

Withdrawal or Leave of Absence

While in the United States, students in F-1 non-immigrant status must be continuously enrolled full time during the academic year until the completion of their programs of study. If you take a non-medical leave of absence, withdraw voluntarily, or required to withdraw from BMC, you are required to leave the United States within 15 days of this action. The only exception to these rules is a medical leave of absence.

If you take a leave of absence, withdraw from your program, you must contact the OIP immediately to discuss your immediate plans, complete a SEVIS Record Update form and review any plans you may have to return.

Medical Leave of Absence

The only exception that allows you to stay in the United States without transferring to another school or changing to another non-immigrant status is a medical leave of absence. Once your school has approved a medical leave of absence, you must also receive approval from the OIP.

1. Make an appointment with an adviser in OIP
2. Complete a SEVIS Record Update Form
3. Submit a letter from a health professional as indicated below

The OIP requires a letter from your physician stating 1) your medical condition, and 2) advising OIP that you are unable to take classes as a student at the time the leave is granted.

If the doctor's letter meets immigration regulations, you are allowed to stay in the United States during the semester as long as you register for the following semester. Under immigration regulations, only one year of medical leave is allowed per degree level and may be authorized in semester increments only.

If you are on a medical leave and depart the United States, you may return using your current documents (valid passport, valid F-1 entry visa and recertified I-20).

Grace Periods

Students who leave their F-1 or J-1 program prior to completion are limited in their ability to remain in the U.S. once the withdrawal is reported to SEVIS. You are encouraged to leave the country or make other arrangements promptly.

Authorized Withdrawal for F-1 students: 15-day grace period

Unauthorized Withdrawal for F-1 students: No grace period