

PROCEDURE: Using “Request for Excused Absence” Letter
STUDENTS WITH PARENTS DEPLOYING TO/FROM WAR ZONE IAW GA DEPT OF EDUCATION RULE 160-5-1-.10

1. **Introduction:** School attendance is strictly enforced in Georgia. Georgia Dept of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10 (attached/Effective 29 Aug 2007) permits students of military parents to spend up to five (5) excused absences per school year with their parent before or after a deployment into a war zone as an “excused absence”. Form letters have been developed to document use of this program. These are available electronically on Airman & Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) Common Drive (under *Dependent Education*)
2. **Point of Contact (POC):** The School Liaison Officer (SLO) or A&FRC staffer designated to perform these duties is POC for processing all “Request for Excused Absence” requests. Completed requests are filed by school year and maintained for one additional year.
3. **Procedure:** Personnel, families, and/or units may choose one of the following options.
 - a. **Option 1:** Spouses may initiate the “Request for Excused Absence” before the sponsor returns.
 - (1) Spouse completes the letter to include specific dates desired. Ensure writing is legible.
 - (2) She/he signs it, prints her/his name and then takes it to the squadron for signature by either the Commander or First Sergeant.
 - (3) The signed letter is taken to SLO’s office OR may be scanned at the squadron and emailed to the SLO.
 - (4) The SLO will FAX or e-mail the “Request” to the District Superintendent; will report his/her decision by calling spouse.
 - b. **Option 2:** The “Request for Excused Absence” letters initiated from the AOR before redeployment.
 - (1) Mbr completes the letter to include specific dates desired at deployed location. Ensure writing is legible.
 - (2) He/she signs it, prints name and takes it to deployed Commander/First Sergeant for signature
 - (3) The signed letter is scanned and emailed to the SLO.
 - (4) The SLO e-mails the scanned “Request” to the District Superintendent; calls the spouse (in local area) and sends a courtesy email to deployed member.
 - c. **Option 3:** The “Request for Excused Absence” letters are initiated right before or right after sponsor’s redeployment.
 - (1) Mbr or spouse completes the letter with specific dates desired. Ensure writing is legible.
 - (2) He/she signs letter, prints name and takes it to squadron for signature by Commander/First Sergeant
 - (3) The signed letter is then taken to SLO’s office or may be scanned and emailed to SLO.
 - (4) The SLO FAX’s or e-mails the “Request” to District Superintendent. SLO called spouse/mbr to notify him/her of decision.
4. The District School Superintendent is approval authority for “Requests for Excused Absences” letters.
5. “Request for Excused Absences” for students attending *private schools* are completed, signed and taken to the Principal/Headmaster. These are not processed through the SLO; no copies are maintained. It is recommended that families keep a copy of this letter should any question arise in the future between private school and student over attendance
6. “Request for Excused Absences” should not be scheduled during any state-mandated (e.g., Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests/CRCTs; Georgia High School Writing Test/GHSWT; End of Course Tests/EOCT, etc) testing periods. Requests for these dates have been disapproved. Personnel and/or spouses are strongly encouraged to coordinate with school officials to avoid scheduling conflicts.
7. A “Request for Excused Absence” letter must be submitted and approved in advance of an absence. District Superintendents are not required to approve an “after-the-fact” request.
8. For students in *Lowndes Co and Valdosta City Schools*: Although Georgia Dept of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10 permits these five (5) excused absences, these days will become part of the student’s total attendance record for the school year. As the school year progresses and the number of excused absences near threshold (7), school officials will likely contact a family IAW the “*Lowndes Juvenile Court Protocol Agreement for Truancy in Schools*” (attached). Families are instructed to follow up with any letter/call from school officials. Truancy Officers routinely screen out military families with no further contact unless absences continue to occur.