



## CLERKSHIP ABSENCE POLICY

<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	6/1/26	<b>NEXT REVIEW:</b>	5/1/2027
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	Academic Programs/Clerkship		
<b>CATEGORY:</b>	Academic Programs		
<b>APPLIES TO:</b>	Students in the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) Program		

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### REFERENCES AND RELATED POLICIES:

- Clerkship Illness and COVID-19 Exposure Policy

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### PURPOSE

MSUCOM requires student participation in clerkship rotations and clinical activities with consistent attendance to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for successful program completion. This policy will define the policy and procedures regarding absences for clerkship activities.

### POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Any absence must follow the MSUCOM Clerkship Absence Policy.
2. MSUCOM courses/rotations may have additional absence requirements from this clerkship policy. Those requirements will be found in the course syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to know any specific absence requirements for the course in which they are enrolled at the time of any absence.
3. Specific rotation sites may have attendance policies stricter than MSUCOM. Students should be aware of those policies when confirming rotations and ensure compliance with those policies.
4. Students requesting SGA funding that includes absence(s) from clerkship rotations must complete the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* with supervisor and student coordinator signature, then submit to the Associate Dean for Clerkship ([enright4@msu.edu](mailto:enright4@msu.edu)) for approval/signature for absence.
5. **Excused Absences**
  - a. Students must obtain documented approval via the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* for all full- or partial-day absence from a rotation. Students should organize absences for one form per rotation only.
  - b. An excused absence is required for all absences from MSUCOM courses/rotations and is obtained by the student by:
    - i. Ensuring requested absences complies with the Clerkship Absence Policy and
    - ii. Correct completion of the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* and
    - iii. Upload of the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* to Medtrics.
  - c. The student should obtain the appropriate signatures on the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* at least 30 days prior to the date of the absence. If call duties/weekend duties are required of the upcoming rotation, the student should ensure completion prior to any call/weekend duty scheduling, which may occur prior to 30 days.
    - i. Exception:

1. There may be base hospital sites/elective rotation sites that allow obtaining appropriate signatures on the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* in shorter times than 30 days. This is at the discretion of the base hospital coordinator or elective coordinator only. If the sites prefer less than a 30-day submission, the completed *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* must be uploaded to Medtrics by day 3 of the start of the rotation.
  2. An absence due to an emergency or short notice interview invitations (year 4 students) is an exception to the 30-day advance notice; however, students must notify rotation team and student coordinator for any emergent absence and complete the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* upon return from an emergent absence and prior to any short notice interview invitation.
  3. All illness absences require the completion of the MSUCOM Clerkship Illness Qualtrics Survey (see Clerkship Illness and COVID-19 Exposure Policy). If not required to isolate or failure to complete the MSUCOM Clerkship Illness Qualtrics Survey, student must complete the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* as personal day absence(s).
- d. Signatures required on the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form*:
- i. The signature of the supervising attending physician is required for all absences.
  - ii. The student coordinator/manager at the rotation site
    1. Base hospital student coordinator/manager- signature is required on all forms in both year 3 and 4 except forms with only absences under 'Additional MSUCOM Approved Absences'
    2. For elective rotations scheduled outside of the student's base hospital, the rotation site coordinator who organized the rotation will be the signatory in addition to the supervising attending physician on all forms.
  - iii. Additional MSUCOM signatures may also be required as described in the policy.
- e. Uploading *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* to Medtrics:
- i. Upload completed forms to the 'Excused Absences' folder (within the 'My Profile' section) of a student's Medtrics profile. It is recommended that students also maintain a copy for their records.
6. **Unexcused Absences** are any absences taken in the clerkship not in compliance with the policy or taken without proper completion/upload of the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form*.
- a. Unexcused absences are considered unprofessional and will result in a report to the Common Grounds Professionalism Committee and/or the MSUCOM Committee on Student Evaluation (COSE)
  - b. Unexcused absences may result in-
    - i. An N-grade on the rotation and/or poor evaluation.
    - ii. Additional time scheduled to complete rotation requirements.
7. **Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Forms**
- a. *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Forms* must be completed for all absences.
8. **First Day of Rotation**-Students are not allowed to be absent from the first day of any rotation due to onboarding and orientation plans at most rotation sites. Students must plan accordingly

for any personal days, interview days, COMLEX, etc. to ensure no absences occur on the first day of rotations.

#### 9. **Managing Absences from Rotations**

- a. Students may request excused absences from rotations provided the maximum time off any one 4-week rotation does not exceed 2 days (maximum time off any one 2-week rotation is 0 days). Please note, this does not mean students are permitted 2 days' absence from each 4-week rotation.
  - i. Additional absences may be requested from any one rotation by contacting the Associate Dean for Clerkship Education via email ([com.clerkship@msu.edu](mailto:com.clerkship@msu.edu)) prior to the absence. The *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* completed by the attending, and student coordinator/manager must accompany the request. Additional documentation may be requested.
  - ii. Time off for taking the COMAT exam and the ½ day optional study time for the COMAT exam (for COMATs on the last Friday of the rotation only) will not count toward the maximum time off any one rotation.

#### 10. **Specific clerkship absence details**

##### a. Personal day absences

- i. Students may utilize 5 personal days per academic year (Year 3 July-June, Year 4 July-graduation) at their discretion, provided the maximum number of total excused absences utilized on any one 4-week rotation does not exceed 2 days. Personal day absences do not carry over from year 3 to year 4. Personal day absences include vacation day(s), sick time, conference time, etc. Students are not permitted to utilize personal days for clinical enrichment (see clinical enrichment policy).

##### b. COMAT study time

- i. COMAT study time absence will be provided to any student enrolled in a COMAT examination occurring the last Friday of the rotation. Students opting to use a COMAT study time absence can leave the rotation at noon on the Thursday before the exam (or an alternate half day per the direction of the base hospital site) and are expected to return to rotation upon the completion of the COMAT. COMAT exam approved delays and COMAT exams requiring rescheduling due to emergency will not be provided COMAT study time. Students not enrolled in a COMAT exam on a rotation are not permitted to utilize COMAT study time from the rotation.

##### c. COMAT examination

- i. Absence for the COMAT examination includes time to take the exam only. Students are expected to return to rotations upon completion of the examination. Students not enrolled in a COMAT exam on a rotation are not permitted to take COMAT examination time off a rotation.

##### d. Year 4 Interview Absences

- i. A fourth-year student may be absent a total of 4 days on any 4-week rotation or 2 days on any 2-week rotation during October-January, with the days used for interview purposes only.
  1. Interview absence requests must not exceed the length of the interview time. Example-Time off for a half day interview is one half day.
  2. All interview absences require completion and upload to medtrics of the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form*.

- e. COMLEX/USMLE examination
  - i. Absence for the COMLEX/USMLE includes time to take the examination only (1 day or 2 days with accommodation).
- f. Research Presentation
  - i. Student absence for research presentations includes the date of presentation for a maximum of 2 presentations throughout the clerkship. Additional presentations and travel to and from any research presentation would be considered personal day absences.
- g. Conference absences
  - i. Any absence to attend a conference would be personal time off and must comply with the maximum time off allowable on any rotation.
    - 1. Exception: Students who hold organization positions requiring presence at a meeting held during a conference will be allowed time off for required meetings and travel to/from meetings. Any additional conference time would be personal days, provided the maximum time off any one rotation is not exceeded.
- h. Prolonged illness, bereavement, maternity/paternity leave
  - i. Students must contact the Associate Dean for Clerkship Education for further direction. Time missed may require make up. Documentation may be required.
- i. Jury duty
  - i. Students must contact the Associate Dean for Clerkship Education upon jury duty notice for further directions. Time missed may require make up.
- j. Other
  - i. Please inquire to the Associate Dean for Clerkship Education for further direction (com.clerkship@msu.edu).
  - ii. There will be meetings scheduled throughout the clerkship by the MSUCOM clerkship team. Some will be required, and others are optional. Students will be made aware of any required meetings via email .