

AO 17: Medical Withdraws

A full or partial medical withdrawal is granted when NS determines that a student's health, safety, and academic success have been compromised by a mental or physical health condition.

17.1 Financial Aid Considerations

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) sets criteria for a leave of absence to apply to financial aid and cautions that many institutions will not qualify. A medical withdrawal from NS does not meet the criteria specified in 34 CFR 668.22(d). Therefore, a medical withdrawal granted by NS does not apply to financial aid and does not relieve a student of obligations related to course attendance or satisfactory academic progress, nor is the student considered enrolled for the purposes of deferring payment on federal student loans.

If a student requesting a medical withdrawal receives financial aid, they should contact the Office of Financial Aid to determine the possible impact on their financial aid status (including loan repayment status and obligations, return of aid already disbursed, effects on future eligibility).

17.2 Request Process

1. Students seeking a medical withdrawal because of significant illness or injury must complete a Request for Medical Withdrawal Form and provide supporting documentation from a medical or mental health provider. Preferred documentation consists of a letter from the student's attending healthcare provider with the following:
 - a. Date of onset of illness.
 - b. Dates the student was under care for the condition.
 - c. Brief explanation of why or how the illness impacted the student's ability to be successful.

NS recognizes that some students do not have continuous access to healthcare. Other supporting documentation may be submitted to verify the student's claim. Additional documentation may be requested at the discretion of the petition reviewer.

2. The student must submit the Request for Medical Withdrawal Form and supporting documentation to the Director of Academic Advising (or designee) and indicate if they are requesting a full or partial medical withdrawal.
3. The Director of Advising will confer with appropriate campus medical or mental health professionals as necessary to make a decision regarding the student's request.

4. In unusual or complex situations, the Director (or designee) may coordinate with the Division of Student Affairs to convene a committee of representatives from campus counseling services, Wellness Services, and other campus units as appropriate.
5. Students who are approved for a medical withdrawal will receive 'W' grades in the affected courses on their official transcripts. 'W' grades do not affect GPA or academic standing calculations.
6. Any adjustment to tuition, including possible refunds, will be made according to NS policy and state and federal law. Petitions for tuition/fee reimbursement will follow existing NS policies and procedures.
7. Students granted a full medical withdrawal have a hold placed on their account by the Academic Advising Center. The student must complete an academic advising appointment before re-enrolling at the University.
8. Students granted a medical withdrawal will be given a copy of this policy and, if their condition allows, will be asked to formally acknowledge receiving it.
9. Students granted a medical withdrawal will receive a letter outlining expectations to be met for the student to successfully return to NS. Expectations include providing appropriate medical documentation and attending an academic advising appointment. The letter will state that NS expects the leave to be long enough to allow the student to address the issues that required the withdrawal. A student who takes a medical withdrawal because of serious illness or injury made need at least one full term away from the University to enhance their likelihood of success when they return.
10. The Director of Advising (or designee) sends approved petitions to the Registrar's Office for processing.

17.2.1 Retroactive Requests (Previous Terms)

A student may experience medical challenges during a semester but may not be aware of the option to request a medical withdrawal or may be unable to request one promptly due to complications related to the illness or injury.

A student can retroactively petition for a late partial or full medical withdrawal up to one academic year after the last day of the term for which the student requests the withdrawal. The student must follow the steps described above.

An extension will be granted if the student has not enrolled at NS since the term the student wishes to retroactively receive a medical withdrawal from. The student must submit a petition for an extension.

17.3 Returning to NS

17.3.1 After a Partial Medical Withdrawal

It is NS's intention to support students in a successful return to the University community. Partial medical withdrawals require the student to meet with the Director of Academic Advising (or designee) before their return and re-enrollment at NS. Students must meet registration and payment due dates published in the academic calendar.

17.3.2 After a Full Medical Withdrawal

To return to NS after a full medical withdrawal, a student must complete these steps:

1. Notify the Director of Academic Advising in writing, via email, of the intent to return and the term when the student wishes to enroll. The Director will schedule an advising appointment with the student.
2. If required by the Director (or designee), submit documentation from the attending healthcare provider attesting to the student's ability to resume studies with a reasonable likelihood of success. Documentation will be held in strict confidence; it will be stored in the student's medical or mental health treatment record and will not become part of their academic record. At the Director's request, the student will authorize the Director to receive any additional information necessary to help the student prepare for successful re-enrollment. The Director may consult with the Dean of Students, the Student CARE Team, or other appropriate resources regarding the student's re-enrollment plan.
3. Students must submit documentation and complete the mandatory advising appointment by the following dates:
 - August 1 for the fall semester.
 - January 1 for the spring semester.
 - May 1 for the summer term.
4. If the Director has concerns about the likelihood of the student's success, they will communicate this to the student.
5. Once the student has submitted necessary documentation and attended the mandatory advising appointment, the Academic Advising Center will release the hold on the student's account.

17.4 Related Information

- Request for Medical Withdrawal Form
- Tuition/Fee Reimbursement Policy

- Financial Aid Handbook, Volume 5, Chapter 1
<https://ifap.ed.gov/fsahandbook/1718FSAHbkVol5.html>

17.4.1 Revision History

- Approved by Dr. Vickie Shields on 6/09/2020 and President Bart Patterson on 7/27/2020.