The George Washington University seeks to prioritize the safety, health, and wellbeing of all students. We recognize that each student is unique, and value their individual experiences. GWU recognizes that there may be times where a student may experience a situation that impedes their ability to be successful as a student and may even jeopardize their safety and/or that of the GW community. A leave of absence provides an opportunity for students to take time away from their academic responsibilities so that they may have the time and space needed to address the reasons that led to their leave, and return to the University to achieve their educational goals. Students are given the opportunity to opt for a voluntary Leave of Absence. However, in some circumstances, it may be necessary for the University to invoke an involuntary Leave of Absence (hereinafter referred to as a “Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence”). A Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence may be invoked after conducting a thorough assessment that:

1. There is a reasonable basis to believe that a student has or may engage in conduct or behavior that has caused or will contribute to a significant disruption to the learning and safety of themselves and/or GW community members; and/or,
2. A student is/will be unable to complete the requirements and responsibilities expected of them as a student at GW.

The Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence is not a disciplinary sanction; however the action(s) that may lead to a Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence may subsequently be the basis of disciplinary action.

This proposed leave process was compiled together after researching existing MLOA processes at the following institutions: Stanford University, University of Pennsylvania, University of San Diego, St. Louis University, and Boston University.

I. Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence

A Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence is an involuntary leave placed on a student for a current and/or future semester(s) if there is sufficient evidence that a student is engaging in or has engaged in behaviors(s) that significantly disrupts University activities and/or poses safety concerns for themselves and/or the campus community. Unsafe and disruptive behavior can include but is not limited to:

- Engaging in, or is likely to engage in behavior(s) that represents a concern for harm to self or others in the campus community
- Engaging in behaviors that indicate that a student is/has been unable or unwilling to control their behavior and to manage the general responsibilities of being a student and live independently
- Engaging in behavior(s) that disrupt the overall educational environment and/or normal University processes that may affect the academic success and wellbeing of others in the campus community

The Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence should only be invoked in extraordinary circumstances at the discretion of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and/or an official designee at the recommendation of the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) and/or the Threat Assessment Team (TAT).

Examples of circumstances where it may be important to invoke a Dean’s Involuntary Leave includes but is not limited to:

- Demonstrated inability and/or consistent refusal to manage one’s behavior
- Inadequately managed self-harm/suicidal concern(s) or attempt(s) that disrupts other campus community members
● Evidence of threat(s) of harm to self and/or others that compromises the safety and wellbeing of the campus community
● Ongoing substance use abuse and/or addiction that creates safety and health concerns to self and/or others
● Ongoing behavior(s) that continues to disrupt the safety and wellbeing of others in the campus community
● Ongoing behavior(s) demonstrates support needs exceed a level of care that has or will create an undue burden on available University resources

The Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence will not take the place of any disciplinary or administrative action associated with a student’s behavior which may be found in violation of the University’s policies, including but not limited to, the Code of Student Conduct. Furthermore, the Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence must remain consistent with the University’s Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Non-Retaliation policy.

II. Process to Invoke a Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence
1. The Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and/or an official designee will receive a written formal recommendation by either the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) and/or the Threat Assessment Team (TAT). The Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and/or official designee will review all relevant information provided to decide whether or not concerns meet the criteria to consider a Dean’s Involuntary Leave.
2. The Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students and/or an official designee will send notification to the student that a Dean’s Involuntary Leave is under consideration. The written notice to the student can be sent electronically and should include:
   a. Explanation for why the student is being considered for a Dean’s Involuntary Leave
   b. A copy of the Dean’s Involuntary Leave policy
   c. Information about how to respond and/or schedule a meeting before a decision is made
   d. (If applicable) A copy of a Release of Information form should the student want to release and/or share any confidential medical information that may be relevant for consideration
   e. (If applicable) Information on taking a voluntary leave/ withdrawal from the University
   f. (If applicable) Information about campus resources
   g. Contact information for a staff member that they can contact with any questions related to the Dean’s Involuntary Leave process
3. The Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and/or an official designee will gather all relevant information and consult with the appropriate University representatives to assess the degree of risk that a student may pose to self and/or others in the campus community particularly considering:
   a. Whether current knowledge about a student’s behavior and/or medical condition(s) provides sufficient objective evidence that a student a risk of health or safety to themselves or others in the campus community
   b. Whether a student’s behavior demonstrates an inability or unwillingness to be self-managed or controlled and therefore impacting their ability to be carry out the general responsibilities of a being a student and live independently
   c. Whether a student’s behavior offers significant disruption to the campus community and/or University resources is unable or unwilling to carry out the essential responsibilities and self-care

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Review of all materials and needed consultation must follow the University’s Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Non-Retaliation policy and adhere to the University’s Personal Information and Privacy Policy.

4. Following an individual assessment not based on stereotypes, generalizations, or speculations, the review of materials and appropriate consultations, the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and/or their official designee will make a decision about whether or not to place the student on a Dean’s Involuntary Leave and will provide a formal notice of their decision. The written notice of decision which may be sent electronically will include information about the student’s right to appeal and to reasonable accommodations during the appeal process.
   a. **If a Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence is imposed**: The written notice of decision to the student will set forth the basis for the decision and a time-frame for when the student must leave the University, when they may be eligible to return to the University, and the conditions, requirements the student will need to satisfy to be eligible for return, and information about the appeals process. The written notice will also inform the student of their right to reasonable accommodations in the return process and will provide contact information who will support a reinstatement process. The length of the leave will be determined on an individual basis. If a Dean’s Involuntary Leave of Absence is imposed, a separate memo should be sent to the following individuals following the appeals period: University Registrar, Academic Dean, GWorld Office, Chief of Police, and, Director of Campus Living (if applicable). A registration hold will be added to a student’s account in a Dean’s Involuntary Leave is imposed.
   b. **If an involuntary leave of absence is not imposed**: The written notice of decision will be communicated that may impose conditions and/or requirements under which the student is allowed to remain at the University.

5. If a student chooses to appeal the Dean’s Involuntary Leave, they must submit a written appeal within five (5) business days (unless otherwise noted) of receiving written notice of the final decision in writing to the Provost’s Office. The written appeal request must include either evidence that improper procedural review occurred and/or new information that was not previously available that may have impacted the decision process. In review of an appeal, the Provost’s Office should consider the following:
   a. Was the Dean’s Involuntary Leave procedure properly followed?
   b. Were the proper facts and criteria used to make a decision?
   c. (If applicable) Is the new information provided sufficient to impact the decision?
   d. Given the proper facts, criteria, and procedures, was the decision a reasonable one?

III. Implications of a Dean’s Involuntary Leave
If a final determination is made that student is placed on a Dean’s Involuntary Leave, the student will be notified of the following:

- Confirmation that the student has been placed on a Dean’s Involuntary Leave for a specific time period
- The student’s access to University housing and/or University services and facilities has been restricted.
- The specific conditions for reinstatement (eg. requesting a Release of Information from medical provider(s)).
- Information about how to appeal the decision
At any time before a final determination is reached, a student may initiate the procedures for withdrawal or voluntary leave from the University. If a student chooses to move forward with this option, it is still possible for the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students to recommend specific conditions that should be considered for reinstatement.

In the event of a Dean’s Involuntary Leave, changes to a student’s semester or summer session enrollment will be recorded aligned with the timeframe outlined in the University Bulletin. Any refund of tuition and/or fees should be calculated based on the Student Tuition Refund Policy for the academic semester or summer session in which the leave occurs. A recommendation for an exception should follow the pre-existing process established by the Tuition Refund Committee.

If the student is in housing when a Dean's Involuntary Leave is approved, the student’s Housing License Agreement will be canceled, and the student will be required to move out within seven (7) calendar days of receiving their Dean’s Involuntary Leave notice (exceptions can be made for an immediate move out in cases where there may be safety risks and/or concerns). The student will receive a refund of housing fees on a pro rata basis for the academic term in which the involuntary leave occurs.

### IV. Returning from a Dean’s Leave
A student who is placed on a Dean’s Involuntary Leave from the University or who voluntarily takes a leave while in the process of consideration for a Dean's Involuntary Leave may only be considered for reinstatement if they have completed all required conditions listed for reinstatement.

A student interested in reinstatement must provide a written letter to the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students and/or their designee to reiterate their desire and readiness to return to the University. The written letter should include the following:

- Rationale to explain why they are ready to return to campus
- The steps that the student has taken to address and meet the conditions of reinstatement
- Their plan to remain consistent and aligned with the University’s academic and community standards

A student interested in reinstatement can also provide any relevant documentation to the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students and/or their designee when expressing their interest in reinstatement. The student may also be asked for further documentation by the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students while in this process.

A student interested in reinstatement should be aware of the following deadlines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester of Return</th>
<th>Earliest Submission Date</th>
<th>Latest Submission Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>July 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>December 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>May 1</td>
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Upon receiving notice of a student’s desire for reinstatement, the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students and/or their designee will do the following:

- Provide written confirmation that their request for reinstatement has been received;
- Review, and examine all relevant documentation;
- Provide the student with an opportunity to meet with the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and/or their designee to discuss their reinstatement request;
- Consult with BIT, TAT, and/or any University partners to discuss the possibility of reinstatement, as well as receive recommendations for any conditions for reinstatement;
- Decide whether a reinstatement will be approved, and if, under what specific conditions.

The Vice Provost for Student Affairs will communicate a decision on reinstatement. If a student’s request for reinstatement is denied, the Vice Provost for Student Affairs will inform the student of the following in writing:

- Why was the request denied;
- When and if additional requests for reinstatement will be considered.

A student may choose to appeal the reinstatement decision within five (5) business days with a written request to the Provost’s Office which must either include evidence that there was improper procedural review and/or new information that was not previously available that may be significant in the decision process. In the review of an appeal, the Provost Office should consider the following:

a. Was the Dean’s Involuntary Leave reinstatement procedure properly followed?

b. Were the proper facts and criteria used to make a decision?

c. (If applicable) Is the new information provided sufficient to impact the initial decision?

d. Given the proper facts, criteria, and procedures, was the decision a reasonable one?