

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**

This policy describes the circumstances under which graduate students enrolled in Rutgers Graduate School-Newark (School 26) may be eligible for approved leave of absence. It outlines the categories of leave of absence and the process to request a leave of absence. The policy also explains the duration of leave and the procedure for returning from a leave of absence. This policy applies to all graduate students enrolled in Rutgers Graduate School-Newark.

### **Important Definitions**

**Regularly Enrolled Graduate Student:** Students with active enrollment status.

**Continuous Enrollment:** All students in graduate degree programs in School 26 must maintain their status by registering each fall and spring semester in coursework, research, dissertation study or Matriculation Continued.

Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment must apply for **readmission** to continue in good standing.

**Leave of Absence:** Any interruption of a student's active studies for an entire term or more. Leave of absence is available to students who plan to reenroll after a temporary suspension of their studies. During such leave, students register for Matriculation Continued (26:001:800) with their program director.

**Discontinuation:** Term used to describe indefinite interruption of studies without a plan to reenroll.

### **Circumstances Eligible for Leave of Absence**

Students may request a leave of absence for the following reasons:

- **Medical** Students seeking a medical leave of absence should provide documentation showing that they are under the care of a duly licensed health care professional;
- **Family or Dependent Care**
  - Birth or adoption of a child by the student or their spouse or partner
  - Care for an ill spouse, parent, or child (request for leave should include explanation of student's caregiving role);
- **Military Service** Students are required to provide a copy of their military induction documents, as well as their active duty authorization;

- **Other / Personal** Any reason other than those stated above (no supporting documentation required).

**How to Request a Leave of Absence**

**STEP 1:** A student seeking a leave of absence must first meet with their program director to determine if leave is the appropriate course of action given the student’s unique circumstances.

**STEP 2:** Student is required to complete and submit the Request for [Leave of Absence form to the GPD](#). The GPD will review the form with the student, including all supporting documentation. GPD is expected to explain the impact of the leave of absence on student’s academic progress and funding timeline. If approved, GPD will sign the request form. Student must then sign request form acknowledging that they have formally made the program aware of this request and having been provided with pertinent information related to their academic progress.

**STEP 3:** Submit the signed Leave of Absence form to the Graduate School-Newark Deans office for review and approval.

Type of Leave	Maximum Duration of Leave	Required Documentation	Other Information
Medical	Four (4) Semesters	Recommendation from a licensed health care professional	If the anticipated absence exceeds four semesters, student should withdraw from the program and contact their Graduate Program Director when they are ready to return to active study
Family or Dependent Care	Four (4) Semesters	Explanation of student’s caregiving role	If the anticipated absence exceeds four semesters, the student should withdraw from the program and contact their Graduate Program Director when they are ready to return to active study
Military Service	Duration of military service	Induction or authorization of	None

		active duty documents	
Other / Personal	1 Semester	None	Students are eligible for a leave of absence for personal reasons only once in their degree program. They must request this type of leave before the add/drop period in the fall or spring semester in order to be eligible

**Return Process**

Students wishing to return from approved leave must submit a [Request to Return to Active Study Form](#). The Request to Return to Active Study must be approved before student is permitted to register.

Students returning from approved leave of absence will not be subjected to the university’s readmission requirements.

**International Students**

International students seeking leave of absence **must consult** with the Office of International Student & Scholar Services (OISS) in order to clarify the immigration / visa regulations that might impact the proposed leave of absence.