

Involuntary Medical Withdrawal

Denison provides a range of support for the medical needs of students, including mental health needs, within the campus community. Sometimes students may have health needs requiring a level of care that exceeds what the university can provide, or that is not compatible with the demands of academic and campus life, with or without reasonable accommodations. In these situations, students may request a voluntary medical withdrawal, which permits students to take a break from Denison to focus on their health needs, and then return when they are ready to successfully pick up with their academic goals.

Requiring students to take a medical withdrawal is rare and only happens when current medical knowledge and/or the best available objective evidence indicates there is significant risk to the student's health or safety or the health or safety of others; where the student is unable or unwilling to carry out substantial self care; or where the student's behavior seriously disrupts the university environment.

Before placing any student on an involuntary medical withdrawal, each case is assessed individually based on all relevant factors, and not based on mere speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations about individuals with disabilities, and a student will be given the opportunity to take a voluntary leave before an involuntary-withdrawal decision is issued.

The Associate Vice President and Dean of Student Life may be notified about a student who may meet the criteria of an involuntary medical withdrawal from various sources, including but not limited to: the student, the student's academic advisor, Residential Communities and Housing Staff, peers, the university's CARE or threat assessment team, or others.

Whether a student takes voluntary time away or is required to take time away for medical reasons, Denison's hope is for the student to be able to return to Denison and their academic goals following resolution and/or successful management of the issue that caused the withdrawal.

A. Involuntary medical withdrawal procedure

1. The Associate Vice President and Dean of Student Life or their designee (hereafter "the Dean or their designee") will consult with the appropriate medical and/or mental health staff from the student health center, and/or staff from accessibility/disability services, prior to deciding whether to initiate an involuntary medical withdrawal.
2. The Dean or their designee will notify the student in writing that an involuntary medical withdrawal is under consideration. The notice will include the reason(s) why and a copy of this

policy. The notice will encourage the student to respond before a decision regarding an involuntary medical withdrawal is made. A time period for responding will be specified. The student will also be notified of the option to take a voluntary medical withdrawal before a decision is made regarding an involuntary withdrawal.

3. The Dean or their designee will consider potential reasonable accommodations that could obviate the need for involuntary time away..

4. The student may be asked to execute a consent/release giving Denison personnel temporary permission to obtain information from the student's healthcare provider(s) regarding issues relevant and appropriate to the consideration of an involuntary medical withdrawal when there is a need for the University to have such information as part of the interactive process and individualized assessment.

5. If a student refuses to respond to the notice from the Dean or their designee, or to consent to the release of information Denison determines may be needed for the individualized assessment, then the assessment may proceed based on the information possessed at the time.

6. As appropriate and feasible for each situation, the Dean or their designee will also confer with others on the need for an involuntary medical withdrawal. Depending on the individual case, this may include: Residential Communities and Housing Staff, faculty members, academic advisors, student health center medical or counseling experts, the student's treatment provider(s) (with appropriate authorization); members of the university's CARE or threat-assessment team; or others that may be appropriate to the individual case.

7. The student's situation will be assessed with attention to the criteria for imposing an involuntary medical withdrawal:

- A. whether current knowledge about the individual's medical condition and/or the best available objective evidence indicates that a student poses a significant risk to their own health or safety or the health or safety of others, not based on mere speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations;
- B. whether a student is unable or unwilling to carry out substantial self-care; and/or
- C. whether a student's behavior seriously disrupts the university environment.

The individualized assessment will look at the factors based on current medical knowledge or the best available objective evidence; the nature, duration and severity of the risk or disruption; the probability the risk or disruption will occur; and whether reasonable accommodations would adequately mitigate the risk or disruption so as to eliminate the need for an involuntary withdrawal.

8. The Dean or their designee will give significant weight to the student's treatment provider(s) regarding the student's ability to function academically and safely with or without reasonable accommodations. If the Dean or their designee determines the information from the provider(s) is incomplete, requires additional explanation or clarification, or is inconsistent with other information possessed by the university, the Dean or their designee, with proper authorization, will seek to contact the provider(s) to obtain additional information. In certain circumstances, the university may require the student to be evaluated by an independent and objective professional designated by Denison, if the Dean or their designee believes it will facilitate a more informed decision.

9. Following these consultations and a review of the available information and documentation, the Dean or their designee will decide whether an involuntary medical withdrawal should be initiated. The Dean or their designee will then provide written notice of the decision to the student. The notice will include information about the student's right to appeal.

10. In certain circumstances, a student may be asked to remain away from the university while the review and/or appeal under this policy is underway. In those situations, every effort will be made by the Dean or their designee to reach a prompt decision, provided the student responds in a timely manner to requests for information, and if appropriate based on the individual case.

11. If an involuntary medical withdrawal is initiated, the written notice will state the basis for the decision and a time frame for when the student must leave the university. The notice will also share information and conditions for eligibility to return. The length of the leave and the return conditions will be determined on an individual basis and, depending on the case, all return details and/or conditions may not be able to be fully ascertained at the time of campus departure.

12. If an involuntary medical withdrawal is not initiated, the Dean or their designee may implement conditions and/or requirements under which the student is allowed to remain at the university.

13. Students may be temporarily restricted from campus premises or academic or campus activities in the event of an infection with a communicable disease or risk of infection, in accordance with the advice of medical experts or public health officials.

14. In any stage of this process, including the appeal and return process, the student may discuss any reasonable accommodations needed for the process with Denison's accessibility/disability services within the Academic Resource Center (740-587-6666).

B. Appeal

1. Within 5 business days of receiving the decision of the Dean or their designee, the student may appeal the decision in writing to the Vice President for Student Life or their designee.. The written appeal must specify the particular basis for the appeal and must be based on grounds other than general dissatisfaction with the decision.
2. The appeal review will be limited to the following considerations:
 - A. Were the proper criteria and facts considered in the decision making?
 - B. Is there any new information not previously available to the student that would be likely to change the outcome?
 - C. Were there any procedural irregularities that materially affected the outcome of the matter to the detriment of the student?
3. After reviewing the appeal submission, a written decision affirming, modifying, or reversing the withdrawal decision will be sent to the student. This decision shall be final.

C. Involuntary Medical Withdrawal Information

1. *Tuition, room, and board refunds*: Tuition refunds are available consistent with Denison's published [tuition refund schedule](#). Pursuant to Denison's housing contract, room and board refunds are available based on the date a student vacates their residential room and in accordance with the published refund schedule.
2. *Effective date of withdrawal*: A student is required to depart the university within the timeframe set by the Dean or their designee, which is typically within 48 hours. The leave will remain in effect until it is determined after an individualized assessment that the student is able to return to the university, with or without reasonable accommodations, and the student has complied with any university requirements that apply to all students returning from time away and all conditions required by the Dean or their designee (and/or the Provost's designee, if conditions were generated or modified by the Provost's designee through the appeals process).
3. *Immigration status*: International students (F-1 or J-1 visa holders) placed on involuntary medical withdrawal must speak with an International Student Support staff member regarding their immigration status.

D. Request for Return

1. It is Denison's hope that any student for whom an involuntary medical withdrawal is initiated will be able to return to Denison following resolution and/or successful management of the issue

that caused the withdrawal. In addition to the general requirements and any specific conditions required by the Dean or their designee, students seeking to return from an involuntary medical withdrawal must complete and return (1) the [Application for Reinstatement and Return from Medical Withdrawal](#) and (2) have their provider return the [Provider Return-From-Medical-Withdrawal Form](#). For reasons of personal or community health and safety, a student may also be required to submit additional documentation related to the factors set forth in section A.7. as part of an individualized assessment, as evidence that the student, with or without reasonable accommodations, has sufficiently addressed the issues that previously established the criteria for initiating an involuntary medical withdrawal.

2. The Dean or their designee may also confer with or seek information from others in making the determination on the return request. The information sought may include (with appropriate authorization, as applicable): documentation of efforts by the student to address the issues that led to the leave; release of treatment information to the extent necessary to determine if the student has sufficiently reduced the risk or disruption that led to the need for the involuntary leave; consultation with Denison medical or mental health staff to the extent necessary to determine if the student has sufficiently reduced the risk or disruption that led to the need for the involuntary leave; and/or consultation with accessibility/disability services within the Academic Resource Center.

3. A student generally will not be permitted to return until one full semester has elapsed (beyond the semester of the departure) or until the time-away period in the notification or related subsequent notification has passed and all conditions and/or requirements are met.

4. If the Dean or their designee determines, based on the above process, that the student is not ready to return to Denison, the student will be notified in writing, including the reason(s), within a reasonable time after the student has submitted a return request and associated documentation.

5. A student not granted permission to return may appeal the decision in writing to the Vice President for Student Life following the procedure in Part B.

E. Policy Scope and Interaction with Other University Policies

An involuntary medical withdrawal is an administrative process and not a disciplinary one. This policy and these procedures are anchored in Denison's concern for the health and safety of the student and the Denison community and are not meant to be punitive.

This policy and these procedures also do not take the place of disciplinary actions that may issue in response to violations to Denison's [Code of Student Conduct](#) or other policies or directives,

nor do they preclude removal or dismissal of students from the university or university-related programs as a result of violations of other universities policies or directives.

In situations involving an imminent or ongoing risk of harm to the student or direct threat to any other member of the university community, the Dean or their designee, in the exercise of their reasonable judgment, may require a student to be immediately prohibited from remaining on or entering Denison's campus or facilities while the individualized assessment and review described above are taking place. Such students will receive the written notice described in section A.2 as soon as possible.

F. Additional Resources

Students placed on involuntary medical withdrawal may want to consult with the following offices as needed, and additionally, the class dean or a Student Life staff member will be available to assist all students who are placed on an involuntary medical withdrawal with their questions about the process to return and resume their studies and life at Denison:

- Hoaglin Wellness Center (Medical Services & Counseling Services)
- International Student Services
- The Registrar's office (740-587-6292) registrar@denison.edu can assist you with transcript requests and questions.
- Student Accounts (740-587-6274) studentaccounts@denison.edu can assist you with questions about payment of your account and/or reimbursements.
- Financial Aid (740-587-6279) finaid@denison.edu staff are also available to assist with account and reimbursement questions related to financial aid.
- Residential Communities and Housing housing@denison.edu can assist with scheduling your move-out. If you do still have belongings in your residential space at Denison, you are required to contact the housing office right away.
- Academic Resources Center: arc@denison.edu
- Hoaglin Wellness Center (Medical Services & Counseling Services): wellness@denison.edu