

CSU Health Network Documentation of Health Care Needs

In the course of providing medical and mental health care, the CSU Health Network may recommend students not to attend class due to ongoing or serious health care needs, accommodations, and/or disabilities, and will provide necessary supporting documentation.

The CSU Health Network does not provide excuse notes for students who are sent to obtain 'verification' or 'validation' of illness, including COVID, that result in missed classes, and for whom we are not providing care.

It is important to preserve the provider-patient relationship for professional medical and mental health care and to reduce the negative consequences of involving providers where professional care is not required. Negative consequences include:

- Risking the recovery time of the individual, who should be at rest with self-care strategies rather than traveling to the health service.
- Increasing the risk of spreading communicable infections (e.g., the common cold, influenza, COVID) during the excursion to the health service.
- Re-injuring students with mental health needs that are not immediately visible.
- Reframing the provider-student relationship from care-based to gatekeeping.
- Misrepresenting the role of health care and hampering students from being wise consumers of professional health care.
- Displacing valuable appointment time. Students relinquishing appropriate self-care at home (e.g., self-limiting gastrointestinal illnesses), in order to obtain a written excuse, take time from patients who do need professional attention.
- Artificially inflating service demand.
- Causing unnecessary financial expense. Students who experience financial hardship are disproportionately penalized.
- Wasting the student's resource of time. There are additional inequities for students balancing time between academics, employment, dependent care, public transportation, etc.
- Wasting provider time. Providers cannot retroactively verify illness for students attempting to obtain notes after an issue has resolved.
- Obscuring the true health record of the individual, when students believe they must escalate symptoms to others' thresholds of satisfaction.
- Jeopardizing privacy rights (HIPAA). Students must not feel compelled to disclose protected health information (PHI) to faculty and staff.
- Creating conflicting instruction from campus authorities (faculty and administration) regarding student development, individual responsibility, and student-faculty relationships.

CSU values include productive and supportive relationships regarding the completion of coursework and attendance in class. Demands for documentation of illness can be referred as follows:

- Students may report illnesses through [the campus Public Health Reporter](#)
- Professors requesting a note for a missed class due to a minor, self-limiting illness, may be provided a copy of this information.
- The [Office of Student Case Management](#) can aid students in communicating legitimate and verifiable life circumstances to faculty. A student may request SCM send notification (note: not an absence excuse) to their faculty. Students may contact SCM here: [Contact Us - Student Case Management \(colostate.edu\)](#).
- Students may submit complaints via the [Student Complaint Form](#).
- The Student Disability Center (<https://disabilitycenter.colostate.edu/>) specializes in assisting students with disabilities to achieve their academic goals. Email: sdcsu@colostate.edu

Comparative college health literature regarding absence notes and student health services:

[Ethical Issues on the Medical Excuse Policy](#). Tyler, Barbara., MD, MPH. *Action!* Newsletter, American College Health Association, Jan/Feb/March 2016.

[Excused Absences Policy](#), University of Wyoming, 2022.

[Excuse Notes](#), Ohio State University Student Health Services, 2022.

[Excuse Policy and FAQs](#), University of Colorado, 2022.

[Joint Memo from the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost and Thielen Student Health Center](#). Iowa State University, August 2022.

[Medical Academic Interventions](#). University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2022.

[Medical Excuse Policy](#). American College Health Association Annual Conference Session, 2010.

[Medical Excuse Policy](#). Oregon State University, 2022.

[Medical Excuse Policy](#). Texas A&M, 2022.

[Medical Excuse Policy](#). University of Virginia, 2022

[Medical Excuse Policy](#). Virginia Tech., 2022.

[Sick Notes Policy](#). University of California at Davis, 2022.

[The Medical Excuse Game as It Is Played at Duke University](#). Christmas, William A., MD. *Journal of American College Health*, 46:5, 235-237, 1998.

[*The Medical Excuse Game, Revisited*](#). Corson-Rikert, Janet, MD and Christmas, William A., MD. Journal of American College Health, 57:5, 561-562, 2009.

[Health Services FAQs](#), Michigan State University's Olin Health Center, 2022.

[Washington State University's practice on written excuses from the Health Service](#). 2022.