

# MEDICAL STUDENT PARENTAL RESOURCE GUIDE

The College of Medicine is committed to supporting all medical students in meeting their degree requirements. Pregnant and parenting students face unique challenges during medical education, and accommodations for these students will vary depending on timing within the curriculum. Given the unique intersection between our medical curriculum and the uncertainties of pregnancy and the timing of a child's arrival, no one policy can address accommodations for every pregnant or parenting student. Pregnancy will require flexibility in your plans, financial considerations, and possible curricular expansion.

The curriculum is not flexible in the first two years. Extended absences (ie. absences beyond what is allowed in the attendance policy) related to parental leave will require the medical student to repeat the academic terms of the affected year. The curriculum is more flexible in the third and fourth years if a leave will not impact the student's ability to re-engage in the clinical curriculum. Extended absences, however, will likely delay the student's graduation and/or ability to start a graduate medical education program on a typical schedule.

A medical student interested in accommodations or time off for pregnancy or parenting-related issues should communicate with the [Office of Admissions and Student Affairs](#) for guidance and to develop a plan specific to their situation.

## BIRTH OR ADOPTION OF CHILD

Requests for planned absences for the birth or adoption of a child should be made to the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs as soon as possible, ideally 60 days before leave would be needed. Medical students will meet with Sr. Associate Dean and/or Assistant Dean for Student Affairs to develop a plan that fits into the [medical student attendance policy](#) as well as discuss contingencies should a change occur in the timing of the birth/adoption. The medical student must make up all required work as determined by the Curriculum and Assessment Offices and is responsible for content covered while absent.

The College of Medicine will make possible every effort to accommodate absences, but there may be circumstances where absences may incur delays in educational progress and/or the need for a leave of absence. During leave of absences, the medical student will have continued use of online resources and campus facilities per usual enrollment. Medical students will be informed on the ramifications of their leave of absence including the impact on their financial aid, as well as how to best indicate the leave on residency applications. Please refer to the Student Handbook for the [Medical Student Leave, Withdrawal and Readmission Policy](#).

## PARENTAL SICK LEAVE

Medical students who need to be absent to care for a sick child should follow absence communication procedures outlined in the [medical student attendance policy](#) and the absences are counted towards the total number of excused absences listed in the policy. Medical students will not be given an excused absence to care for a sick child on an Assessment day unless emergent and extenuating circumstances apply and have been communicated to the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs. The medical student must make up all required work as determined by the course directors and is responsible for content covered while absent. Missed time without notice, even with appropriate reason, may result in an Incident Card. The College of Medicine will make possible every effort to accommodate absences, but there may be circumstances where absences may incur delays in educational progress and/or the need for a leave of absence.



Elson S. Floyd  
College of Medicine

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

## NURSING MOTHERS

Each campus has lactation locations for nursing mothers that can be found on the [Health and Wellness Services for MD Students](#) website. It is the expectation of the college that medical students have the ability to utilize a clean, private space with adequate electricity, sanitation, and lighting at all educational sites. If proper lactation accommodations are not available, medical students should notify the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.

## ACCOMMODATIONS AND TITLE IX PROTECTIONS

Title IX prohibits sex and gender-based discrimination in educational programs and ensures equitable access to programs and activities that prevent discrimination based on sex or gender—including a student’s pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, recover therefrom, or parenting status. If a medical student believes they are being discriminated against based on their pregnancy or parenting status, they should contact the [WSU Office of Civil Rights Compliance & Investigation](#) to report the discrimination. Protections for nursing mothers under Title IX include breaks for breastfeeding/pumping, proper lactation locations, and adjustments during timed exams for breastfeeding/pumping.

Medical students with pregnancy related medical conditions should contact the [Access Services Office](#) to discuss reasonable accommodations considerations which may include securing medical provider documentation. The College of Medicine strongly encourages pregnant medical students to consult with their personal health care provider regarding prevention of possible harmful exposures in their clinical or anatomy lab settings.

## PERSONAL COUNSELING SUPPORT

As you adjust to new parenthood, the college recognizes that you might feel overwhelmed or even discouraged. Medical students have access to counseling services that can be found at the [Health and Wellness Services for MD Students](#) website. Additional resource for immediate support include:

National Postpartum Depression Hotline  
1-800-PPD-MOMS

National Suicide Prevention Hotline  
1-800-273-8255

## CHILDREN IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

As a general rule, medical students may not bring children to classes, clinical settings, clerkship activities, small groups, or academic co-curricular activities (such as large group lectures). Medical students may find WSU Childcare information for each College of Medicine campus at the [Health and Wellness Services for MD Students](#) website. The College of Medicine cannot subsidize, facilitate, or manage placement of dependents at childcare centers and encourages medical students to speak with the [Financial Aid Office](#) to see if their financial aid package can be adjusted to cover additional family expenses.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Office of Admissions and Student Affairs  
[medicine.studentaffairs@wsu.edu](mailto:medicine.studentaffairs@wsu.edu), 509-368-6827

Office of Civil Rights Compliance & Investigation  
[crci@wsu.edu](mailto:crci@wsu.edu), 509-335-8288

Access Services Office  
[spok.studentsuccess@wsu.edu](mailto:spok.studentsuccess@wsu.edu), 509-358-7816

Financial Aid Office  
[spokane.financialaid@wsu.edu](mailto:spokane.financialaid@wsu.edu), 509-358-7905