



**SOUTHWESTERN**  
**ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY**

## **Medical Leave Notification, Documentation, and Compliance Policy**

### **Notice Requirement**

Students who are unable to attend classes due to illness or a medical condition are required to notify the Health Services Office **within twenty-four (24) hours** of the onset of the absence. Failure to provide timely notice may result in the institution's inability to recognize the absence as medically excused.

Health Services **cannot submit a medical leave request for approval** to the appropriate administrative office if a student has been absent for an extended period without prior notification. Students must contact **Mrs. Gloria Rivera** within the required timeframe so that the medical leave process may be initiated in accordance with institutional policy.

### **Documentation and Approval**

All medical leave requests are contingent upon the submission of **appropriate and verifiable medical documentation** from a licensed healthcare provider. While the institution acknowledges that such documentation may require additional time to obtain, **initial notification within the required timeframe is mandatory** in order to provisionally notify faculty of the student's medical status.

Medical leave approval is not finalized until documentation is received and reviewed. Upon approval, faculty will be notified of the **authorized medical leave period and the approved end date**. Diagnostic details will not be disclosed.

### **Retroactive Requests**

The institution **does not grant retroactive approval of medical leave** when students fail to comply with notification and documentation requirements. Absences occurring prior to proper notification and initiation of the medical leave process will not be retroactively excused.

### **Compliance with Federal and Institutional Regulations**

This policy is administered in compliance with applicable federal and state regulations, including but not limited to:

- The **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**;
- The **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**;
- The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** and **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**, where applicable;
- Institutional policies governing attendance, academic progress, and student conduct.

Medical documentation is maintained by Health Services in accordance with FERPA, HIPAA and institutional data security standards. Faculty notification is limited to information necessary for academic coordination.

## **Student Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- Notify Health Services within the established timeframe.
- Submit required medical documentation in a timely manner.
- Adhere to all applicable institutional policies and procedures.

Failure to comply with these responsibilities may result in absences being recorded as unexcused and may negatively impact academic standing.

## **Appeals Process**

Students who believe that a medical leave request was denied due to **extenuating or extraordinary circumstances** beyond their reasonable control may submit a written appeal.

Appeals must:

- Be submitted **in writing within five (5) business days** of the denial notification
- Include a detailed explanation of the circumstances preventing timely notification or documentation
- Be accompanied by any **supporting medical or corroborating documentation**, where available.

Appeals will be reviewed by the designated institutional authority or appeals committee. Decisions rendered through the appeals process are **final**. Submission of an appeal does not guarantee approval of a medical leave request nor alter academic obligations unless and until the appeal is approved.

## **Institutional Commitment and Reservation of Rights**

The institution is committed to supporting students experiencing medical hardships and to protecting student rights under applicable law. However, the institution **reserves the right to enforce all policy requirements** and to deny medical leave requests or appeals that do not meet established criteria.

Questions regarding this policy, the appeals process, or medical leave procedures should be directed to the appropriate administrative office (Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness);  
oire@swau.edu