

# LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND STOP OUT POLICY

Undergraduate and graduate students may need to interrupt their enrollment for a period of time, for a variety of reasons. Guided by federal student financial aid guidelines, Bay Path University defines two types of interrupted enrollment: Leave of Absence and Stop Out. This policy does not apply to absences from class(s) for short-term reasons, including but not limited to illness.

Related policies on course withdrawals, refunds and withdrawal from the University should be reviewed and considered by a student contemplating a leave of absence.

## Leave of Absence

A student who is in good standing with the University and needs to interrupt enrollment may be eligible for an approved Leave of Absence (LOA). Students on an approved LOA are eligible for student loan repayment deferment and are generally guaranteed re-enrollment immediately following the end of the LOA. An approved leave of absence will be granted only in the following circumstances:

- Serious student medical problems
- Pregnancy
- Death or serious illness of an immediate family member
- Military duty (see section on military leaves of absence).

Students seeking a leave of absence must obtain and fully complete the Enrollment Status Form available on the Student tab in the portal. The following conditions apply to an approved leave of absence:

- Students must be in good conduct and academic standing and meet satisfactory academic progress standards at the time of the request.
- Before submitting an Enrollment Status Form to request an official leave of absence, students should discuss the request with their educator coach.
- The Enrollment Status Form must be completed in full, including the period of time for the leave of absence, the specific date of return, and the reason for the leave.
- Upon receipt of an Enrollment Status Form requesting an official leave of absence, the Registrar's Office will reach out to the student with guidance on next steps.
- Students are required to submit appropriate documentation for the reason requesting the approved leave of absence. Official leave of absence requests that are submitted without appropriate documentation will not be approved. All documentation will be kept confidential and private consistent with the terms of this policy and the business needs of the University.
- The total duration of all leaves may not exceed 180 days in a 12-month period. If the student does not return within the time agreed upon and has not contacted the University, they will be administratively withdrawn from the University.
- Students receiving financial aid must discuss the proposed leave of absence with a representative from the Student Financial Services Office to determine the impact on student financial aid.
- Students on an approved leave of absence will have a maximum of 48 hours to vacate the residence hall and campus.
- Students on an approved leave of absence may not attend classes, participate as a member of a student organization (including

athletics) or be on campus for any reason without prior written permission from the Assistant Dean for Curriculum and Instruction.

International students are eligible to take an LOA due to medical reasons. Students must obtain appropriate medical documentation recommending the LOA for medical reasons and must notify the SEVIS Coordinator at Bay Path University. Students who remain in the United States without obtaining advanced approval for medical LOA will be considered out of status for their international student status. International students who take a non-medical leave of absence, withdraw voluntarily or are suspended or required to withdraw from the University 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.

## Military Leave of Absence

Bay Path University recognizes the significant investment of time and personal sacrifices of students who serve in the US military. To accommodate the special challenges of earning a degree while serving, students called to active military duty during a session may utilize any of the options below, provided that the student has provided a copy of their active military orders, the dates of active duty coincide with the current session, and has notified the Registrar's Office at registrar@baypath.edu of their decision at the time the Enrollment Status Form is submitted.

1. A student can take the grade they have earned to date in a class, provided that a sufficient number of class meetings have passed and both student and Program Director agree to this option. The number of class meetings will be determined according to the format of the program and the requirements of the course(s) and/or program. A student selecting this option will not be refunded any tuition or fees and will have their grade processed in the normal manner at the end of the semester with appropriate credits and grade awarded. This option will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
2. A student can request an incomplete, provided that a limited number of class meetings remain, the student is passing the course at the time of the request, and both student and instructor agree to this option. The instructor of the course must indicate which of the student's assignments are outstanding at the time of request. Students with active military orders will be given 90 days after the conclusion of their active duty to complete any outstanding assignments. After this 90-day period, the instructor must grade the work and provide an updated letter grade to the Registrar's Office at registrar@baypath.edu. Students who do not complete the coursework within the 90-day military incomplete period will be graded based upon the coursework that they did complete.
3. A student can request a retroactive drop from the course(s). A student electing this option will have their tuition refunded or credited, whichever is deemed appropriate, without credits awarded. A resident student may at any time during the semester be released from their contractual obligations for room and board. Room and board charges will be refunded for the unused portion of the contract on a pro rata basis.

Students approved for a military leave of absence will be dropped from all previously enrolled coursework where the date of the request predates the start date of the course(s) and they will have their tuition refunded or credited, whichever is deemed appropriate, without credits awarded.

## Financial Aid Implications of a Leave of Absence

Financial aid recipients considering a leave of absence should be aware of the implications to their financial aid. Students approved for a leave of absence are eligible to have their student loans deferred for the period

of the leave. Students who do not meet the above criteria for a leave of absence are not eligible for an in-school loan deferment status, which means that repayment of the loans will be required if enrollment status falls below half-time.

Financial aid awarded, but not used, prior to a leave of absence is not carried over if the student returns to full-time enrollment at the conclusion of the leave of absence. Students must re-apply for aid following an approved leave of absence, according to the policies and procedures applicable to that period as determined by the Student Financial Services Office.

For purposes of administering federal financial aid, a student who is receiving Title IV financial aid funds and is not granted a leave of absence based upon the above guidelines will be considered as withdrawn from Bay Path University (for financial aid purposes only).

### **Student Loan Repayment of a Leave of Absence**

If students are on a leave of absence from the University and do not meet the above criteria, their lender or federal loan service agency will move their loan from an in-school status to a grace or repayment status as required. While on a leave of absence, students may be able to postpone repayment by obtaining a deferment or forbearance from their loan servicer(s) as a result of unemployment or economic hardship. Students should contact their loan servicer(s) for more information about loan repayment. Students may review their federal loan history and determine their loan service agencies by visiting the National Student Loan Data System website at <https://studentaid.gov>. Once they re-enroll on a half-time or greater basis, they may be able to request deferment for "in-school" status.

### **Return from a Leave of Absence**

Students returning from an approved leave of absence should work with their educator coach to register for courses, and are encouraged to contact Student Financial Services upon their return to discuss financial aid and payment options.

Students returning from a medical leave may be required to provide Health Services with appropriate documentation from their health care provider indicating their readiness to return to the University with or without accommodations.

### **Stop Out**

A student who is not eligible for an approved leave of absence, but leaves the University with the intention of returning at a later time, will be considered a stop out.

Students seeking a stop out must fully complete the Enrollment Status Form, which is available in the Student Forms section of the Students tab on the MyBayPath portal. The following conditions apply to a stop out:

- Students must be in good conduct and academic standing and meet satisfactory academic progress standards at the time of the request.
- The Enrollment Status Form must be completed in full, including the period of time for the stop out, the specific date of return, the reason for enrollment interruption and the student's virtual signature.
- Before submitting an Enrollment Status Form to request a stop out, students must discuss the request with their educator coach.

Students receiving financial aid must discuss the stop out with a representative from the Student Financial Services Office to determine the impact on student financial aid.

### **Financial Aid Implications of a Stop Out**

Financial aid recipients considering a stop out should be aware of the implications to their financial aid. Students on a Stop Out are not eligible for an in-school loan deferment status, which means that repayment of the loans will be required if enrollment status falls below half-time.

For purposes of administering federal financial aid, a student who is receiving Title IV financial aid funds and is not granted an approved leave of absence based upon the Leave of Absence policy will be considered as withdrawn from Bay Path University (for financial aid purposes only).

### **Student Loan Repayment of a Stop Out**

If students are on a Stop Out, a lender or federal loan service agency will move their loan from an in-school status to a grace or repayment status as required. Students may be able to postpone repayment by obtaining a deferment or forbearance from their loan servicer(s) as a result of unemployment or economic hardship. Students should contact their loan servicer(s) for more information about loan repayment. Students may review their federal loan history and determine their loan service agencies by visiting the National Student Loan Data System website at <https://studentaid.gov>. Once they re-enroll on a half-time or greater basis, they may be able to request deferment for "in-school" status.