

	Involuntary Leave of Absence Policy	
	Responsible Administrative Unit: Student Life	Policy Contact: Rebecca Flintoft, Associate Vice President of Student Life, rflintof@mines.edu

1.0 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Colorado School of Mines (“Mines”) is committed to partnering for student success. As part of this commitment, Mines provides a range of support services to address the medical needs of students, including mental health needs, within the context of our educational community. When a student experiences medical needs that require treatment beyond what Mines provides, or a level of treatment that is uncondusive to either the educational community and mission of Mines or the student’s academic progress, they may elect to take a voluntary leave of absence/withdrawal, as outlined in the Colorado School of Mines Catalog or Mines may place them on *Involuntary Leave of Absence*.

For these types of situations, Mines is committed to offering and developing reasonable solutions to help students remain in the educational community where possible, and to help students return to Mines following a voluntary leave of absence/withdrawal or an *Involuntary Leave of Absence*. The following constitutes the Mines policy regarding involuntary leaves of absence for graduate and undergraduate students.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENTS

In the absence of a voluntary leave of absence/withdrawal, Mines may place a student on *Involuntary Leave of Absence*. An *Involuntary Leave of Absence* does not revoke a student’s admission to Mines.

During an *Involuntary Leave of Absence*, a student is not enrolled in courses at Colorado School of Mines and may not participate in activities and services that are reserved for enrolled students, including but not limited to, Mines housing or health and counseling services.

This Policy is not a substitute for the academic or student code of conduct policies and adjudication process.

This Policy does not govern financial matters related to attendance. Student tuition and fee refund requests are governed by the Payments and Refunds section of the Colorado School of Mines Catalog. Financial aid is governed by federal, state, and university policy.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice President of Student Life (VPSL) or designee, may place a graduate or undergraduate student on *Involuntary Leave of Absence* under any of the following circumstances:

- A student is unable or unwilling to carry out substantial self-care obligations or otherwise safely and effectively participate in the educational program;
- Current medical knowledge and/or the best available objective evidence indicates that a student poses a significant risk to the health or safety of themselves or others, not based on speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations; or
- The student's behavior causes significant disruption to the learning environment or campus community.

The decision to place a student on *Involuntary Leave of Absence* will be based on a number of circumstances, including but not limited to:

- the nature and severity of the risk;
- the probability of substantial harm;
- whether the risk can be reasonably mitigated; and
- relevant medical and non-medical observations and information.

When Mines receives information indicating an *Involuntary Leave of Absence* may be appropriate, the *CARE Team* will review the information and make a recommendation to the VPSL (See Exhibit 1). Prior to making a recommendation for an *Involuntary Leave of Absence*, Mines will generally undertake the following actions:

- Prior notice of potential *Involuntary Leave of Absence*, including specific behavioral expectations (See reference to Sample Prior Notice, under section 6.0 Resources or Attachments.)
- Opportunity for the student to respond to such notices

In addition, Mines may undertake other actions or solutions depending on the circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Outreach and support to the student, including referral to appropriate mental health and medical care providers
- Reasonable accommodations of documented disabilities
- Housing changes or removal from housing
- Consultation with student, Mines faculty or staff, family members, care providers, and/or other supportive individuals
- Opportunity for student to provide documentation from outside medical and/or mental health provider

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- Notification of designated emergency contacts where notification is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other third-parties
- Risk or threat assessment
- Referral for psychological assessment
- Clarification of voluntary leave of absence, withdrawal, and course reduction options and associated impacts
- Review of policy and procedures related to tuition and fee waiver appeals, graduate student funding, and financial aid impacts related to potential voluntary withdrawal or leave of absence, course reduction, or *Involuntary Leave of Absence*
- Consideration of possible degree program change
- Consultation regarding housing options during and after *Involuntary Leave of Absence*

4.0 COMPLIANCE/ENFORCEMENT

The President delegates authority to develop, administer, maintain, and enforce appropriate procedures and resources to implement this policy to the Vice President of Student Life.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

Involuntary Leave of Absence. Also referred to as “involuntary leave,” a period of time during which a student is not enrolled in courses at Colorado School of Mines and may not participate in activities and services that are reserved for enrolled students, including but not limited to Mines housing and health and counseling services. *Involuntary Leave of Absence* does not revoke a student’s admission to Mines.

CARE Team. Mines’ Crisis Assessment, Response, and Education (CARE) team, as outlined at <https://www.mines.edu/student-life/care/>.

6.0 RESOURCES & ATTACHMENTS

- Student tuition and fees refund requests are governed by the Payments and Refunds policy found in the Colorado School of Mines Catalog: <https://catalog.mines.edu/graduate/tuitionfeesfinancialassistance/>
- Review our [Tuition and Fee Waiver Appeal Policy](#)
- For information about the CARE Team at Mines, visit care.mines.edu
- See [sample of Prior Notice of Involuntary Leave of Absence](#)
- [Petition to Return After Involuntary Leave of Absence](#)
- For more information on Undergraduate Student Withdrawals, please visit: <https://www.mines.edu/student-life/withdrawal/>

KEY WORDS

Medical leave of absence, medical withdrawal, Involuntary Leave of Absence, involuntary withdrawal.

7.0 HISTORY AND REVIEW CYCLE

The policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or as needed by the Responsible Administrative Unit.

Issued: August 1, 2019

Revised: N/A

EXHIBIT 1

1.0 Procedures for Involuntary Leave of Absence

- 1.1** When Mines receives information indicating an Involuntary Leave of Absence may be appropriate, the Chair of the CARE Team (Chair) or designee will gather all relevant information and confer with relevant CARE Team members and subject matter experts to review all evidence, including any documentation previously provided by the student. If additional information or action is needed, the Chair will seek out such information or ensure such action is taken.
- 1.2** If, following review of all relevant evidence, the Chair or designee recommends an Involuntary Leave of Absence to the VPSL, the VPSL or designee will notify the student of the recommendation, the effective date of leave (typically no less than 5 business days from the notification), the appeal process and appeal deadline.
- 1.3** Within 10 business days of receipt of the notice, the student may submit a written appeal of the Involuntary Leave of Absence and provide relevant additional information to the VPSL.
- 1.4** Upon receiving the appeal, the VPSL or designee will review all relevant evidence and issue a decision either affirming or reversing the recommendation for an Involuntary Leave of Absence.
- 1.5** VPSL or designee will notify the student of the appeal decision within 7 business days of receipt of the appeal.
- 1.6** The appeal decision is final.
- 1.7** If the recommendation for Involuntary Leave is affirmed, the Chair or designee will ensure the student is provided relevant information concerning the requirements and expectations of the student, as well as procedures and expectations for the petition to return to Mines following the Involuntary Leave.

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2.0 Procedures for Returning to Mines after Involuntary Leave of Absence

- 2.1** Following an Involuntary Leave of Absence, in order to re-enroll the student will submit a written petition to the VPSL. The petition will be reviewed by the Chair or designee, other relevant CARE Team members, and relevant subject matter experts, who will then recommend to the VPSL whether or not the petition should be approved. When relevant, Mines will engage the institution's chosen medical and/or mental health clinician(s) to help evaluate the student's petition, including evaluating relevant documentation provided by the student or their provider(s).
- 2.2** For information on the Petition to Return After Involuntary Leave of Absence, please see [Mines' Policy Library](#).