

Excused Absences Policy
University of Tennessee Health Science Center
College of Dentistry

General Guidelines

- Excused absence requests must be submitted online via [Qualtrics Form](#).
- Absence requests must be submitted 5 business days in advance of planned absences, and a maximum of 5 business days following the return to campus following any unplanned absences.
- Documentation (PDF, photo, document) must be attached to the online form. If the documentation is in a file type that is not readable for our office, please convert it to jpeg or pdf. If we can't read the documentation, the absence will not be excused.
- An absence is **not officially excused** until confirmed by the College of Dentistry administration (Dean or designee).
- No other personnel (e.g., Course Directors, Chairs, Group Leaders) may grant an excused absence.

Personal Days

- **D3 and D4 Students:**
 - Allowed 6 personal half-days per semester for personal business.
 - Personal days cannot be taken on scheduled examination days.
 - Sick days without a doctor's excuse count toward the 6 half-day total.
 - Personal days can carry over from Fall to Spring semester if academic/clinical progress is adequate but cannot carry over to the next academic year.
 - Use of personal days must not compromise patient care or continuity of care.

Clinical Responsibilities

- Excused absences do not exempt students from assigned clinic, clinical blocks and/or clinic rotations.
- Students must:
 - Arrange for a replacement for any assigned block or off-site rotation.
 - Notify the departmental block coordinator of changes to block rotations.
 - Notify the course director and site supervisor of changes to off-site rotations.
 - Inform their PCC and scheduled patients about their inability to attend appointments.

Events or Situations That are Usually Excused

Documentation is required for all of these examples.

1. Formal residency interviews
2. Graduation ceremonies of first-degree relatives
3. Private practice interviews (limited to 4 in D4 year; documentation required)
4. Formal academic invited externships
 - Must be in good academic standing (no probation, sufficient clinic progress).
5. Personal Illness with a note from a treating clinic or doctor
6. Automobile accidents
7. Childbirth and Complications related to pregnancy (student and spouse/partner only)
8. National Boards, ADAT, or GRE exams, this includes one travel day if >100 miles from Memphis. If at all possible, students should AVOID taking exams when class/clinic is in session.
9. Death or serious illness of family members, documentation can be provided in a time frame that respects the sudden nature of these events.
10. Representing the college/university in an official capacity
11. Regional or national dental-related meetings (if presenting or as a primary officer)
12. Jury duty and other judicial matters
13. Military service

14. Recognized religious holidays, this does not include travel to and from distant locations. This only covers the recognized days themselves.
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Events or Situations that are typically NOT Excused

1. Weddings (including the student's own) and associated events.
 2. Vacations.
 3. Non-college-sponsored events:
 - Free dental days
 - CE courses
 - Dental meetings
 - Mission trips
 4. Shadowing/observing residency programs without official invitation.
 5. Acting as a dental assistant for board exams (without prior approval).
 6. Routine family events: birthdays, anniversaries, reunions, etc.
 7. Unfortunate events such as alarm malfunctions or traffic delays.
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Documentation Requirements

- Provide documentation within five working days after returning to school for unexpected or unplanned absences.
 - Documentation must include the name of the student who is applying for the excuse.
 - Medical documentation must come from an official healthcare provider.
 - In the event of the passing or sudden illness of a family member, please notify the Office of Student Affairs with any delays in documentation.
 - For absences planned in advance, please submit the excused absence request form at least 5 business days prior to the planned absence, and obtain approval before making travel arrangements.
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Special Notes

- Students who fail to provide proper documentation within the required time frame will not receive an excused absence and may not be allowed to make up missed assignments or exams.
- Course directors may assign alternative assignments at their discretion.