



## **Voluntary Withdrawal Medical Leave Policy** **Policy#**

<b>Tracking</b>	<b>Approval Date:</b> <b>Effective Date:</b>
-----------------	---

### **SECTION 1. Purpose**

The purpose of a **voluntary withdrawal medical leave (“ML”)** is to provide students time away from academic studies for treatment of a physical or mental health condition that impairs a student’s ability to function safely and successfully as a member of the Ranken Technical College (“Ranken”) community. This policy applies to all Ranken students. The authority to grant a ML and permission to return from a ML resides with the **Education Committee (“EC”) (or designee)**. Each leave is individualized based on the needs of the student and handled on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of conditions for which a student may request a medical withdrawal include, but are not limited to:

- Severe psychological condition requiring hospitalization or intensive outpatient care;
- Severe injury or illness with prolonged recovery (i.e., continuous absence for more than two weeks of class);
- Severe illness requiring ongoing close medical monitoring;
- Severe complications resulting from a chronic medical condition;
- New diagnosis of a life-threatening condition;
- Non-elective surgery with prolonged recovery;
- Severe complications related to a pregnancy;
- Infectious disease requiring specific isolation; and/or
- Documented medical complications from sexual or other violent assault.

### **SECTION 2. Deadlines**

#### 16 Week Courses

Students can apply for a voluntary ML at any time; however, in order for a ML to take effect during an ongoing semester, the process must be completed on or before Friday of the twelfth (12th) week of the semester. A voluntary ML lasts until the end of the current academic semester and may last up to two full academic semesters. If a ML lasts for longer than an academic year, students are expected to adhere to curriculum changes in their program of study during their absence.

<b>ML Term</b>	<b>Deadline to Request ML</b>
Fall Semester	Friday of 12th week of fall semester
Spring Semester	Friday of 12th week of spring semester
Summer Semester	Friday of 12th week of summer semester

Requests for reinstatement from a voluntary ML must be submitted no later than six (6) weeks before the term in which the student wishes to start. Applications for reinstatement will not be considered after the deadlines.

<b>ML Term</b>	<b>Deadline to Request Return from ML</b>
Fall Semester	Six weeks prior to start of spring semester
Spring Semester	Six weeks prior to start of summer semester
Summer Semester	Six weeks prior to start of fall semester

### **8 Week Courses**

Students can apply for a voluntary ML at any time; however, in order for a ML to take effect during an ongoing semester, the process must be completed on or before Friday of the sixth (6th) week of the semester. A voluntary ML lasts until the end of the current academic semester and may last up to two full academic semesters. If a ML lasts for longer than an academic year, students are expected to adhere to curriculum changes in their program of study during their absence.

<b>ML Term</b>	<b>Deadline to Request ML</b>
Fall Semester I	Friday of 6th week of fall semester I
Fall Semester II	Friday of 6th week of fall semester II
Spring Semester I	Friday of 6th week of spring semester I
Spring Semester II	Friday of 6th week of spring semester II
Summer Semester I	Friday of 6th week of summer semester I
Summer Semester II	Friday of 6th week of summer semester II

Requests for reinstatement from a voluntary ML must be submitted no later than six (6) weeks before the term in which the student wishes to start. Applications for reinstatement will not be considered after the deadlines.

<b>ML Term</b>	<b>Deadline to Request Return from ML</b>
Fall Semester I	Six weeks prior to start of spring semester I
Fall Semester II	Six weeks prior to start of spring semester II
Spring Semester I	Six weeks prior to start of summer semester I
Spring Semester II	Six weeks prior to start of summer semester II
Summer Semester I	Six weeks prior to start of fall semester I
Summer Semester II	Six weeks prior to start of fall semester II

### **SECTION 3. ML Request Process**

To begin the process of requesting an ML, the student shall reach out to SSC and meet with a staff member who will guide the student through all leave options available, the ML process, and required documentation to request a leave. SSC is located in the Finney Building and is also available at (314) 286-4891 and [ssc@ranken.edu](mailto:ssc@ranken.edu). Students seeking a voluntary ML must submit the following documentation to SSC:

- (1) Medical Leave of Absence (ML) Application; and
- (2) Consent for Release of Information.

**The Education Committee (or designee) has discretion to grant or deny the request.** Once the Application and Consent are received, Ranken staff may contact the student's treatment provider(s) to obtain additional documentation to fully assess the ML request. SSC will notify the student in writing of **the** determination. SSC will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that determinations are communicated within four (4) weeks of receipt of all forms required; however, there may be circumstances in which the determination takes longer. In such circumstances, SSC will notify the student in writing of the reason(s) for the delay and the date they expect to render a decision.

If an ML is granted, the student's transcript will reflect "W" grades for the courses enrolled during the semester of the ML. During an ML, students are not allowed to take Ranken courses, live in on-campus housing, or participate in student organizations, clubs, and/or activities. Students are not eligible for financial aid while on an ML; however, an ML does not impact a student's future eligibility for aid. For more information about the impact of ML on student loans, contact Financial Aid at (314) 286-4878 or [financialaid@ranken.edu](mailto:financialaid@ranken.edu). The student may forfeit any Ranken-funded scholarship that may have been awarded while enrolled in their major. The student may also become ineligible to receive a tuition credit that was previously awarded. Eligibility for tuition credits and/or Ranken-funded scholarships will be determined by the Business Office or the Financial Aid Office. Ranken's policies on refunds for tuition and housing are still applicable to students who decide to take a ML. Please review the Ranken Student Handbook, specifically the Credit Balance and eRefund Policy, the Return of Title IV Aid Policy, the Return of Unearned Tuition Assistance Policy, and the Bookstore Refunds Policy.

#### **SECTION 4. Return from ML**

When applying for readmission, students are encouraged to consider whether they are healthy enough to return to school as future requests for medical or compassionate withdrawals for the same or similar conditions may not be granted. **Students seeking to return from a voluntary ML must submit the following documentation to SSC:**

- (1) ML Student Success Plan; and
- (2) ML Treatment Provider Report.

The ML Treatment Provider Report must be completed by each and every one of the student's providers of medical services (including mental health services) during the ML period. The form elicits pertinent information, including (i) the student's diagnosis(es); (ii) the student's

**Commented [HB1]:** Pete, Should students have to apply for readmission through the Registrar, or should there be a separate application for reinstatement following an ML?

Here's what Ranken's policies currently provide: "Students who have left the College prior to completing their course of study, or Ranken graduates seeking further degrees or certificates may apply for readmission. All candidates must submit a separate readmission application. Applicants returning to the College in good standing can readmit with a readmission charge. Contact the Registrars office for additional information."

medications; (iii) the student's progress during the ML; and (iv) the basis for the provider's recommendation that the student is ready to return from leave.

**Eating Disorders.** For students returning from a ML due to an eating disorder, the following additional information is required from the student's health care provider:

- (1) Complete history of the eating disorder (with explanation of severity of behaviors);
- (2) Report of physical exam completed by a physician within the past month;
- (3) Height and weight parameters and vital signs for the last 3-6 months (depending on duration of leave);
- (4) EKG and labs: CMP, CBC, amylase, urinalysis, magnesium, and phosphorus completed within the past 30 days (preferred) or 60 days (acceptable).

SSC will make all reasonable efforts to issue a determination on a request for return from ML within four (4) weeks of the student's submission of all required documentation. There may be times, however, where the SSC cannot gather and consider all necessary information within the four-week timeframe. In such instances, SSC must notify the student in writing every two (2) weeks to explain the cause(s) of the delay.

Students returning from ML are strongly encouraged to contact the Registrar in advance to confirm all registration holds will be lifted once the ML reinstatement is approved. Students should also contact the Financial Aid office to determine if there have been any changes to their eligibility for financial aid.

**Commented [HB2]:** Many St. Louis-area schools have recently added this type of language. Although not required, we highly recommend it especially given the benchmarking in our area.