ROLLINS POLICY

| Title: | Student Leaves of Absence | Type: | Student Affairs |
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## I. Purpose

This policy outlines the Leaves of Absence (LOA) processes, various procedures, and conditions for Rollins students. The policy includes readmission criteria, as well as processes and implications for students in terms of academic, financial, and housing matters at the College. This policy applies to students enrolled in all degree-granting programs of the College: Arts and Sciences (A&S), Professional Studies (CPS), Hamilton Holt (Holt), and the Crummer Graduate School of Business (Crummer).

All students may, with the approval of the Dean of Students, take an LOA to pursue nonacademic and/or non-Rollins academic interests or needs for one or two consecutive semesters. The conditions governing a leave of absence are as follows.

- A LOA typically begins at the start of a regular semester and may not extend beyond two terms. The Dean of Students may grant exceptions, see Section III. Procedures.
- LOA extensions, terminations, or cancellations must have the approval of the Dean of Students.
- A student on a LOA is not considered enrolled at Rollins and is not expected to participate in the College community. The Dean of Students may grant exceptions.
- A student on LOA may not transfer academic credit to Rollins for coursework taken while on leave without permission from the Dean of Students office. The Dean of Students office will coordinate permission with the appropriate academic dean(s).
- A LOA cannot be initiated after a student has been academically or social suspended or dismissed.

Students enrolled in A&S, CPS, or Holt, are expected to return to Rollins at the conclusion of a leave. Readmission is only necessary if a leave extends beyond two terms; readmission is not guaranteed. A student may continue to qualify for financial aid if s/he adheres to College deadlines. In addition, appropriate Federal, state and institutional financial aid policies will apply.

Crummer has a Continuous Enrollment Policy. Programs are structured so that each class of students progresses as a group. Failure to enroll in three consecutive semesters (i.e., one full year) is considered non-continuous attendance. Students who are not enrolled at Crummer for a period of three consecutive semesters will be removed from active student status, and must reapply for admission. Readmission is not guaranteed.

## II. Definitions

Outlined below are the various types of LOA's at the College, as well as guidance regarding hospitalization of a student.

**A. Personal Leaves (PLOA)**

PLOA may be granted for a program of work, study, or travel that demonstrably contributes to the student's personal development or program of study at Rollins. A student may also request a PLOA for reasons related to financial and/or personal hardship.

**B. Compassionate Leaves (CLOA)**

In unusual circumstances, the Dean of Students or designee may, upon careful consideration of the welfare of the individual student, place a student on a CLOA, due to extraordinary personal reasons that are not related to the student's physical or mental health, yet prevent the student from continuing classes (e.g., death in the immediate family).

**C. Medical Leaves of Absence (MLOA)**

In unusual circumstances, the Dean of Students or designee may, upon careful consideration of the welfare of the individual student and the College community, place a student on MLOA.

A student is encouraged to request a voluntary medical leave in the event s/he believes her/his physical and/or mental health concerns are significantly interfering with the ability to succeed at Rollins and/or the demands of college life are interfering with her/his recovery or safety. A student who, in consultation with the Director of the Wellness Center or her/his health care provider, determines s/he needs to request a voluntary medical leave must contact the Dean of Students office to discuss the terms of the MLOA.

**D. Involuntary Leave**

In unusual circumstances, the Dean of Students or designee, in consultation with the Wellness Center and the Behavioral Evaluation and Threat Assessment (BETA) Team, may determine that a student needs to be placed on involuntary leave. This determination will be based upon an individualized and objective assessment of the student's ability to safely participate in the College's courses and programs and will examine whether the student's behavior presents a serious and imminent risk to the health, safety, or welfare of the student or other members of the College community. The assessment will determine the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability of the potentially threatening injury actually occurring; and whether or not reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures will sufficiently mitigate the risk. The assessment will also include an evaluation of recommendations from medical professionals and an opportunity for the student and/or the student's parents to submit medical information and recommendations from the student's medical provider(s). In addition, a student who is not attending class or making satisfactory academic progress may be placed on an involuntary leave at the Dean of Students' directive in collaboration with the appropriate academic dean(s). Such a decision will include inquiry into the student's current health and welfare and may include a request for the student's recent medical or mental health information.

***Note***: In an effort to minimize risk and to help protect the welfare of the Rollins community, the College has a procedure for reviewing incidents that result in a student's involuntary hospitalization via the Baker Act (Florida Statute, 394.463 Florida Mental Health Act) or Marchman Act (Florida Statute, 397 Substance Abuse Services ).

Whenever law enforcement (Winter Park Police, Orange County Sheriff's Office, etc.) provide transportation of a Rollins student to the hospital for involuntary examination, officers will file a report with the *Office of Community Standards and Responsibility* (CSR). Once the report is received, the Director of CSR may notify and consult with Dean of Students office to review the severity of the student's behavior related to the involuntary examination for potential of continued risk to the campus community. A determination will be made as to whether a mandated interview and counseling education is necessary or whether some other, more stringent, protective action is appropriate to protect both the welfare of the student and the community. This determination will be based on an individualized assessment of the facts and circumstances surrounding the involuntary hospitalization and all available medical documentation. In either case, the Director of CSR will contact the student in a timely manner (upon release from the hospital and return to Rollins) and will require an initial meeting between the Dean of Students or designee and the student to inform the student of his/her rights and responsibilities regarding the incident involving involuntary hospitalization.

In cases where a mandated assessment and counseling education are necessary, the Dean of Students or designee may require students to complete an interview with a licensed mental health professional and participate in a counseling education program. The required interview must occur within two weeks following release from the hospital. Examples of a licensed mental health professional include a Wellness Center counselor, or a community based counselor or psychiatrist of the student's choice. The mandatory counseling education program, which is facilitated by the Wellness Center, must occur within 8 weeks following hospital release. The Dean of Students or designee will require proof of participation for the required interview with the licensed mental health professional and the counseling education program(s). Failure to comply may result in the initiation of the Involuntary Leave Procedure.

In cases where more protective action is needed based on more severe behavior / conduct (e.g., behaviors/actions significantly affecting the student's health and welfare, behavior endangering others, threats to harm others, and behavior disruptive to community), the Dean of students or designee may initiate a 1) immediate interim involuntary leave, 2) involuntary leave procedure, or 3) required interview with a mental health professional and counseling education.

## III. Procedures

The following section outlines LOA procedures and processes at the College.

**A. Personal, Compassionate or Medical Leaves**

**1. Initiating a Leave of Absence**

- The student should contact the Dean of Students/Student Affairs Office to schedule an appointment with the Director of Student and Family Care to discuss the LOA.
- Students considering a leave are asked to complete the following.
  - Review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) listed on the Dean of Students' website.
  - Download and complete the LOA form.

- Bring the LOA form to her/his appointment with the Dean of Students or Director of Student and Family Care. In the case of a Medical Leave of Absence, the student will also need to obtain a LOA recommendation letter from her/his healthcare provider (on letterhead and signed) which includes the medical reason for the leave and any conditions/treatment recommendations with which the student will need to comply to ensure her/his readiness to return to the rigors and challenges of a college environment. If the student cannot meet in person the LOA meeting can occur via phone.
- Ask the Dean of Students or Director of Student and Family Care any questions the student may have about the LOA. Following the discussion, the student and the Dean of Students or Director of Student and Family Care will both sign the LOA form.
- The Dean of Students or Director of Student and Family Care will notify the following offices that the student is considering a LOA. It is the student's responsibility to follow up with appropriate offices regarding potential impact of a LOA. Offices include: Bursar, Financial Aid, Residential Life and Explorations, Athletics, International Student and Scholar Services.

Once a leave is granted, the completed LOA form will be logged and filed in the Dean of Students Office. The Student Records Office will be notified of the leave via a Change of Status Form.

The student's professors and faculty advisor, and all departments connected with the student, will be notified via workflow initiated from the Change of Status Form that the LOA has been processed. The Student Records Office will withdraw the student from classes (if the LOA is taken during the academic year).

Final approval for an LOA and the conditions associated with the LOA will be provided in writing by email to the student by the Dean of Students Office.

**B. Involuntary Leave**

- The involuntary leave process will be initiated following the receipt of information that the student poses a serious and imminent threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the student or the College community.
- Threat notification may be received in the form of an incident report to CSR, or a psychiatric evaluation filed with the Dean of Students.
- Following the receipt of this information, the Dean of Students will call a meeting of the College's BETA Team at the earliest possible date. The student may attend this meeting and may present information in support of his/her case. The student will also be provided the opportunity to initiate the process for a voluntary medical leave. Following this meeting and after reviewing all relevant information, the BETA Team will make a recommendation to the Dean of Students about whether to place the student on involuntary leave, reinstate the student, or reinstate the student with conditions.

- The Dean of Students will make a final decision regarding the student's enrollment status and notify the student in writing. The student will be placed on involuntary leave if the Dean of Students concludes, on the basis of preponderance of evidence, that the student engages or threatens to engage in behavior that:
  - pose a significant danger to the health, safety, or welfare of the student or to others, or
  - substantially impede the lawful activities of other members of the campus community.
- A student subject to involuntary leave is entitled to the following.
  - Notice of intent to remove the student pursuant to this policy stating the reasons for the action.
  - The opportunity to examine and discuss the psychiatric or other evaluations provided to the committee.
  - The opportunity to present relevant information for consideration of his/her case.
  - The opportunity to have an advisor of the student's own choice accompany the student. An advisor must be a Rollins College student, staff member, or faculty member, or a parent. The student may request permission from the Dean of Students for an advisor who does not meet the listed criteria.

The procedure outlined above should be followed in most circumstances. However, the Dean of Students may impose an immediate and interim leave (the equivalent of a summary suspension), prior to the review of all information, if the Dean of Students concludes that the student poses an immediate threat to the welfare of any individual, the student body, or any part of the College or its community. In such cases, the student will be placed on involuntary leave while the above process is followed.

The Right to Appeal. In the event a student disagrees with the decision of the Dean of Students, the student may appeal the finding. The appeal must be made in writing to the Vice President for Student Affairs within three (3) calendar of the date the decision is communicated to the student. The Vice President for Student Affairs shall have fourteen (14) calendar days after receiving the appeal to review the case and render a decision.

Conditions of Involuntary Leave. Upon being placed on involuntary leave, the student may not attend classes, may not be an active member of a registered Rollins student organization, may no longer use College facilities, must vacate College-owned or affiliated housing, and may be entitled to whatever refunds of tuition, fees, and room and board charges are appropriate given the timing of the withdrawal.

Students placed on involuntarily leave shall have a hold placed on their academic records, preventing them from being readmitted or re-enrolled at Rollins except as stated in this paragraph. A student may request readmission or re-enrollment at the College and provide the Dean of Students with documentation from an appropriate health care provider of their choice who has conducted a proper assessment of the student and concluded that the student does not pose a serious risk to the health, safety, or welfare of the student or members of the College community. In cases where the Dean has imposed other conditions for readmission, it is the responsibility of the student to provide documentation of compliance with such conditions.

A student who is not placed on involuntary leave may be subject to conditions to continue enrollment at the College. In such cases, the student will be provided with a written summary of conditions and must meet all conditions in order to maintain student status. A student who fails to meet such conditions will be subject to involuntary leave by the Dean of Students or may be subject to charges through the College's student conduct process for failure to comply.

## IV. General Conditions for Leaves of Absence

**A. Course Registration.**

A student's registration for classes will be canceled for the semesters that the student plans to be on leave. A student on or considering a LOA should contact the Director of Student and Family Care for more information regarding course registration.

Students on LOA will be able to participate in course registration for the semester in which they are expected to return. The Director of Student and Family Care will send reinstatement instructions to students on a LOA prior to the semester they are expected to return. These instructions are sent in early November for spring, and late March or early April for the fall semester. Once the student is reinstated, the Office of Student Records will send registration instructions.

In order to register, students must contact their faculty advisor to gain their personal identification number (PIN) for registration. Students can access the schedule of classes online and registration occurs through FoxLink.

**B. Transcript Notation**

If a LOA begins before the drop deadline appropriate for the course(s), no record of attendance will be recorded on the transcript for that semester. If the leave begins after the drop deadline a "W" for withdrawal will be entered in the transcript for courses for that semester.

**C. Leave Limits**

There is no administrative limit upon the number of leaves a student may take. However, leaves may not be taken back to back without a period of re-enrollment at the College. Students on a LOA for more than two consecutive terms will have to reapply for admission, readmission is not guaranteed.

**D. Taking Classes at Other Institutions**

A student must obtain permission from the Dean of Students and confer with the Office of Student Records prior to enrolling at another institution while on leave. During this consultation students will determine whether courses will transfer and how the course(s) will apply to her/his Rollins degree. A student must request that an official transcript be sent to Rollins from all institutions attended during the time away, even if credit is not requested. A student must submit a completed transfer credit approval request by submitting a Request for Permission to Study Outside of A&S|CPS form to the Office of Student Records before the work can be evaluated for transfer credit. The student must also submit an official transcript of all work completed from the attended school. Students receiving Rollins financial aid must check with the Rollins College Office of Financial Aid to determine if there are any financial aid implications for taking classes while on leave. Student-athletes should check with the Department of Athletics to determine if there are

any National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) eligibility implications for taking classes at other institutions while on leave."

**E. International Students**
International students considering an LOA are required to speak with the Director of International Student and Scholar Services regarding; visa program status, departure to (and return from) home country, and other considerations.

**F. Incoming (New) Students**
A student who is new to Rollins and has not yet attended classes is eligible to defer matriculation and enrollment. Attendance is the determining factor in whether an individual is considered a current student or an incoming student. Incoming new students will have the opportunity to defer until the first day of classes. Generally, students who defer may only do so for a full year, not a semester. Students should contact the College's Office of Admissions for further information on deferring enrollment.

**G. Tuition Refunds**
Tuition refunds follow a schedule that is based on the number of days completed in the semester. Links to the College's refund schedules are provided below.

A&S/CPS Refund Schedule
Holt Refund Schedule
Crummer Refund Schedule

No proration of housing and dining fees occurs after the first two weeks of classes. A student who moves out during the first two weeks will be charged a daily rate for occupancy in addition to the housing release fee. Students should contact Business Services for meal plan refunds and Residence Life and Explorations regarding room charges.

Appeals of tuition refunds will be reviewed as a Review of Fee Adjustment.

## V. Reinstatement from Leave

Students requesting return from LOA must complete all processes, sanctions, or requests resulting from Community Standards and Responsibility (CSR) or Honor Code cases. Students must also clear all holds on their account before registering for courses.

- **Personal (PLOA) or Compassionate Leave (CLOA).** Requests for reinstatement are due via email to the Director of Student and Family Care no less than four (4) weeks prior to the start of classes.
- **Medical (MLOA) or Involuntary Leave.** Reinstatement from a MLOA or Involuntary Leave requires documentation from an appropriate health care provider indicating the student's ability to manage a full-time academic load.

  The student must have his/her appropriate service provider provide an official signed statement of recommendation for reinstatement and a completed reinstatement questionnaire that can be downloaded from the Dean of Students website. The official statement must address the following:

- specific diagnosis,
- progress made as a result of any treatment or community sanctions plan completion,
- readiness of the student to return to full-time student status, and
- recommended treatment plan to support the student's transition back to campus.

The documentation must provide verification that all conditions of the MLOA or Involuntary Leave have been met at the time of the request

Conditions for return are based on an individualized assessment. As such, a student may be required to submit additional documentation not listed above. Requests for reinstatement are due by email from the student's Rollins or personal email account to the Director of Student and Family Care no less than four (4) weeks prior to the start of classes.

The Dean of Students/Director of Student and Family Care will email reinstatement approvals to the student. The Dean of Students Office will issue a Change of Status Form and Student Records will notify the student of registration instructions via email.

The student on MLOA or Involuntary Leave should contact the Bursar's Office and Financial Aid Office as soon as s/he knows s/he will be returning. If interested in on-campus housing, s/he should contact the Office of Residential Life and Explorations as soon as possible. (Please note: on-campus housing is required for students with 60 earned hours or less and specific housing types are not guaranteed.) Additionally, if a student is an international student, s/he should contact the Office of International Student & Scholar Services as soon as possible prior to his/her return.

## VI. Extending a Leave or Early Return (for all leave types)

Students may apply initially for a one- or two-semester LOA. Classes will be dropped for all semesters for which the student plans to be on leave. A one-semester leave may be extended to two semesters at the request of the student. The student must schedule a meeting with the Dean of Students or Director of Student and Family Care, meet with the Dean or Director (via phone if not in the area), complete the LOA form, and contact the appropriate offices (Bursar, Financial Aid, Residential Life and Explorations, Athletics, International Student and Scholar Services) so the offices may notify the student of any additional relevant information or changes to the information they were given when they initially took a leave.

If a student has taken a LOA for two semesters, is not ready to return, and wishes to remain on LOA, s/he may contact the Office of the Dean of Students for a one- or two-semester extension of the leave. Normally, however, students are not approved for more than one-year (two semesters) of leave at a time.

LOAs and MLOAs may not be stacked beyond four (4) semesters – students may not spend more than two semesters away by returning from MLOA and immediately going on another LOA, or vice versa. As with extending a one-semester leave, the student must schedule an appointment with the Dean of Students or Director of Student and Family Care. The student must meet with the Dean/Director, complete the LOA form, and contact the appropriate offices (Bursar, Financial Aid, Residential Life and Explorations, Athletics, International Student and Scholar Services) so the offices may notify the student of any additional relevant information, or changes.

Students who originally applied for a two-semester LOA and who wish to return after only one semester away should contact the Director of Student and Family Care no less than four (4) weeks prior to the start of classes.

## VII. Return from an Expired Leave

Students who do not return from any LOA after two consecutive semesters, or who withdraw and wish to return to the College, must apply for readmission through the Office of Admission. Students should contact the Office of Admission to begin the readmission process.

In addition to the application, a student must submit a college official's report and official transcripts from each institution attended (if any) since leaving Rollins. Letters of recommendation from faculty, employers, and/or a physician or therapist may be submitted as well. The readmission deadlines are May 15th for fall semester and November 1st for spring semester. All readmission materials should be sent to the Office of Admission.

In certain cases, such as medical leaves, Community Standards and Responsibility (CSR) and Honor Code cases, students must fulfill any conditions or sanctions set forth by the College in addition to being approved for readmission. Students should be ready to present documentation verifying they have met these conditions.

Students applying for financial aid should complete all the necessary paperwork and adhere to applicable deadlines per Financial Aid, these deadlines are often earlier than the deadlines for registration and readmission. It is to the student's advantage to apply as early as possible for readmission as financial aid cannot be awarded until the student has been formally readmitted. The Office of Admission will notify the Office of Financial Aid when a student has been approved for readmission.

## VIII. Related Policies

**A. Financial Aid**

A LOA may or may not affect a student's eligibility for financial aid in the future and an unfinished semester may be counted as one semester of financial aid eligibility used. The Office of Financial Aid determines how much, if any, current financial aid must be repaid and how much financial aid the student is eligible to retain based on Federal, state, and institutional regulations and policies. This calculation is based on the leave date, which may be different than the move out date if the student is living on campus. The student should be certain to discuss with the Office of Financial Aid and Office of the Bursar any balances owed (including repayment of financial aid) as a result of taking an LOA. A student may or may not owe a balance to the College, depending on his/her individual situation.

There may be financial implications as the result of multiple leaves, depending on when LOA's are taken. Every student's situation is different and must be reviewed individually by the Office of Financial Aid. To be eligible for financial aid consideration when a student returns from a leave, s/he must complete all financial aid application requirements.

**B. Residence Halls**

Students have 48 hours to vacate residence hall rooms once an LOA is in effect. In some cases, a student may contact the Dean of Students' Office and Residential Life and Explorations if more time is needed to make travel arrangements. If a student's LOA begins during winter break or at the beginning of the spring semester, the student will have three days to pack her/his room and vacate once the residence halls open for spring semester. Students may ask for special permission from Director of Student Life: Residence Life and Explorations to return to the halls before they open to remove belongings from her/his room.

Students must take all of their belongings with them or make off-campus arrangements for storage during her/his LOA. Students may give written permission to a friend or family member to pick up items if they are unavailable to do so. Arrangements will be coordinated by the Director of Student and Family Care in collaboration with Residential Life and Explorations and must be completed with one week of the student's departure. Items not collected will be removed and donated at the student's expense.

When a student takes a LOA, the room and board contract terminates 48 hours after the LOA is completed. If the student returns her/his room key and the room is left without damage, the student will not receive any additional housing charges.

When a student takes a LOA, any future housing contracts (if any exist) will be terminated. If the student takes a LOA for the fall semester, the contract for the full academic year will be terminated. If the student takes a LOA between fall and spring semesters, the spring semester portion of the contract will be canceled. If a student has already paid for the upcoming semester's housing, a refund will be processed.

Students considering taking a LOA or who are on leave are encouraged to consult with the Office of Residential Life and Explorations regarding room and board arrangements upon their return. Students on leave in the spring, intending to return in the fall, should consult the Residential Life and Explorations website for the timeline of how to enter the housing lottery.

**C. Email and Library Access**

A student's Rollins email account remains active during an LOA. A student on LOA is a welcome visitor at the Olin Library, unless otherwise noted in the LOA documents. However, a student on LOA is not granted Library borrowing privileges.

**D. Student Employment**

A student who is on an LOA is not eligible for any form of student employment at Rollins.

**E. Wellness Center**

A student on LOA does not have access to the Wellness Center staff or services. The Dean of Students may make exceptions.

**F. Center for Career and Life Planning**

A student on LOA may receive services at the Center for Career and Life Planning (CCLP) pertaining to career counseling, résumé, and/or job search assistance.

**G. Alfond Sports Center, Athletic Teams, Student Organizations, and Campus Events**
Since a student on LOA is taking a break from the College, students on leave are not eligible to use the Alfond Sports Center, take classes, participate on College athletic teams, or participate in Rollins student organization events and programs. Exceptions to this policy can be requested from the Dean of students in collaboration with the Athletic Director and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

A student on LOA is permitted to submit applications for study abroad and for positions as a resident assistant (RA), house manager, peer mentor, international peer advisor, or other peer education opportunities that will take place the semester the student returns from LOA. Regular application deadlines apply.

In addition, while on LOA, a student is unable to compete in Rollins College athletic programs until after the last day of exams prior to the semester they are scheduled to return.

**H. Fox Day**
A student on LOA is not permitted to attend or participate in Fox Day activities.

## IX. Appendices/Supplemental Materials
*Not applicable.*

## X. Rationale for Revision
*Not applicable.*