**Applying For Medical Leave November 2022**

As with all leaves at Columbia, medical leave is authorized at the University level. The University Policy on Medical Leave for Faculty is documented in the Faculty Handbook (see Link <https://facultyhandbook.columbia.edu/content/34-leaves> and copied excerpt below.

To ensure confidentiality and privacy, the approval process for applying for and approving medical leave is handled by the Leave Management Office:

Leave Management Office

615 West 131st Street, MC 8703  
Studebaker 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10027  
Telephone: 212-851-0698  
Fax: 212-851-7069  
Email: [leavemanagement@columbia.edu](mailto:leavemanagement@columbia.edu)

**Process**

1. You should confer with your doctor about the need for a medical leave, and the expected time period / amount of relief needed.

* Medical leaves begin and end based on the medical condition, not on semester dates.
* It is possible to apply for a partial leave, that would relieve you of some, but not all, of your duties during a specified period.
* Teaching relief is normally pro-rated according to the length of the leave.

1. Request a letter from your doctor explaining the need for medical leave and the expected time period / relief needed. This letter must include the diagnosis/ICD code.
2. The letter should be sent by you or your doctor’s office to the University’s  Leave Management department directly at [leavemanagement@columbia.edu](mailto:leavemanagement@columbia.edu) or by fax to 212-851-706 to preserve your privacy.  The School and dean’s office should NOT be copied on this message.
3. It is helpful for you to keep the Senior Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs and their staff informed when you have submitted such a request so that the School can follow up if needed.
4. After the letter is reviewed, the Leave Management Office informs you and the School of the approved period of leave.
5. You then need to send a brief leave request letter to the Dean’s Office (template below) with the same dates as those approved by the Leave Management Office, and your leave will be processed with HR.

* If your circumstances change (the treatment is easier or more complicated than anticipated) then the doctor would send in a revised letter and the process would be repeated and the terms of the leave updated.

**Leave Request Letter Template**

Senior Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs

Office of the Dean

Kravis Hall 353

New York, NY 10027

Dear XXX

Following up my earlier conversations with your office and approval from the Office of Leave Management, I write to request a medical leave beginning on XXX and ending on XXX.

My understanding is that if the leave is granted:

* my teaching load and other responsibilities during the leave year will be reduced by XXX reflecting an exemption of XXX teaching credits
* my salary will remain unchanged.

Please let me know if you have further questions, and thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

**Faculty Handbook:**  **Section on Medical Leave**

Full-time faculty who cannot perform their responsibilities because of illness or injury are given leaves of absence with full salary for up to six months from the onset of the disability under the University’s salary continuation plan. Faculty needing a leave of absence for medical reasons, inclusive of work related accidents should 1) write to their chair or dean indicating that their doctor has advised them that they should go on a medical leave for a specified period of time (to maintain confidentiality they should not mention their medical condition or specify why their doctor is recommending the leave); and 2) provide documentation from a physician specifying the nature of the leave of absence and anticipated duration of the disability to the [Leave Management Office](mailto:leavemanagement@columbia.edu) via email. This office will then advise the dean or executive vice president and the Provost on how long they will be unable to perform their normal responsibilities.

       If the disability continues beyond six months, the faculty member should apply to the University’s insurance carrier for long-term disability through the Leave Management Office. If approved, the faculty member is given a medical leave and as applicable, will receive payment from University’s insurance carrier according to the terms of the University’s long-term disability program. Officers who are able to perform some of their normal responsibilities must provide an updated note to [Leave Management](mailto:leavemanagement@columbia.edu), and if approved for a workplace accommodation and approved by the long-term disability carrier, will receive prorated salary from the University and prorated disability payments from the insurance carrier.

       Faculty able to return to active service after recovering from disabling illness or injury after being approved for long term disability are required to submit a letter from a physician to the Leave Management Office stating that they are physically capable of resuming their responsibilities. If special working arrangements are needed for the individual to return, the physician should also specify the nature of the accommodations required. The physician’s letter should be submitted to the [Leave Management Office](mailto:leavemanagement@columbia.edu) to preserve the confidentiality of the information about the faculty member’s illness or injury.