



Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia

Leave of Absence Policy (transitional period)

Effective March 2026

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Version	Description	Originator	Reviewed	Approved	Date	Next review
0.1	Leave of Absence Policy (transitional period)	Registration & Membership Manager	CEO	CEO	March 2026	March 2028

For further information, please email admin@pacfa.org.au. Proposals for amendments or additions to this document should be sent to the Head of Education.

PACFA acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of this nation. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, as the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we work and live. Our office is on the land of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin nation in Naarm/Melbourne and we thank them for their enduring and continuing contribution to the life of this place. We recognise that First Peoples' sovereignty was never ceded.

1. Overview

Intent	To manage the Leave of Absence processes for PACFA registrants in preparation for National Standards
Duration of policy	2 years
Applicable to	All PACFA registrants seeking to take Leave of Absence
Implementation Responsibility	Registration & Membership Manager
Date	March 2026

2. Purpose

PACFA registrants may require periods away from practice for professional or personal reasons. Registrants who are temporarily not practising may apply for a Leave of Absence from the PACFA Register for a period of up to three (3) years.

This policy defines the eligibility framework and requirements for Leave of Absence and Return from Leave, ensuring that registrants maintain appropriate professional and ethical standards and are fit to return to practice.

While on an approved Leave of Absence, a registrant's name will remain on the PACFA Register; however, as they are non-practising, their contact details will not be publicly displayed and their registration status will be recorded as "**On Leave.**"

Registrants whose registration has lapsed and who have not been on an approved Leave of Absence are subject to the **Reactivation Policy**.

3. Eligibility

Only registrants holding current PACFA registration are eligible to apply for Leave of Absence, subject to the provisions of this policy.

3.1 Leave of Absence for Future Periods

PACFA registrants who intend to be non-practising for a defined period may apply for a Leave of Absence for a period of up to three (3) years. Where a longer period is required, a new application must be submitted prior to the expiry of the approved leave.

Applicants must provide a valid reason for the Leave of Absence, which may include parental or family leave, study or professional development commitments, compassionate circumstances, extended travel, illness or incapacity, or other approved personal or professional circumstances.

3.2 Retrospective Leave of Absence

Registrants who have become non-practising during a current membership year may apply for retrospective Leave of Absence.

Retrospective Leave of Absence will not be approved where a registrant has continued to practise and is seeking to avoid compliance with annual renewal requirements, including supervision and continuing professional development (CPD) obligations.

3.3 Ineligible Applicants

Registrants whose PACFA registration has lapsed and who were not on an approved Leave of Absence are not eligible under this policy and must apply under the Reactivation Policy.

4. Conditions of Leave of Absence

The following conditions apply to registrants on an approved Leave of Absence:

4.1 Client Contact

Registrants on Leave of Absence must not engage in client contact during the approved leave period. Client contact refers to the provision of therapy within a therapeutic relationship for which client consent has been obtained, whether paid or voluntary.

4.2 Representation as a PACFA Registrant

Registrants on Leave of Absence must not advertise or represent themselves as a PACFA registrant during the approved leave period.

4.3 Renewal Requirements

While on approved Leave of Absence, registrants are not required to meet the annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and supervision requirements for that period.

Registrants are expected to complete the required CPD and supervision for the portion of the membership year prior to commencing their leave. Recency of Practice requirements continue to apply and are not paused during the leave period.

4.4 Insurance

Registrants must ensure that appropriate Professional Indemnity Insurance arrangements are maintained during the leave period.

Although registrants may not be practising during this time, claims may arise in relation to services provided prior to the leave period. Registrants are encouraged to contact their insurer directly to confirm the type and level of insurance cover required, as arrangements may vary depending on individual circumstances

4.5 Returning from Leave of Absence

Registrants must submit a [Return from Leave of Absence Application Form](#) and obtain approval from PACFA prior to resuming practice. Registration status will be updated to Active on the PACFA Register once the application has been approved and relevant requirements have been met.

5. Application and Fees

Applicants must complete and submit the [PACFA Leave of Absence Application Form](#), and pay any relevant fees prior to assessment. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application.

6. Submission of Application for Leave of Absence

To submit an application for Leave of Absence, an applicant must complete the appropriate application form and use the PACFA website to upload any required documentation. All Leave of Absence applications are subject to assessment by PACFA.

PACFA retains authority to:

- Assess eligibility for Leave of Absence
- Determine the adequacy and relevance of information submitted
- Approve, refuse, or impose conditions on a Leave of Absence

Eligibility does not guarantee approval. Decisions are made in accordance with PACFA's standards and policies.

7. More Information

For more information about this process contact the Registration and Membership Manager or Membership team at membership@pacfa.org.au

8. Associated Links

1. [Registration Standards & Associated Registration Standards](#)
2. [PACFA Leave of Absence Application Form](#)
3. [Return from Leave of Absence Application Form](#)