

Loyola University of Chicago
COVID-19 Absence Policy for Graduate Assistants

In accordance with this COVID-19 Absence Policy for Graduate Assistants (the “Policy”), for the Spring 2021 Semester, graduate assistants (those graduate students receiving a partial or full merit award involving stipend and/or tuition scholarship and holding a research or teaching position) will be eligible for up to a total of 14 consecutive calendar days due to COVID-19 hardship that interrupts their graduate assistantship. These days of excused absence are intended to support graduate assistants who are temporarily unable to fulfill their training responsibilities either on campus or remotely, because of hardships directly related to COVID-19. The provision of financial support otherwise in place to the graduate assistant will continue during any qualifying excused absence under this Policy.

Qualified COVID-19 hardships include:

1. When a graduate assistant is unable to fulfill their graduate assistant training responsibilities due to their own COVID-19-related illness;
2. When a graduate assistant is unable to fulfill their graduate assistantship training responsibilities due to isolation following exposure to someone with COVID-19 and/or is experiencing possible symptoms or symptoms of COVID-19 (as outlined in Loyola’s Health and Safety: [Return to Campus](#) guidelines) and it is not operationally feasible for the graduate assistant to perform their graduate assistantship responsibilities remotely;
3. When a graduate assistant is unable to fulfill their graduate assistantship training responsibilities due to the COVID-19-related illness of a family member for whom they are providing care and it is not operationally feasible for the graduate assistant to perform their graduate assistantship responsibilities remotely and/or in conjunction with their family care commitment; and/or
4. When a graduate assistant is unable to perform their graduate assistantship training responsibilities because a COVID-19-related school or daycare closure requires the graduate assistant to be at home with a child or dependent, and it is not operationally feasible for the graduate assistant to perform their graduate assistantship responsibilities remotely and/or in conjunction with the childcare commitment.

A graduate assistant must inform their course instructor or research mentor about any absence based on COVID-19 hardship at their earliest convenience. Documentation to support the request may be required. It is the responsibility of the course instructor or research mentor to arrange temporary coverage until the graduate assistant can resume their assistantship.

A graduate assistant who must be absent from their graduate assistantship due to COVID-19 hardship for longer than 14 days should consult with their course instructor or research mentor to decide how to deal with the interruption in the graduate assistant’s studies.

Whether a graduate assistant receives their funding upon their return from an absence lasting longer than 14 days is at the discretion of the graduate program, in accordance with the terms of the graduate assistantship, applicable University policies and governing law.

Graduate students who are taking courses (not as part of a graduate assistantship) and experiencing COVID-19 hardship should consult with their professor(s) and/or the Dean of Students' Office, following University [policy](#).

Graduate students who have completed their course work and are experiencing COVID-19 hardship should consult with their program or school to discuss available options.

Graduate students who are hourly workers at the University and experiencing COVID-19 hardship as part of their hourly work for the University should consult the Office of Human Resources' [Sick Leave Policy](#).

To help address the unprecedented impact of COVID-19, Loyola University of Chicago has temporarily implemented this Policy for the Spring 2021 Semester. Given the unpredictable nature of this health emergency, the University will revisit the applicability of this Policy after the Spring 2021 Semester.