 weeks (60 calendar days). If the leave is extended beyond 8 weeks (60 calendar days), the leave becomes an unpaid Leave of Absence. Paid vacation time is not available for a 12-month period following paid leave.
- Students on paid leave (receiving a stipend) may not receive income from other employment.
- Students on unpaid leave may receive income from other employment.
- The academic and post-defense leaves of absence are unpaid.

Note: If a student is a fellow on an NIH NRSA grant (i.e., T32, F30, F31), the grant provides support for sick days up to 15 calendar days and support for parental leave for up to 60 calendar days. Further stipend support during paid leave is the responsibility of the mentor.

Reference the specific leave types below for further information.

3. **Health Insurance and Housing While on Leave:**

- Health insurance benefits may continue while the student is on leave for up to six months. However, prior to or immediately after the start date of a leave of absence, the student must consult with the Benefits Office regarding continuation of health insurance. It is the student's responsibility to confirm their health insurance benefit status while on leave.
- A student may remain in student housing while on leave and must continue to pay rent during that time. A student who does not pay rent for any reason may be subject to removal from student housing.

4. **International Students:**

- As a condition of maintaining student status for visa requirements, all international students must pursue a “full course of study.” An international student is eligible for parental leave or medical leave only upon approval of the Office of International Services and with written healthcare provider’s recommendation. An international student is not eligible for other types of leave.

C. Types of Leaves

1. **Parental Leave of Absence:**

- A student may request a paid parental leave of absence for up to a maximum of sixty calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to eight work-weeks) per year for the adoption or the birth of a child. Either parent is eligible for parental leave.
- A student requiring an extension of parental leave longer than sixty calendar days must seek approval from the mentor and associate dean (and MSTP director, if applicable) for an unpaid leave extension prior to the original anticipated date of return. The student must submit an amended Leave of Absence form with a written note from a healthcare provider. The student may continue the leave as unpaid medical leave for an additional four months. The maximum amount of time allowed for a parental leave of absence is six months.

2. **Medical Leave of Absence:**

- A student may request to take a medical leave of absence in the case of prolonged illness or another medical emergency. This leave may also be appropriate in the case of chronic physical or mental illness. (Pregnancy and childbirth are covered by parental leave as stated above.) At the beginning of a medical leave of absence, the student must submit a health-care provider’s note along with the Leave of Absence form.
- The associate dean or program director may immediately place a student on medical leave status if the student experiences an episode or series of episodes of psychiatric illness and/or symptoms that reasonably appears, in the judgment of the associate dean or program director (after appropriate psychiatric consultation), to render the student unable to safely continue to participate in the academic program. Actions taken under the authority of this policy shall be in response, not to the presence of a “psychiatric illness/diagnosis” per se, but to documented aberrations of judgment or behavior that adversely affect laboratory, interpersonal, community, and/or general social functions and relationships. Periods of impaired judgment, above all, pose a threat to fellow students, faculty, and the community, regardless of the specific diagnosis or etiology of the condition.
- Return from a medical leave of absence requires submission of a healthcare provider’s note certifying that the student is well enough to return to their responsibilities as a full-time graduate student. This healthcare provider note must accompany the Return from Leave of Absence form.
- A student may continue to receive a stipend for up to a maximum of sixty calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to eight weeks) for medical leave. After this period of time, the student may continue on unpaid medical leave for an additional four months. The maximum amount of time allowed for a medical leave of absence is six months. In extreme circumstances medical leave may be extended an additional six months with appropriate documentation from a medical professional. If the student does not return to active student status after twelve months of medical leave, the student may be administratively withdrawn from the program.

- Rarely a student may experience a serious medical condition that results in a disability. The Graduate Division follows Einstein's Student Disability Accommodation Policy.

3. Sick Leave or Bereavement Leave:

- A student may take a sick leave for a maximum of fifteen calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to two weeks) per year.
- If a member of the immediate family dies, a student may take a bereavement leave of absence for up to five days. These days are to be taken consecutively within a reasonable time of the date of the death or funeral and may not be split or postponed. If the student needs more time for a funeral or other arrangements, the student may request vacation time or an academic (unpaid) leave of absence in which case a Leave of Absence Form must be submitted to the Graduate Division office.
- A Leave of Absence Form need not be submitted to the Graduate Division office prior to going on sick or bereavement leave. However, the student must communicate with the mentor regarding sickness or bereavement leave.

4. Personal/Academic Leave of Absence:

- The associate dean (and MSTP director, if applicable) may grant a personal/academic leave of absence for a period up to a maximum of six months. This may be considered appropriate if the student is experiencing problems in courses or laboratory research, academic difficulties based on personal issues, conflicts, or the need for counseling beyond normal tutoring. The personal leave of absence may be because of academic reasons. *The personal/academic leave of absence is unpaid leave.*
- The personal/academic leave may be used as an unpaid leave during which time the student is completing their dissertation. The maximum period for this leave is six months. The student may apply for an extension of up to another six months.
- If the student does not return to active student status after twelve months of personal/academic leave and defend the thesis, if applicable, the student may be administratively withdrawn from the program.

5. Post-Defense Leave of Absence:

- If a student successfully defends the thesis and then must leave Einstein prior to satisfying all final requirements for the PhD degree (as may occur if the student starts a job), the student will be placed on an unpaid post-defense leave of absence. The maximum amount of time allotted for a post-defense leave of absence is three months from the date of thesis defense. No extension permissible.
- A student on a post-defense leave of absence is no longer in active, full-time status and therefore no longer eligible for loan deferment, stipend, or health insurance.
- Health insurance while on a post-defense leave of absence: Health benefits for a student on an unpaid post-defense leave of absence will terminate on the last day of the month in which the student is terminated from Einstein payroll.
- International Students: As a condition of maintaining student status, all international students must pursue a "full course of study." The post-defense leave of absence is not available to international students.

D. Return from Leave of Absence

1. A student who wishes to return from a leave of absence must:

- At least two weeks prior to the anticipated date, confirm the anticipated return date with the mentor, associate dean, and the registrar of the Graduate Division.
- On the date of return, notify the Graduate Division registrar's office by email (gradregistrar@einsteinmed.edu) so that student status can be updated, and
- Within three days of return from leave, submit a completed Return from Leave of Absence form, with all necessary signatures, to the Graduate Office (Belfer 202) or by email gradregistrar@einsteinmed.edu.
- Returning from a medical leave of absence requires a submission of a healthcare provider's note certifying that the student is well enough to return to their responsibilities as a full-time graduate student, in addition to the Return from Leave of Absence form.

E. Failure to Return from a Leave of Absence

- Once the period of leave time is expired, and the student does not wish to return to the program (i.e. active student status), the student will have the option to withdraw from the program by notifying the Graduate Division registrar's office at gradregistrar@einsteinmed.edu within fourteen calendar days prior to the leave expiration date. The "official withdrawal" will be recorded on the student's permanent graduate transcript.
- If the student does not contact or notify the Graduate Division Registrar within fourteen calendar days prior to the leave expiration date, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

F. References

[Graduate Division Academic Calendar](#)
[Graduate Division Forms](#)
[Einstein Holiday Schedule](#)
[Einstein's Student Disability Accommodation Policy](#)

IV. Definitions

None.

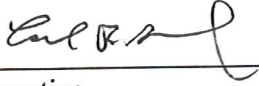
V. Effective Date

Effective as of: January 1, 2022

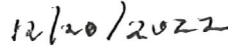
VI. Policy Management and Responsibilities

Einstein's Graduate Division of Biomedical Sciences is the Responsible Office under this Policy.
Einstein's Executive Dean is the Responsible Executive, and the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs is the Responsible Officer for the management of this Policy.

VII. Approved (or Revised)



Responsible Executive



Date