

STUDENT HEALTH, LEAVE, & WITHDRAWAL POLICIES

The **Offices of Health and Counseling** provide clinical and administrative services for currently enrolled full-time students during the academic year. **Student Health Services** is an on-campus clinic that provides medical services by appointment. **Counseling Services** offers a range of counseling resources related to college student mental health and well-being, adjusting to college life, or academic success. Both offices are located within the Health Center building in Queen Anne's Hall and can be reached by calling 410-778-7261. Hours are Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–noon and 1–4 p.m. When classes are not in session, the offices are open for administrative purposes and clinical services cannot be guaranteed. Students wanting to make an appointment to see a Washington College health or counseling clinician should call the office at 410-778-7261. The office may also refer you to one of the resources below.

Students needing regular, ongoing, or intensive support will be referred to local or partner providers for additional clinical support.

During times when classes are not in session, students should seek support from the following **resources**:

- 911 for Emergencies (9-911 from a campus phone)
- University of Maryland Shore Medical Center at Chestertown: 410-778-3300
- For All Seasons Behavioral Health Hot Line (24/7): 1-800-310-7273
- Chester River Behavioral Health & Wellness: 410-778-5550 (Monday–Friday 9 a.m.–7 p.m.)
- Sante Eastern Shore Mobile Crisis Team (24/7): 1-888-407-8018
- Office of Public Safety (who will refer you for support): 410-778-7810
- **Mantra Telehealth**
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 or 1-800-273-8255

Health Insurance

Washington College requires that all students have health insurance. The College offers a health insurance plan with a limited amount of coverage for accidents and sickness. All international students are required to purchase health insurance through Washington College. For more information about these insurance policies, contact the Health Center (ext. 7261).

Student Responsibilities for Receiving Clinical Services

It is the student's responsibility to give health care providers complete and full information on health status and to cooperate with the treatment plan and follow-up care. The student's responsibilities include asking questions, using materials made available for education regarding their own health concerns, showing the same respect for the health care provider that they expect to receive, keeping appointments, and following the treatment plan. Students failing to provide the health care provider with information may be denied treatment.

Class Attendance and Illness Policy

The Health Services staff will not write notes or excuse students from academic obligations but may recommend what is in the student's best interest regarding health and class attendance. At the first signs of illness, students should call the Health Center early in the day so an assessment can be made and treatment given.

A Class Missed Due to Illness

If a student is absent from class due to minor illness for 1-3 days, the student is responsible for informing professors of the illness and making arrangements for missed work.

If a student has a serious medical problem and must miss more than 3 days of classes, the student should call Health Services to inform the staff about the problem. If appropriate, Health Services will notify the Provost's Office of the anticipated length of the illness and absence. If an off-campus health care provider is involved, the student will be required to arrange that Health Services be provided with written verification from the provider. As soon as the student has recovered, they should meet with each professor to develop an individualized make-up work plan.

Please note that the Health Service staff will not notify the Associate Provost's office unless the student arranges for documentation from an appropriate health care provider that the illness requires that she or he miss more than three consecutive days of classes.

Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Procedures

A student may find it necessary to take a leave of absence for conditions such as an extended illness, unexpected emergency surgery, mental health crisis, or injury. Students should contact Health Services or Counseling Services as soon as possible to request a leave. Students on leave will be required to have their outside health care provider fill out "Return from Approved Absence, Leave of Absence or Withdrawal Form". The form and guidelines for its completion are also available **on the Health Service website**.

Leave of Absence

Students may take a temporary leave of absence from the College during the semester when medical or personal emergency circumstances require that they be away from campus for more than five days.

Medical Leave of Absence

A medical leave of absence is typically granted when a student needs to be off campus for more than five consecutive days in order to deal with a significant medical condition. The student must consult with Health Services or Counseling Services about the problem that necessitates the leave. Health or Counseling Services (H&C) will recommend whether a student qualifies for a medical leave.

If approved, Health and Counseling will advise the student, the Provost's Office, and the Office of Student Affairs about the student's leave and will advise all parties about the requirements for the student's return to campus.

The Provost's Office maintains the approved leave documentation and communicates its details to Student Affairs, the student's faculty members, and the student's advisor(s). A student on a medical leave of absence may not return to classes, reside on campus, participate in student social life or other campus activities, or use Washington College facilities, until Health or Counseling Services has approved their return.

The student is still expected to contact their professors as soon as possible to discuss making up missed work aligned with professors' course policies as articulated in their syllabi. When discussing missing work and deadlines, faculty members should make a good-faith effort to allow students to reasonably make up work whenever possible or complete alternative assignments.

Illnesses or other health problems that require five or fewer consecutive days off campus do not qualify as a medical leave of absence and in those cases, the student is expected to notify their faculty members if they will be missing class to discuss making up missed work.

Other Leaves of Absence

A student who requires a leave for other reasons (i.e., personal emergency circumstances or bereavement) the student must contact the Provost's Office to discuss the leave request. If approved, the Provost's Office will advise the student and the Office of Student Affairs about the student's leave and will advise all parties about when the student is expected to return to campus. The Provost's Office maintains the approved leave documentation and communicates its details to Student Affairs, the student's faculty members, and the student's advisor(s).

The student is still expected to contact their professors as soon as possible to discuss making up missed work aligned with professors' course policies as articulated in their syllabi. When discussing missing work and deadlines, faculty members should make a good-faith effort to allow students to reasonably make up work whenever possible or complete alternative assignments.

Title IX Remedy

If a student must be absent from class as a result of a remedy connected to an involvement in a Title IX case, this will be confirmed by the Title IX Coordinator and communicated to the Provost's Office, which will notify faculty about the student's absence.

Length and Terms of a Leave of Absence

A leave of absence is usually granted for up to two weeks (14 calendar days). If the student has not been approved by Health and Counseling to return after 14 days or if the student requests an additional leave at another time during the semester, the Provost's Office reviews the student's situation, consulting with Health Services or Counseling Services when appropriate, to determine whether the student's leave should be extended or an additional leave approved. Depending upon the situation, students who are not ready to return after 14 days may be advised to withdraw from the College for that semester. In these cases, the withdrawal is retroactive to the last day the student attended classes and is indicated on the student's transcript by grades of "W" in all courses in which the student was enrolled that semester.

All students who are granted a medical withdrawal for the semester must provide documentation from their treating providers that they are ready to resume academics by having their provider complete the "Return from Approved Absence or Withdrawal Form". The form and the guidelines for its completion are also available on the Health Services website. This document must be received by the Health or Counseling Director at least 2 weeks prior to reinstatement and registering for classes/housing. Students requiring academic or other accommodations after a medical withdrawal or leave should schedule an appointment with the Office of Academic Skills at oas@washcoll.edu or 410-778-7860.

If a student is not in good social or academic standing when they take a leave of absence or withdraw for any reason, their reinstatement of enrollment or readmission may be conditional, pending the resolution of any alleged academic or social violations of the Honor Code.

Mandatory Leave (ML)

If, as a result of an illness or condition, a student poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others, is unable to successfully participate in the educational programs offered by the College, or substantially disrupts the ability of others to fully participate in the educational opportunities offered by the College, the College may:

- remove a student from the residence halls;
- remove a student from classes;
- require conditions for continued enrollment; and/or

- require a mandatory leave (ML). Such leaves may be short term, such as temporary hospitalization, or long term, such as a withdrawal for the remainder of the semester or longer.

The College will apply this policy in a nondiscriminatory manner based on a student's conduct, actions, and statements, not merely on knowledge, belief, or perception that a student is an individual with a disability or a physical or mental health condition. Determinations are based on individualized risk assessments based on reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or the best available objective information.

Mandatory leave is reserved for situations in which risks cannot be mitigated by other measures.

The Behavioral Concerns Team

The Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator convenes the Behavioral Concerns Team (BCT), to include the Director of Health Services, the Disability Access Specialist, and others as appropriate to consider issues involving potential issues that are impeding the likelihood of success to include health, mental health or behaviors that may demonstrate an inability to meet minimal expectations of managing autonomy or present health and/or safety risk. Members of the Behavioral Concerns Team (BCT) that coordinates the College's responses to students exhibiting behaviors that indicate distress, cause a disturbance in the community, and/or present a danger to others. Committed to proactive, early intervention, the BCT may recommend a behavioral contract to include compliance with a medical treatment plan, regular consultations with health care professionals, meetings with administrators, disclosure of relevant medical records and information, and/or restrictions on participation in residential housing or other activities. The behavioral contract may also require a reduction of the conduct at issue sufficient to enable safe participation in the campus community. In appropriate cases, a student's failure or refusal to satisfy the conditions of a behavioral contract can be grounds for the BCT to review the case for additional action.

Process for Appealing a Mandatory Leave

The Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator (or designee) will notify the student of all expectations established by the BCT, up to and including a mandatory leave (ML) and arrange for the student to meet with available members of the BCT and to present medical information or other evidence. The student will be provided with a copy of this policy. The BCT will reach a decision and notify the student in writing. If the BCT decision is to require a ML, the student may appeal this decision and/or any conditions established for return to the College by sending a written request to the Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator within two business days explaining why the student believes the BCT decision is unwarranted. The Vice President for Student Affairs or designee will make the final decision regarding the appeal within 48 hours and notify the student in writing.

Returning from Mandatory Leave

The BCT may establish conditions for return from a ML such as examination by appropriate health care providers, release of relevant medical records, evidence of compliance with treatment plans, and interviews with College officials.

Prior to returning to campus, a student placed on ML must request permission to return and provide the appropriate documentation to the College Health or Counseling Services demonstrating that he or she has met any conditions imposed by the College. The Director of Health or Coordinator of Counseling will make a recommendation to the Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator. The Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator or designee will make the final decision and notify the student in writing.

Emergency Interim Withdrawal

If a student's behavior poses a significant risk of causing serious and imminent harm or of directly and substantially interfering with the activities of others, the Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator (or designee) may **administratively remove the student pending review by the BCT**. In cases of Emergency Interim Withdrawal, it may be necessary for students to leave campus before the BCT convenes. In these cases, the Director of Health or Coordinator of Counseling may evaluate the student to make a determination of level of risk; and/or distress. This assessment is made using the evaluative instrument that is completed by all students accessing counseling and/or health services. The student has a right to appeal the Emergency Interim Withdrawal following the same process for appealing a ML.

Maintenance of Records

The BCT is the custodian of reports from the community about students. The BCT ensures that all reports are housed in the College's ADVOCATE database, where core members have limited access to the files. As reports are received, they are reviewed by the BCT and may be edited to ensure appropriate content. Access to and disclosure of these records (including incident narrative, supporting documentation, and notes and records of interventions) included in ADVOCATE is governed by FERPA and/or Maryland medical records laws.