



## **Leave of Absence**

### **Policy:**

Interns are required by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) to have a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised professional practice and to achieve the competencies listed in the Standards of Education for entry-level dietitians before they can be issued a Verification Statement and thus be eligible for the national Registration Examination for Dietitians.

Because unexpected life situations arise and illnesses/accidents occur, this policy is to provide direction related to personal leave. The following procedures will provide guidance when interns may need time away from the U of M DI to attend to matters which impact their individual lives and significantly interfere with their ability to meet their internship responsibilities.

### **Procedure:**

- If injury or illness occurs, the intern must contact the Internship Director, and provide documentation of the severity/extent of the injury/illness, any required work limitations, and if indicated, request a leave of absence. If the intern is unable to contact the Internship Director, a designated individual may be appointed to make contact on the intern's behalf.
- The written request must indicate a date when the intern will meet with the Internship Director to discuss re-entry into the U of M DI program. In the case of a medical leave of absence, the intern will be required to submit a physician's release before returning to the program.
- Timely completion of the program following an approved leave of absence is within one year from the ORIGINAL program start date.
- Once a leave of absence is established, specific arrangements will be made on an individual basis in coordination with the Internship Director. The intern's accomplishments to date will be evaluated, and a written plan for completion will be determined. The written plan for completion will include, but is not limited to:
  - The number of program hours completed.
  - Specific rotations, assignments, projects, and competencies successfully completed, and preceptor evaluations of the intern's work and capabilities.
  - Number of required hours remaining to meet the standards set by the U of M DI Program and ACEND.
  - Specific rotations, assignments, projects, and competencies required to be successfully completed by the intern.
  - The plan will also take into consideration the availability of preceptors to work with the intern, as well as the reasonable expectation that the intern will successfully complete the program.
  - The opportunity to complete remaining supervised practice experiences will depend upon availability of affiliated sites and supervision.



- If it is not deemed feasible by at least one of the following parties (Internship Director, Preceptors, or Intern) for the intern to complete the program within one year from the ORIGINAL program start date, the intern will be advised to temporarily withdraw from the program and begin again with the next internship class. It will be the intern's responsibility to communicate in writing their desire for re-entry to the program. If an intern who has requested a leave of absence from the program does not re-enter the program by the beginning of the next internship year, the intern must re-apply for an internship slot. If re-selected, the intern may be required to repeat professional and supervised practice experiences at the discretion of the Internship Director and the Preceptors.
- If a leave of absence is established and the intern re-enters the program at the start of the next internship year, any program fee owed AND any difference between DI annual program fees must be paid by the first day.
- If the intern is unable to re-enter at the start of the next internship year, fees already paid will not be refunded. In the event the intern reapplies and is accepted to the program, the full program fee will be charged at the current U of M DI program rate.
- The intern does not qualify for benefits related to the federal Family Medical Leave Act as s/he is not considered an employee of the U of M DI Program, its affiliated sites, or of the University of Minnesota.
- Written documentation of a leave of absence will be filed in the intern's permanent record, which contains information consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, University of Minnesota policies, and the ACEND policies governing internship requirements.