

Caltech is committed to promoting a healthy research environment. The following guidelines are intended to help students and advisors come to a mutual understanding about appropriate circumstances in which a student can be excused from research or academic duties for brief periods.

1. Valid circumstances under which a graduate student may be excused from research or academic duties include, but are not limited to:

- a. The student feels unwell (either physically or mentally).
- b. The student has a family emergency (e.g., needing to take care of an unwell family member; attending a funeral).
- c. The student has another type of emergency (e.g., evacuating due to a catastrophic weather event).
- d. In cases of infectious disease, the student requires time not only to recover, but also to prevent the spread of disease.

2. Being excused from research or academic duties is separate from recognized leave to which a student may be entitled, including vacation days, Institute holidays and pregnancy/bonding leave.

3. Students should contact their advisor for excused days but do not need to reveal private medical information in order to be excused.

4. If there are disagreements about these guidelines, students are encouraged to consult with the Graduate Office.

5. Graduate students are expected to follow the Honor Code in requesting excused days and are allowed up to 15 excused days per academic year (Fall term through Summer term). If a student reaches 15 excused days, the student and advisor should have a discussion to determine whether further excused days are compatible with satisfactory academic progress or if a leave of absence is more appropriate. Depending on the particular circumstances, these discussions may benefit from interactions with other Institute support groups, including the Counseling Center, Student Wellness Services, CARE team, and Graduate Office.