

Washington University in St. Louis Policy on Military Absences, Refunds and Readmissions

Washington University recognizes that students serving in the U.S. Armed Forces and their Family Members may encounter situations where Military Service forces them to withdraw from a course of study, sometimes with little notice. This policy recognizes and makes appropriate allowances for students in such situations; it applies to all university schools and programs.

The point of contact is the Office of Military and Veteran Services:

Washington University in St. Louis
Office of Military and Veteran Services
1 Brookings Drive, Campus Box 1175
St. Louis, MO 63130
veterans@wustl.edu
(314) 935-2609

Short-Term Absences Due to Military Service Obligations

Students who 1) are called to Military Service for 30 days or less and 2) do not believe a Military Leave of Absence is necessary, should notify their instructors as soon as possible to make arrangements to complete missed coursework and should provide Documentation of the required Military Service upon request. University faculty and staff will do their best to accommodate students, but depending on the nature of the class and the length and timing of the absence, the student may not be able to remain enrolled in the course. If an instructor does not believe a student will be able to successfully complete their course based on the absence, the instructor must communicate with the student as early as possible in the academic term and in partnership with their academic dean and the Office of Military and Veteran Services. Students may contact the Office of Military and Veteran Services and their academic dean for guidance and assistance.

Military Leave of Absence

1. Students called to Military Service should request a Military Leave of Absence from the university unless they are able to make arrangements to complete their coursework for credit.
 - A. Students should contact their academic deans and the university's Office of Military and Veteran Services to provide notice (written or oral) of their Military Leave of Absence as far in advance as is reasonable under the circumstances. Notice can be made by the student or an appropriate U.S. Armed Forces officer or Department of Defense official. Notice does not need to include a statement of intention to return to the university.
 - B. Advance notice of a leave of absence due to Military Service is not required if precluded by military necessity, such as students' service in operations that are classified or would be compromised by such notice. However, the student will still need to withdraw from classes or request another type of leave of absence from the university following standard university policy in order for the university to properly document the student's cessation of enrollment.
2. Upon receiving the student's notice, the academic dean and the Office of Military and Veteran Services will coordinate with the University Registrar, who will review the notice, initiate the Military Leave of Absence, and notify Student Financial Services, Student Accounting and the Veteran Affairs (VA) School Certifying Official.

- A. Student Financial Services will review the student's eligibility for financial aid funds received before the time of withdrawal and inform the student regarding current financial aid status and any actions required to defer loan repayments based on Military Service requirements.
- B. Student Accounting will process all refunds.
- C. The VA School Certifying Official will terminate Veteran Education Benefits certification and inform the student regarding current benefits status and any actions required to repay the VA.

Refunds

- 1. Refunds are granted to students who are unable to complete the remainder of the academic term and who provide advance notice and Documentation to the University of their Military Leave of Absence. Students must follow Military Leave of Absence procedures under 1.A above to initiate the refund. Students will receive a 100% refund of tuition and fees charged for the term from which they withdraw, but will be charged for non-fee expenses already incurred. Refunded fees include the Student Activity Fee and Student Health and Wellness Fee.
 - A. For students receiving Tuition Assistance or Veteran Education Benefits (other than Yellow Ribbon), tuition and fees will be refunded directly to the payee.
 - B. For students receiving Veteran Education Benefits, the VA School Certifying Official will terminate certification effective the date the student withdraws. Withdrawals after the drop deadline will be submitted to the VA under Mitigating Circumstances.
 - i. If the VA approves Mitigating Circumstances, then the student is only responsible to repay the VA for expenses the student incurs and payments the student receives after the withdrawal date. The university will refund the VA once the student receives a VA debt letter and provides the letter to the university.
 - ii. Students enrolled in the university's health insurance plan continue to have an active policy and should contact their insurer to cancel. The insurer will advise of any possible refunds.
 - C. For students receiving Yellow Ribbon or other tuition remission benefits, each school will reverse tuition charges for their respective students. For Yellow Ribbon recipients, the school will work with the VA Certifying Official to determine if the tuition payments should be refunded to the VA.
- 2. If the university determines it is appropriate to award academic credit for work completed during the term, the student shall not receive a refund for the portion of the course of study for which academic credit is awarded.

Readmission and Reenrollment after Military Leave of Absence

- 1. **Military Readmission Requirements.** Service Members and their Family Members wishing to reenroll at the university after a leave of absence due to Military Service (a "Military Readmission") must notify the university of their intention to resume their course of study. Subject to the criteria set forth below, the university will promptly readmit such students with the same academic status as the student had when the student last attended the university or was last admitted but was unable to attend due to Military Service.
 - A. **Notice of Intent to Return.**
 - i. Except as otherwise provided herein, notice of intent to return must be provided to the university:
 - a. within 3 years from the time the student is discharged from Military Service or is placed on inactive duty following the period of Military Service that required the leave of absence; or

D. Students will be charged the same amount of tuition and fees for their first academic year after Military Readmission as they were charged in the academic year during which the student left the university due to Military Service obligations.

i. However, if military or Veteran Education Benefits will cover the difference between the tuition and fee amounts currently charged to other students and the amount charged during the term of withdrawal, the university may charge the amounts currently charged to other students.

ii. If returning students are admitted to programs different from those from which they withdrew, and for subsequent academic years these students are admitted to their current programs, the school must assess no more than the tuition and fee charges that other students in the same programs are assessed for the relevant academic years.

4. Academic Preparation. If students are not academically prepared to resume their previous courses of study or complete their programs, the university will determine whether reasonable means are available to help them become prepared. The university may deny reenrollment if it determines that reasonable efforts are not available or that such efforts have failed to prepare these students adequately.

Definitions

1. *Family Member*: Primarily refers to the spouse, parent or child of a Service Member, although it may include another relative of a Service Member responsible for providing caregiver support.

2. *Military Service*: Service, whether voluntary or involuntary, in the U.S. Armed Forces – including service in the National Guard or Reserve.

4. *Military Leave of Absence*: A university-approved withdrawal from a university course or program that is necessitated by military service.

3. *Documentation*: Substantiating proof of Military Service that will vary from case to case and that may include (but is not limited to) the following:

- A DD 214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty;
- A copy of duty orders prepared by the facility where the orders were fulfilled carrying an endorsement indicating completion of the described service;
- A letter from the commanding officer of a personnel support activity or from someone of comparable authority;
- A certificate of completion from military training school;
- A discharge certificate showing character of service;
- A copy of extracts from payroll documents showing periods of service; and
- A letter from a National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) team leader or administrative officer verifying the dates and times of NDMS training or federal activation.

5. *Veteran Education Benefits*: Education benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to eligible Service Members, veterans, and certain dependents and survivors. Beneficiaries may receive financial support for undergraduate and graduate degrees, vocational and technical training, licensing and certification tests, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and more.

6. *Tuition Assistance (TA)*: Funds provided by the Department of Defense to pay a percentage of the charges of an educational institution for the tuition of active duty, Reserve, or National Guard members of the military services and of Coast Guard members who are enrolled in approved courses of study during their off-duty time.

7. *Mitigating Circumstances*: Circumstances beyond the student's control that prevent the student from continuing in school or that cause the student to reduce credits. See:

https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/1564/~/~mitigating-circumstances%3A-what-are-they-and-why-you-need-to-know%3F for additional VA guidance.

8. *Service Member*: A member of the uniformed services, which consist of the U.S. Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard), the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Services.