Center For Student Wellness
505 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, NJ 07430-1680
Counseling Services: Phone (201) 684-7522 Fax (201) 684-7995
Health Services: Phone (201) 684-7536 Fax (201) 684-7534
https://www.ramapo.edu/csw/

MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE (MLOA)

Students may apply for a Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA) from the College for reasons of medical or mental health illnesses. MLOA are processed through the Center for Student Wellness (CSW). Mental health related MLOAs are processed through Counseling Services and medical MLOAs are processed through Valley Medical Group Health Services (VMG).

MLOAs will be considered after the official College withdrawal deadline has passed (see Academic Calendar on the web). Students typically withdraw from **all** registered courses under this policy. Exceptions for a partial medical leave may be considered under unusual circumstances and are evaluated on an individual basis. The grade for each course will be recorded as "W" on the student's transcript. There will be no refund if the request for an MLOA is completed after the College refund deadline (see Academic Calendar on the web).

Students can take as much time as needed away from the College to recover from their condition; however, students who do not take classes for two or more consecutive semesters after the MLOA must reapply for admission through the Office of Admissions. Readmitted students will continue their studies under the graduation requirements in effect at the time of their readmission.

It is strongly recommended that the student take off, at minimum, one full semester from their academic studies. This time is often needed to obtain the necessary psychological or medical treatment.

Student benefits and considerations of taking an MLOA

- An MLOA sometimes qualifies a student to initiate a leave of absence later in the semester than might typically be permitted for other forms of leave.
- Taking an MLOA should not impact insurance coverage. However, it is advised that a student inquires with their insurance carrier regarding coverage.
- For international students, an MLOA may affect one's legal status. International students holding visas, including F-1 or J-1 visas, should consult with the Director of International Education or their own counsel before filing for an MLOA to make sure they meet with the immigration regulatory requirements. The Roukema Center for International Education is located in the C-wing, Suite 213.
- Students who live in housing must follow the housing withdrawal process outlined in the Guide to Community Living and move out of campus housing within 24 hours of completing the MLOA. Students intending on returning to housing (after obtaining clearance to return from an MLOA) must contact the Office of Residence Life via e-mail at reslife@ramapo.edu. The Office of Residence Life will make every reasonable effort to provide housing to a student who is returning from an MLOA.
- Students who withdraw and have received financial aid must contact the Financial Aid office. Some student aid may need to be returned. Any balance that results from a reduction in aid is the student's responsibility.

- If a student has a merit scholarship awarded through the Office of Enrollment Management during the semester that they request a MLOA, and receive a W grade, it is counted toward their eight semesters of scholarship eligibility. If the student is not enrolled for two consecutive semesters, their scholarship is forfeited and they will need to reapply to Ramapo through the Admissions Office. If the student has to reapply to Ramapo College, their scholarship will not be reinstated. While on MLOA, the student cannot take classes at any other institution.

Steps for requesting a MLOA:

1. Complete MLOA Interest and Acknowledgement Form. This form confirms the student's understanding of:
    a. The MLOA process and deadlines
    b. Implications on housing, financial aid, scholarships, health insurance and student visas, etc.
2. Once the MLOA Interest and Acknowledgement Form is received a member of the CSW will contact the student to confirm and review the directions below
3. For mental health reasons:
    a. If the student has an off-campus mental health provider, the provider completes the MLOA Request Form and faxes it to Counseling Services at 201-684-7995.
    b. Student signs a consent form allowing the off-campus mental health provider to communicate with Counseling Services
    c. If the student does not have a mental health provider, an appointment can be provided through Counseling Services for a MLOA evaluation.
4. For medical reasons:
    a. If the student has an off-campus medical provider, the provider completes the MLOA Request Form and faxes it to VMG at 201-582-0044
    a. Student signs a consent form allowing the off-campus medical provider to communicate with VMG.
    b. If the student does not have a medical provider, an appointment can be provided through VMG for a MLOA evaluation.
5. Once all the documentation has been reviewed, a recommendation is made to the Director (or designee) for the CSW for a decision.
6. Student will be notified via Ramapo email within 5 business days of a decision.
7. If the MLOA is approved:
    a. Notification is made to the Registrar's office, who administers Withdrawal (W) grades;
    b. A registration hold is placed on the student's account until the student has been evaluated and cleared by the CSW to return to Ramapo.
    c. If the student is a resident, the Office of Residence Life is notified and the student must move out of campus housing within 24 hours.
8. In cases where an MLOA is denied, a student may file an appeal within 5 business days with the Dean of Students if the student can demonstrate that a specified procedural error or errors in the interpretation of the College regulations were so substantial as to effectively deny the person fair consideration.

Deadlines for Requesting an MLOA

Students requesting an MLOA must have **completed** an evaluation, through the CSW, **no later than the last day of the semester as listed on the on-line academic calendar** in order for an MLOA to be processed for that semester.

Notification

The College reserves the right to notify a student's designated emergency contact that an MLOA has been issued. The student's designated emergency contact may be asked to make arrangements for the safe removal of the student from the college environment.

Steps to return from an MLOA:

In order to be approved to return from an MLOA:

1. Student must have their off-campus medical or mental health provider complete the Community Provider Return Form and submit it via fax:
    a. For mental health reasons fax to Counseling Services at 201-684-7995
    b. For medical reasons fax to VMG at 201-582-0044
2. Following receipt of the Community Provider Return form, the student will be contacted to schedule an evaluation through the appropriate unit (Counseling Services or VMG) within the CSW.
3. Following the evaluation, a recommendation on readiness to return is made to the Director for the CSW (or designee) for a decision.
4. Student will be notified via Ramapo email within 5 business days of a decision.
5. If the student's return from an MLOA is denied they may file an appeal with the Dean of Students if the student can demonstrate that a specified procedural error or errors in the interpretation of college regulations were so substantial as to effectively deny the person fair consideration. Such appeals must be submitted in writing to the Dean of Students within five (5) business days from the date of notification of the denial of a return from an MLOA. The decision of the Dean of Students is final.

Deadlines for Returning from an MLOA

Students returning from an MLOA must complete the process by the established deadlines: August 15th for the fall semester and December 15th for the spring semester. If the deadline is missed, the student's return from an MLOA may be postponed until a later semester. If the process to return from an MLOA is not completed by the deadline, the student will be deregistered (if applicable).

Disability Support Services for Students Following a Return from an MLOA

Ramapo College of New Jersey supports the protections available to students with disabilities under Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and any applicable State regulations. The Office of Specialized Services (OSS) facilitates equal access to the programs and activities at Ramapo College for students with documented physical, sensory, learning, or psychological disabilities. Students whose medical or psychological conditions meet the criteria for a disability are encouraged to register with the Office of Specialized Services in order to have their request for accommodations evaluated.

Academic Standards and Code of Conduct

Approval of a MLOA does not terminate or suspend the College's authority to continue the conduct process to resolution. The student remains responsible for participating in the process, and the College may proceed in the student's absence after reasonable notice and an opportunity to participate. Further, the College may place a hold on the student's transcript, degree conferral and readmission pending resolution of the student conduct process.