



Brown University Student Support Services

Guidelines: Clearance to Return from Medical Leave in Lieu of Academic Suspension or Refused Registration

Students with a status of Academic Suspension or Refused Registration, as determined by the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) may be eligible for a Medical Leave in Lieu of either of these standings if health circumstances contributed significantly to their academic challenges. Students with a Medical Leave in Lieu status submit petitions for clearance which are reviewed by both the Medical Leave Clearance Committee and CAS in parallel processes when they petition to return to Brown. This document is intended to outline all documents students need to submit as part of the clearance process so students are aware of expectations in advance and have a reference guide at any point in their process.

Medical Leaves are intended to give students time to focus on their health and well-being so that they can return to campus and be successful in their academic and co-curricular pursuits. The Medical Leave Clearance process is designed to ensure that students have taken such care, that they have developed an academic plan, and that appropriate supports and resources are in place for their return. The following guidelines apply to undergraduate students who are seeking to return to Brown following a Medical Leave of Absence in Lieu of Academic Suspension or Refused Registration. (Graduate and medical school students considering Medical Leave should contact the Graduate School and Medical School respectively).

We encourage students to take sufficient time to address the health-related concerns that led to their leave-taking. Returning too soon may result in the student continuing to struggle academically and personally. A Medical Leave in Lieu of Academic Suspension typically lasts at least two semesters. A Medical Leave in Lieu of Refused Registration typically lasts at least one semester. However, students on Medical Leave in Lieu of Academic Suspension or Refused Registration may petition to return at any time. Many students choose to take two or more semesters while others return sooner. The length of the leave is intended to allow a student sufficient time away from campus to address medical needs and to engage in activities that will contribute to a successful return. Students may petition for clearance during any review period. Students who are not granted clearance may petition again at any subsequent review period and/or appeal the denial. Any student whose petition is denied will receive a detailed written explanation of the University's decision not to allow the student to return, including all reasons for the denial, citing the best available objective medical evidence on which the decision was based, and may appeal the denial as described below.

The College Degree Completion Deans invite students to meet to review graduation requirements and develop a viable overall degree completion plan before their return. Students may schedule a meeting by emailing degreecompletiondeans@brown.edu and should include the best way for a Degree Completion Dean to reach them.

Brown administers Medical Leaves in a non-discriminatory manner. The Medical Leave Clearance process requires an individualized assessment based on the best available objective medical evidence. Brown will provide reasonable modifications to Brown's policies, practices, and procedures that are necessary to prevent discrimination unless the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the University's academic standards, course requirements, goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations ("reasonable modifications"). Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications to Brown's Medical Leave Clearance policies, practices, and procedures by contacting studentsupport@brown.edu.

PETITIONING FOR CLEARANCE TO RETURN FROM MEDICAL LEAVE IN LIEU OF ACADEMIC SUSPENSION OR REFUSED REGISTRATION

Guidelines governing clearance seek to assure, in consultation with the student and their medical care providers, that the student will be able to function effectively in the autonomous student environment at Brown. The clearance process also provides a review of the ongoing supports a student may need (e.g., reasonable modifications).

Deadlines

The Medical Leave Clearance Committee and CAS review petitions on a rolling basis. The committees meet monthly and students may submit a petition at any time. Petitions received by the 1st of the month will be reviewed in that month. The review process takes approximately four weeks. Students with incomplete documentation as of the 1st will be reviewed in the next cycle after their petition documents are complete.

While the petition review process is rolling, the time of their clearance will impact other important university deadlines (e.g., Financial Aid, Residential Life, pre-registration for the next semester, and the Office of International Student and Scholar Services). As such, students should note the following critical deadlines.

Final deadline:	FALL SEMESTER	SPRING SEMESTER	SUMMER SEMESTER
To return	June 1 st	November 1 st	May 1 st
To participate in pre-registration	March 1 st	October 1 st	February 1 st
To participate in housing lottery	January 1 st	n/a	n/a
To participate in special interest housing	January 1 st	n/a	n/a

In order to petition for clearance, a student must send all required documents by **11:59pm EST** on the deadline date for the semester that the student seeks to return.

Materials, except for the ASK petition portion, may be sent via email, fax, or postal service:

Email: studentsupport@brown.edu | **Fax:** 401-863-1999

Mail: Student Support Services | Attn: Medical Leave Clearance Committee | Box 2015 | Providence, RI 02912

Petition for Clearance Materials

Each petition must include the documents that are described in detail below.

For **both** committees:

- Student Letter

For the **Medical Leave Clearance Committee**

- Clinician Letter(s)
- Release of Information Form

For the **Committee on Academic Standing**

- [ASK Petition](#): Returning to Studies at Brown
 - o Satisfy all the requirements listed in the CAS letter
 - o Detailed Overall Course Plan made in consultation with your CAS Dean or concentration advisor

In addition, any outstanding financial obligations with the [Bursar Office](#) may prevent eligibility of future enrollment. As part of the clearance process, Student Support Services will ask all petitioning students to contact the [Bursar Office](#) to inquire on their financial hold status.

Please note, Student Support and Academic Deans are both available to answer questions about the requested materials or any other aspect of the process.

Joint Document

1. **Student letter:** The letter should be sent to the attention of the Student Support Dean who is working with you. The letter should include:
 - A header including your name, current email, and physical address at which you will receive your decision letter.
 - The term for which you are petitioning to return from Medical Leave.
 - Discussion of the factors that led to the leave-taking.
 - An overview of the care and treatment received to address the health issue that led to the leave.
 - Other activities in which you have engaged while on leave (for example: work, taking courses, volunteering, pursuing other interests) which may both contribute to your well-being and readiness to return.
 - Reflection on your ability to return to the rigors of academic study and the social demands of Brown.
 - An overview of your plans for how you will manage the rigors of Brown once you have returned (continued treatment, building a support network, accessing resources, etc.) and any reasonable modifications (e.g. reduced course load) you may need to return successfully.

Medical Leave Documents

1. **Treatment Provider Letter(s):** For leaves which require clearance from Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), students must submit a letter from their mental health treatment provider. For leaves which require clearance from University Health Services, students must submit a letter from their physical health treatment provider. Students may submit more than one letter from treatment providers (e.g., a therapist and psychiatrist or a primary care and specialist health provider). In some instances, students may submit letters from both a mental health treatment provider and a physician. The Medical Leave form signed at the time of leave-taking indicates the clearance type.

The treatment provider's letter should include the following information:

- A statement of their opinion on whether the student will be ready to return to the academic and social demands of full-time enrollment at the University by the beginning of the term for which the student is petitioning to return from Medical Leave. A reduced course load may be a reasonable modification for the student to continue full-time enrollment.¹ The statement should include the basis for their opinion on the student's readiness to return.
 - If there are concerns about the student's readiness to return to full-time enrollment, the treatment provider should explain. The treatment provider should include any recommendations that would mitigate those concerns, including any reasonable modifications, such as a course load reduction, that would enable the student to successfully participate in Brown's programs.
2. **Release of Information Form:** Since the treatment provider letter is maintained as part of your medical record in CAPS and/or UHS, a limited release of information form is required in order for the Brown clinicians to participate fully in the clearance committee. Signing the release allows Brown's clinicians to share some information included in the support letter provided to us. The form is Brown's standard release and has been pre-completed to indicate that you give the CAPS and/or UHS staff who review your letter permission to share

¹ See <https://www.brown.edu/offices/student-support/meeting-dean/course-load-reductions>.

relevant information with the committee. This release does not apply to any information aside from the letter, and it does not give permission to share the contents of the letter with anyone outside of the committee. The form can be found in the Medical Leave section of the [Student Support Services](#) website and will also be provided to you as part of reminders about the clearance process.

CAS Documents

1. **ASK Petition**: Returning to Studies at Brown (see screenshots at end of this document for the petition form you must complete in the ASK dashboard.) [The form here](#) is a tool intended to help with preparing your petition to the Committee on Academic Standing in consultation with your CAS advisor.
 - **Satisfy all the requirements listed in the CAS letter**: At the time of leave-taking, students will receive a letter from the Committee on Academic Standing detailing requirements for returning to active status. These requirements, which may be subject to reasonable modification, may include finishing incomplete coursework, taking transfer courses*, connecting with academic and other support resources, and other requirements. Students should include an outline the completion of these requirements.
 - **Detailed Course Plan**: A detailed overall academic plan with concentration, course selections, and academic priorities carefully laid out – and evidence of consultation with your CAS Dean Students in semester 4 or higher should also consult with their concentration advisor.

*Many students on Medical Leave in Lieu of Academic Suspension & Refused Registration take courses elsewhere that can be transferred back to Brown upon their return. These students must also follow the Transfer Approval Protocol in ASK and send an official transcript of course grades to the Brown Registrar's office, with copies included with their petitions.

CLEARANCE REVIEW PROCESS

Timeline & Process

In order to carefully consider each petition and the individual situation of each student, the review process takes approximately four weeks following the respective deadlines.

- Week One: Compile all materials, follow up with student on any missing materials, and distribute letters to Deans and Brown clinicians for review.
- Week Two: On the Medical Leave side, Student Support Deans and clinicians from Counseling and Psychological Services and University Health Services review their respective letters. These staff may reach out to students and/or clinicians to request additional information that may not be contained in the letters but which may help to understand the student's readiness to return. However, any requests for additional information will be narrowly tailored to information that is reasonably needed to resolve individualized and objective questions or concerns regarding the student's fitness to return to Brown. The statements of treatment providers will be accorded considerable weight. On the CAS side, the CAS committee meets to review materials, including your detailed academic plan and whether you met CAS requirements.
- Week Three: The Medical Leave Clearance Committee meets to review each petition. The Dean working with each student presents their petition. Following the meeting, Deans may communicate to students with questions that the committee has about their treatment and activities while on leave or plans for care once they have returned. Any information that the Deans seek will be narrowly tailored to information that is reasonably needed to resolve individualized and objective questions or concerns regarding the student's fitness to return to Brown.
- Week Four: Any follow-up is completed. Decision letters are prepared and distributed.

Clearance Committee & Criteria

The committee is comprised of the Student Support Services Deans as well as representatives from CAPS, UHS, the College, and Student Accessibility Services (SAS). The committee makes an individualized assessment of each student and seeks to determine that the student has met the following clearance criteria:

- Received appropriate and sufficient treatment from mental health and/or physical health care providers.
- Demonstrates insight regarding the circumstances that led to their Medical Leave. Demonstrates readiness to return to full-time enrollment (note: a reduced course load may be a reasonable modification for the student to continue full-time enrollment). This may be shown through the general activities of the student while on leave.
- Demonstrates the ability to function in the student environment with or without reasonable modifications to University policies, practices, or procedures.
- Demonstrates an appropriate plan for managing the rigors of Brown upon return. The plan may include their academic and social life balance, their support system (family and friends) and how it contributes to their readjustment, continued care from clinicians, and other activities in which they will engage to care for themselves.

Decision Letter & Transition

Once the review is complete, students are notified by letter of the disposition of their clearance. For students who are cleared, the letter will also include recommendations for support resources on campus that may be useful to the student. When a student is cleared, Student Support Services & CAS begin the process of notifying other offices on campus. At this point, Student Support Services will contact any students who still have financial holds in place, directing them to contact the [Bursar Office](#) and fulfill any obligations. Once cleared, a student will be assigned both a Student Support Dean and an Academic-Dean. The student may be in touch with their Deans at any point with questions about the transition back to Brown. The Deans will also reach out to the student shortly after their return to check in.

APPEAL PROCESS

Within five (5) business days of notification of a denial for clearance, the student may appeal, in writing, the decision of the committee, setting out the reason for the appeal and any supporting materials. Appeals will be submitted to the Dean of Students or their designee. A student may appeal a decision of the committee denying the student's request for readmission based on one or more of the following grounds: (1) the decision of the Committee is contrary to the evidence submitted by the student or treatment provider that supports the student's readiness to return, (2) there is relevant new information that was not reasonably available at the time of the original clearance deadline, and/or (3) a material procedural error by the University or committee. The appeal officer shall review the record and any additional information submitted in the appeal and determine whether to uphold or modify the decision of the committee or to remand the matter to the committee with instructions for reconsideration. Decisions will be communicated to the student within ten (10) business days of the appeal deadline.

RELATED INFORMATION

Students are advised to notify other offices during their clearance process. Such offices may include:

- Contact the [Office of Residential Life](#)
- Contact the [Office of Financial Aid](#)
- Contact the [Loan Office](#)
- Contact the [Bursar](#)
- Contact [Student and Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#)
- Contact [the College](#)

When Student Support Services informs the **Registrar's Office** that a student has been cleared for return from Medical Leave, the Registrar's Office will contact the student via email regarding the process for on-line registration.

Student Support Deans are available at any time to answer questions about the requested materials or any other aspect of the Medical Leave process. College Academic Deans are available to assist with questions about the CAS petition process and requirements.

Related Links:

- [Student Support Services](#)
- [Committee on Academic Standing](#)

Screenshots of ASK Petition to CAS: Returning to Studies at Brown

New Petition ?	
Student *	<input type="text"/>
Submitted on Behalf Of *	<input type="text"/>
Petition Type *	Returning to Studies at Brown ▾
Status	Draft
Instructions	<p>NOTE: This petition does not replace any documents you must complete and return to Student Support Services to return from a medical leave.</p> <p>Thank you for your petition to the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) for a return to studies after time away. If you are petitioning, it is presumed you have already completed the Google form linked here to help you prepare this petition and developed your overall academic plan in consultation with a College academic dean and/or your concentration advisor if you have declared a concentration. Taking these steps will help you submit the strongest possible petition to CAS and demonstrate your readiness to return to Brown.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please list out the courses you believe you will enroll in next semester. Please use this format: Course #, Title, and denote (CR) if the course is a Concentration Requirement. 2. If you have filed a concentration, please tell us who your concentration advisor is and list out (1. 2. 3. 4. etc.) your remaining concentration requirements. Again use this format: Course #, Title. 3. Please summarize your plan to complete remaining degree requirements beyond concentration requirements (i.e. 30 course credits, writing requirement, enrollment requirement). Provide any context for this plan that you believe the Committee would find useful to have. 4. [OPTIONAL] Add link to the google worksheet you used to help you map this out with your dean. 5. Please indicate if your overall plan involves completion of any incomplete courses, summer or intersessions at Brown, any reduced course loads, and/or enrollment past 8 semesters. 6. Please list academic resources you plan to use regularly and share how you expect to benefit from these academic resources. 7. [REQUIRED IF ON ACADEMIC SUSPENSION, REFUSED REGISTRATION OR SERIOUS WARNING] Please list all the specific requirements detailed in your last CAS letter for returning to active status, and describe which of these you have and have not yet satisfied. Include whether you finished incomplete course work, recovered course credits by taking courses elsewhere, connected with academic and other support resources, and any other requirements as stipulated in your letter.

New Petition ?	
Student *	<input type="text"/>
Submitted on Behalf Of *	<input type="text"/>
Petition Type *	Returning to Studies at Brown ▾
Status	Draft
Instructions	<p>NOTE: This petition does not replace any documents you must complete and return to Student Support Services to return from a medical leave.</p> <p>Thank you for your petition to the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) for a return to studies after time away. If you are petitioning, it is presumed you have already completed the Google form linked here to help you prepare this petition and developed your overall academic plan in consultation with a College academic dean and/or your concentration advisor if you have declared a concentration. Taking these steps will help you submit the strongest possible petition to CAS and demonstrate your readiness to return to Brown.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please list out the courses you believe you will enroll in next semester. Please use this format: Course #, Title, and denote (CR) if the course is a Concentration Requirement. 2. If you have filed a concentration, please tell us who your concentration advisor is and list out (1. 2. 3. 4. etc.) your remaining concentration requirements. Again use this format: Course #, Title. 3. Please summarize your plan to complete remaining degree requirements beyond concentration requirements (i.e. 30 course credits, writing requirement, enrollment requirement). Provide any context for this plan that you believe the Committee would find useful to have. 4. [OPTIONAL] Add link to the google worksheet you used to help you map this out with your dean. 5. Please indicate if your overall plan involves completion of any incomplete courses, summer or intersessions at Brown, any reduced course loads, and/or enrollment past 8 semesters. 6. Please list academic resources you plan to use regularly and share how you expect to benefit from these academic resources. 7. [REQUIRED IF ON ACADEMIC SUSPENSION, REFUSED REGISTRATION OR SERIOUS WARNING] Please list all the specific requirements detailed in your last CAS letter for returning to active status, and describe which of these you have and have not yet satisfied. Include whether you finished incomplete course work, recovered course credits by taking courses elsewhere, connected with academic and other support resources, and any other requirements as stipulated in your letter.

Student Support Services

Box 2015 | Providence, RI 02912 | Phone: 401-863-3145 | Fax: 401-863-1999

Email: studentsupport@brown.edu Web: <http://brown.edu/student-support>

	Add Supporter: <input type="text"/>
Alternate Email	<input type="text"/>
Current Address	Street 1 <input type="text"/>
	Street 2 <input type="text"/>
	Street 3 <input type="text"/>
	City <input type="text"/>
	State/Province <input type="text"/>
	Postal Code <input type="text"/>
	Country <input type="text"/>
Concentration	<input type="checkbox"/> New concentration:
Documentation	No files uploaded
	<input type="button" value="Add File"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit petition for review by the Committee on Academic Standing.	
<input type="button" value="Cancel"/> <input type="button" value="Save"/>	