

MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE (MLOA): Questions and Answers

Purchase College Health Service (914)251-6380

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1. **Q: What is a MLOA?**

A: A **MLOA** is provided by the Administration to students whose emotional distress/substance use/physical health is so severe that they are unable to address the requirements of the academic environment. This will usually mean the student is a danger to himself/herself/themselves or others, is unable to adequately care for himself/herself/themselves, is engaging in excessive substance use or has physical health issues requiring specialized and/or prolonged treatment or hospitalization. For further information regarding a MLOA, please refer to the Purchase website address: <https://www.purchase.edu/offices/student-affairs/policies-and-procedures/> (Click on Leaves and Withdrawals)

2. **Q: Can I get a MLOA for a specific class?**

A: **No.** A **MLOA** constitutes a complete withdrawal from school. MLOAs are not given for selected Classes.

3. **Q: If I get a MLOA, what will I need to do to return to school?**

A: Anyone who gets a MLOA must normally remain out of school for a minimum of six months and must be able to substantiate that he/she/they has addressed the issues that precipitated the MLOA. Typically, it is recommended that the student has received appropriate medical treatment and/or psychotherapy, has been employed, or has taken classes at a community college. When the student is ready to return to school he/she/they must be evaluated by the Counseling Center or Health Services (wherever the student was originally seen for the medical leave). The student will need to provide documentation to verify diagnosis and treatment given, type and amount of treatment (for mental health issues, the number of sessions with a mental health professional: 1 or 2 visits will not suffice), and confirmation from the treating professional that the student is ready to return to school. The MLOA re-entry paperwork will be mailed to the student's home address at the student's request. Please call the office for your Reentry Forms.

The medical leave return process must happen **prior to the first day of classes** to the semester that the student is planning to return.

4. **Q: I was depressed/extremely ill during the fall semester last year and had bad grades. Could I get a MLOA for the semester?**

A: In general, MLOAs are not granted retroactively (they are only given for the current semester). However, in extraordinary circumstances a MLOA may be granted for a prior semester.

5. **Q: Can I stay in the residence hall if I get a MLOA?**

A: **No.** You need to move out of your residence hall within a couple of days. Once you take a MLOA, you are not eligible for the services rendered to students (e.g. residence halls, Health Services, library, meal plan etc). Please contact your Residence Coordinator to make arrangements to check out of your residence assignment.

6. **Q: Will it show up on my transcripts?**

A: The MLOA shows up on transcripts as "W" signifying "withdrawal." Those reviewing a transcript would have no way of knowing the reason for the withdrawal.

7. **Q: Will my school health insurance lapse while I am on a MLOA?**
- A:** If you are enrolled in the college health insurance plan, you will continue to be covered until the end of the enrollment period (either January or August whichever comes first) even if you leave school on a MLOA. If you continue your MLOA beyond that semester, you will **not** be eligible to enroll in the college health insurance plan until you return to active full time status. Students on Medical Leaves who are insured with non-college insurance plans should check eligibility for continuing coverage with their insurance companies.
8. **Q: Can I get a prorated reimbursement for that portion of the semester’s tuition, housing costs or meal plans that I will not use as a result of my MLOA?**
- A:** Medical leaves are effective on the date that the completed recommendation is received by the Office of Student Affairs. This effective date is used for calculating billing and refunds, and for assessing financial liability. The standard refund and financial liability policy applies for medical leaves. Federal law requires that financial aid recipients “earn” most of the aid they receive. Students who withdraw prior to completing 60 percent of the semester may be required to return some of the aid they were awarded. More information regarding the college refund policy and financial aid guidelines can be found on the Student Financial Services web page: <https://www.purchase.edu/offices/student-financial-services/student-accounts-billing/refund-policy/>.
9. **Q: Am I guaranteed the same housing I signed up for this semester, when I return from MLOA?**
- A: No.** Campus housing is limited; it is NOT guaranteed for student returning from MLOAs. Although students returning from MLOA are prioritized for housing, housing may not be available. Students returning from leave should explore off campus options in case campus housing is unavailable. If a student has registered for housing for an upcoming semester prior to taking a MLOA that housing agreement is cancelled. Please contact the Office of Community Engagement at (914) 251-6320 for specific information related to on-campus housing.
10. **Q: What do I need to do to get a MLOA?**
- A:** It is a good idea to first discuss the decision with family or those who provide financial support who may also be impacted by your decision. A meeting with a staff professional at the Counseling Center or Student Health Services to assess whether you meet the criteria for a MLOA will be necessary. The Office of Student Affairs makes the final decision as to whether a MLOA will be granted.
11. **Important Notice for International Students:** You are required by U.S. Government regulations to inform a Designated School Official PRIOR to requesting any Leave of Absence. Failure to do so may jeopardize your visa status and/or your ability to obtain a U.S. visa in the future. Please make an appointment with the Office of International Program and Services (international@purchase.edu or 914-251-6032) before submitting your request for Medical Leave of Absence.

I have read & understand the above & agree to a Medical Leave of Absence. _____ Date

Name of Student (print)

Signature of Student