

# **Tuition Equalization Grant Program**

**REGULATIONS - 600.**

**2008 - 2009 Award Year**



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**Georgia Student Finance Commission  
2082 East Exchange Place  
Tucker, Georgia 30084**

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## **602. Program Overview.**

The Georgia General Assembly created the Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) program, beginning with the 1972-73 Award Year (Fiscal Year 1973). State revenues provide the funding for this program, as authorized each year by the State of Georgia's Annual Operating Budget. During the Legislative Session that precedes each Award Year, the Georgia General Assembly establishes the TEG award amount eligible students will receive for the coming Award Year, and the total amount of funds appropriated to the program for the Fiscal Year. The TEG award amount and total funding for the program can change during the Fiscal Year. The Georgia Student Finance Commission, referred to in these regulations as the "Commission", administers the TEG program, in accordance with the Official Code of Georgia Annotated §20-3-410 et. seq., in its entirety.

Residents of Georgia seeking undergraduate degrees from eligible private colleges and universities, located within the State of Georgia, may receive TEG funds to assist with their Cost of Attendance. TEG recipients must enroll as full-time students (12 hours) in order to receive payment for a school term. The eligibility requirements of the TEG program do not include academic merit, achievement, or financial need criteria. The TEG program results from recognition that facilities of accredited private or independent colleges and universities located within the State of Georgia can be used more effectively in the public interest, by the granting of financial assistance to citizens who choose to attend such colleges and universities, and that the provision of such assistance will reduce the costs to the taxpayers of the state below the cost of providing similar instruction within the University System of Georgia.

The Georgia General Assembly expanded the program, beginning with the 1982-83 Award Year (Fiscal Year 1983), to provide TEG funds for residents of Georgia attending out-of-state public colleges and universities, as college juniors or seniors, who live within 50 miles of the out-of-state campus, but not within 50 miles of the nearest four-year institution of the University System of Georgia.

### **603. Definitions.**

**“Academic Year”** means a period of time, usually eight or nine months, during which a Full-Time student would normally be expected to complete the equivalent of two semesters or three quarters of instruction.

**“Accrediting Agency”** means an association or agency recognized and approved by the Commission to function as an evaluator of the quality of the educational institutions and programs as described in these regulations.

**“Alternative Study”** means course work included in college Degree credit-earning programs of study that require travel outside of the State of Georgia, but within the United States.

**“Appeal”** means a formal written request from a student to the Commission for a review to determine if a rule, policy, or regulation was applied correctly in an individual’s specific case.

**“Associate Degree”** means a two-year college level Degree conferred on students by a postsecondary institution upon completion of a unified program of study in an academic discipline or major at the Undergraduate level. Associate Degrees typically require a student to earn at least 60 semester or 90 quarter hours of college Degree credit.

**“Audit”** means when a student registers for and attends a course for the purpose of personal development, with the understanding and agreement of his or her postsecondary institution that no credit hours or grade will be earned for that course work.

**“Award Date”** means the 15<sup>th</sup> calendar day after the end of an Eligible Postsecondary Institution’s drop/add period of each school term. A student is not eligible for TEG payment unless he or she maintained Full-Time status through the drop/add period and for 14 consecutive calendar days after the drop/add period.

**“Award Year”** means four consecutive quarters or three consecutive semesters, beginning with the summer term and ending with the spring term, or the Non-Standard Term equivalent, or the Non-Term equivalent.

**“Award-Year Reconciliation”** means a final student-by-student reconciliation for an Award Year conducted by Eligible Postsecondary Institutions with the Commission, immediately following the completion of an Award Year.

**“Baccalaureate Degree”** means a four-year college level Degree conferred on students by a postsecondary institution upon completion of a unified program of study in an academic discipline or major at the Undergraduate level.

Baccalaureate (Bachelor's) Degrees typically require a student to earn at least 120 semester or 180 quarter hours of college Degree credit.

**“Board of Regents”** means the governing body overseeing the University System of Georgia (USG).

**“Certificate”** means a credential indicating satisfactory completion of training in a technical program of study offered by a postsecondary educational institution, which is not an Associate or Baccalaureate Degree.

**“Commission”** means the Georgia Student Finance Commission, the agency responsible for administering certain postsecondary educational student financial aid programs offered by the State of Georgia, and other programs for which funds may be appropriated or assigned to it by the State Legislature, or from other sources, from time to time.

**“Continuing Education”** means postsecondary level courses designed for personal development or an extension of the traditional on-campus learning process, and does not lead to a postsecondary Certificate, Diploma, or Degree.

**“Cost of Attendance”** means the estimated expenses, both direct and indirect, which may be incurred by a student to finance the cost of receiving a postsecondary education. These expenses include Tuition, fees, room, meals, books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses, as determined by the Eligible Postsecondary Institution and defined by Federal Title IV Regulations.

**“Degree”** means a two-year Associate Degree or four-year Baccalaureate Degree conferred on students by a postsecondary institution upon completion of a unified program of study in an academic discipline or major at the Undergraduate level.

**“Diploma”** means a credential indicating satisfactory completion of training in a technical program of study offered by a postsecondary institution, which is not an Associate or Baccalaureate Degree.

**“Distance Learning”** means an educational process that is characterized by the separation, in time or place, between instructor and student. It may include courses offered principally through the use of television, audio, video cassettes/discs, correspondence, audio/computer conferencing, and transmission by computer, Internet, open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite.

**“Dual Credit Enrollment”** means a situation whereby an agreement has been established between an Eligible High School and an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, wherein a student Enrolls in postsecondary course work, earning Carnegie Units of credit that count toward high school graduation requirements and simultaneously earning postsecondary credit hours for such course work.

**“Eligible Non-Citizen”** means a person who, in accordance with the Federal Title IV Regulations, is a United States permanent resident with a Permanent Resident Alien Card (I-551 or I-151); or a conditional permanent resident (I-551C); or the holder of an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from the Department of Homeland Security showing any one of the following designations: “Refugee”, “Asylum Granted”, “Parolee” (I-94 confirms paroled for a minimum of one year and status has not expired); or “Cuban-Haitian Entrant”. Victims of human trafficking, in accordance with the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, may also be considered Eligible Non-Citizens. Persons with an F1 or F2 student visa, a J1 or J2 exchange visitor visa, or a G series visa are not Eligible Non-Citizens.

**“Eligible Postsecondary Institution”** means an institution that is:

- (1) a private (independent) non-proprietary (non-profit) postsecondary institution located in Georgia, which is not a unit of the University System of Georgia, which is not a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, which is not a Graduate Level school or college of theology or divinity, and which is accredited or holds candidate status for accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or was previously accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools within the last seven years and which otherwise meets the requirements of this definition, except for the lack of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; or
- (2) a private (independent) proprietary (for-profit) postsecondary institution located in Georgia, which is a Baccalaureate Degree granting postsecondary institution, which is accredited by a regional Accrediting Agency recognized by the United States Department of Education, which is not a Bible school or college (or, at the Graduate Level, a school or college of theology or divinity), which admits as regular students only persons who have a high school diploma, a General Education Development (GED) diploma, or a Degree from an accredited postsecondary institution, whose students are eligible to participate in the Federal Title IV Programs, which has been reviewed and approved for operation and for receipt of Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) funds by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission, and which has been in existence in Georgia for at least ten years; or
- (3) a public postsecondary institution located outside the State of Georgia, which is a four-year Baccalaureate Degree granting institution that is owned and operated by a state other than Georgia, which is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, which is not a Graduate Level school or college of theology or divinity, whose students are eligible to participate in the Federal Title IV Programs, and which is located within 50 road miles, by the nearest practical route of travel, of the home residence of one or more eligible students. Once an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, in any of the three categories, has been approved by the United States Department of Education for participation in the Federal Title IV Programs and then such approval is suspended or

revoked by the United States Department of Education; the institution is ineligible to participate in the TEG program until approval for participation in Federal Title IV Programs has been restored by the United State Department of Education. In order to be classified as an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, such institution must have a valid TEG Participation Agreement on file with the Commission.

**“Enroll”, “Enrolled”, or “Enrollment”** means a student has completed the registration requirements, as defined by the postsecondary institution, except for payment of Tuition and fees.

**“Exception”** means a formal written request from a student to the Commission for a review of the student’s extenuating circumstances and to request approval for TEG payment, despite not having fulfilled the regulatory eligibility requirements of the TEG payment.

**“Federal Title IV Programs”** means the student financial aid programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education that are authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

**“Federal Title IV Regulations”** means federal regulations governing Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Higher Education Amendments of 1998, found in Chapter Six of Title 34 of the Federal Register.

**“Fiscal Year”** means the 12-month period of time commencing each year on July 1<sup>st</sup> and extending through June 30<sup>th</sup> of the succeeding calendar year that represents the State Government of Georgia’s annual budgetary cycle.

**“Freshman”** means a first-year student who is fully admitted and Enrolled in a Matriculated status to seek a college Degree or technical Certificate or Diploma at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution. Typically, a student is classified as a Freshman until he or she has earned at least 30 semester or 45 quarter hours of postsecondary level credit.

**“Full-Time”** means Enrollment for the equivalent of at least 12 quarter or 12 semester hours per school term of postsecondary credit of a Matriculated student at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

**“GCollege411”** means the State of Georgia’s website that provides information on careers, Georgia’s postsecondary institutions, student financial aid, and accesses electronic college and financial aid applications.

**“Georgia Resident” or “Georgia Residency”** means an individual or the status of such individual who is a United States Citizen or Eligible Non-Citizen, and who meets the Georgia residency requirements, according to the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulations* of the Commission, as specified and limited by these program regulations.

**“Graduate Level”** means the postsecondary academic level at which a student is Enrolled in a program of study beyond the Baccalaureate Degree level or in a non-undergraduate program.

**“GSFAPPS”** means Georgia Student Financial Aid Application System, the Commission’s web-based electronic application system by which students can apply for the scholarship, grant, and service-cancelable loan programs administered by the Commission.

**“Home Institution”** means an Eligible Postsecondary Institution in which the student is normally Enrolled and is in a Matriculated status working toward a Degree, Diploma, or Certificate.

**“HOPE”** means Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally, a State of Georgia student financial aid program administered by the Commission to provide non-repayable scholarship and grant assistance to residents of Georgia attending Eligible Postsecondary Institutions in Georgia. HOPE is authorized by the Official Code of Georgia Annotated § 20-3-519 and is funded by State of Georgia Lottery appropriations.

**“Host Institution”** means a postsecondary institution a student is temporarily attending as a Transient student.

**“Incarcerated”** means to be confined by competent public authority or under due legal process. A student is considered Incarcerated if he or she is serving a criminal sentence in a federal, state, or local penitentiary, prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, half-way house, or similar correctional institution (whether operated by the government or a contractor) or is sentenced to home detention.

**“Joint Enrollment”** means a situation whereby a secondary (high school) student is Enrolled in postsecondary level course work with an Eligible Postsecondary Institution while continuing to pursue his or her high school diploma, but the student’s high school has not agreed to accept the postsecondary course work as credit toward the student’s high school graduation requirements.

**“Learning Support”** means remedial course work provided by a postsecondary institution to a student whose entrance or placement evaluation has identified deficiencies in the student’s academic preparation or readiness for specific core curriculum postsecondary level course work.

**“Matriculated”** means a student is fully admitted and Enrolled in an Eligible Postsecondary Institution in a unified academic program of study leading to Degree, Diploma, or Certificate.

**“Military Personnel”** means an active member of the Armed Forces of the United States, including members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Commissioned officers of the Public Health Service or the

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on active duty are also considered to be Military Personnel.

**“Non-Standard Term”** means a school term where all course work is expected to begin and end within a set period of time, but is not a semester, trimester, or quarter term. Non-Standard terms may be of unequal length within an Award Year.

**“Non-Term”** means a program of study measuring progress in clock hours, or a program of study measuring progress in credit hours and has courses that do not begin and end within a set period of time, or has courses that overlap, or has sequential courses that do not begin and end within a term.

**“Paid-Hours”** means the number of quarter or semester hours for which a student received TEG payment. The number of Paid-Hours is used to determine when a student has reached the maximum number of hours he or she is eligible to receive TEG payment.

**“Parent”** means the natural mother or father, adoptive parent, or United States court-appointed legal guardian of a student.

**“Program Review”** means an assessment by the Commission of an Eligible Postsecondary Institution by evaluating the Eligible Postsecondary Institution’s compliance with the regulations governing state programs.

**“Satisfactory Academic Progress”** means the academic standards required of students by their postsecondary institutions in order to be eligible to receive payment from Federal Title IV Programs, in accordance with Federal Title IV Regulations. The standards must include a qualitative component, such as grades, and a quantitative component with a maximum time frame for completion of a student’s program of study (no longer than 150% of the length of the program).

**“Study Abroad”** means postsecondary course work that requires travel outside the United States and for which a student earns credit hours that are accepted toward a program of study leading to a Degree. Study Abroad programs are also referred to by some institutions as International-Intercultural Studies.

**“SURFER”** means the Commission’s web-based system used by Eligible Postsecondary Institutions to electronically transmit and receive student data, award information, and conduct other administrative activities related to the Commission’s scholarship and grant programs.

**“Technical College System of Georgia”** or **“TCSG”** means the State of Georgia’s unified system of public technical colleges, formerly the Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE), which is governed by the Board of Commissioners of the Technical College System of Georgia.

**“TEG”** means the Tuition Equalization Grant program, a State of Georgia student financial aid program administered by the Commission to provide non-repayable grant assistance to residents of Georgia who are Full-Time Undergraduate students attending: (1) private/independent (nonprofit or proprietary) Eligible Postsecondary Institutions located in Georgia, or (2) college level juniors or seniors attending four-year public colleges or universities located outside the State of Georgia, but within 50 miles of Georgia’s borders. The TEG program is authorized by the Official Code of Georgia Annotated § 20-3-410 and is funded by state appropriations.

**“Term-Reconciliation”** means an official acknowledgement by an authorized official of an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, at the end of each school term, that the number of students submitted for payment and amount invoiced by the institution and the number of students awarded and amount issued by the Commission, according to the SURFER system, are accurate on the date of such acknowledgement.

**“Transient”** means a student is attending a Host Institution and is granted temporary admission for the purpose of completing course work and earning postsecondary credit to transfer back to his or her Home Institution toward a Degree, Diploma, or Certificate.

**“Tuition”** means the charges to a student for academic instruction without regard to other fees such as technology, activity, athletic, health, etc.

**“Undergraduate”** means a student who is in attendance at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution and who is in the process of obtaining an Associate Degree or Baccalaureate Degree.

**“University System of Georgia”** or **“USG”** means the State of Georgia’s unified system of public colleges and universities, which are governed by the Board of Regents.

**“Withdrawal Date”** means the date the student withdraws, as determined by the institution. The institution must determine the Withdrawal Date in accordance with the procedures set forth for determining Withdrawal Date under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

## **604. General Eligibility Requirements.**

### **604.1. Citizenship.**

A student must be a United States Citizen or an Eligible Non-Citizen for 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the first day of classes of the school term for which TEG payment is sought.

### **604.2. Georgia Residency.**

- a. A student attending an Eligible Postsecondary Institution meets the Georgia Residency requirements for purposes of TEG eligibility, if he or she meets the criteria of the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulations*. However, a Freshman student with a non-resident Military Personnel Parent meets the Georgia Residency requirements if such student graduated from a high school located in Georgia and his or her Military Personnel Parent was stationed in Georgia at the time of the student's high school graduation. In order to benefit from this exemption, a student must begin receiving TEG payment prior to attempting 30 semester or 45 quarter hours of college credit after high school graduation.
- b. A student, who was correctly determined to meet the Georgia Residency requirements and began receiving TEG payment, will continue to meet the Georgia Residency requirements for purposes of TEG eligibility, unless he or she has a break in Enrollment of two or more consecutive semesters or quarters and resides outside of Georgia for 12 or more consecutive months. If such student later returns to Georgia, he or she must re-establish Georgia Residency for 12 consecutive months, (in accordance with *Section 604.a.*), before regaining TEG eligibility. A student who has a break in Enrollment of two or more consecutive semesters or quarters, and who resides outside Georgia for less than 12 consecutive months, and then later returns to Georgia and Enrolls in an Eligible Postsecondary Institution within 12 consecutive months from his or her most recent date of Enrollment in an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, will continue to meet the Georgia Residency requirements for purposes of TEG eligibility.

### **604.3. Enrollment Status.**

- a. A student must be Enrolled at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution as an Undergraduate in a Matriculated status leading to a Degree.
- b. A student must be classified and Enrolled as Full-Time for 14 consecutive calendar days following the last day of the institution's drop/add period in order to be eligible for TEG payment. To be considered Full-Time, a student must be registered for 12 or more hours and attending classes through 14 consecutive calendar days following the institution's drop/add period. The 15<sup>th</sup> day after the drop/add period is referred to as the Award Date. If a

student officially or unofficially withdraws, drops out, or is expelled prior to the Award Date, he or she is ineligible to receive TEG payment for that school term. If the Eligible Postsecondary Institution is unable to document the student's class attendance to the Award Date, the student is considered to have unofficially withdrawn and is ineligible for TEG payment.

#### **604.4. Satisfactory Academic Progress.**

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in a program of study in accordance with the standards and practices used for Federal Title IV Programs by the Eligible Postsecondary Institution at which such student is Enrolled.

#### **604.5. Selective Service Registration.**

A student must be in compliance with the United States Selective Service System requirements, if such requirements are applicable, prior to the TEG program application deadline in order to be eligible for TEG payment for that school term.

#### **604.6. Defaulted Loan or Refund Due.**

A student must not be in default on a Federal Title IV or State of Georgia educational loan, nor owe a refund on a Federal Title IV or State of Georgia student financial aid program, nor in any other way be in violation of Federal Title IV Regulations or State of Georgia student financial aid program regulations. If such student has repaid the defaulted loan or refund due in full, or resolved the default status, then he or she may be eligible to receive TEG payment beginning with the school term in which repayment was made in full, but not retroactively for previous school terms. A student's default status can be resolved by one of three ways: 1) complete an acceptable rehabilitation plan, 2) having the loan repurchased by the original lender and the default status reversed, 3) by consolidating the loan out of a default status.

#### **604.7. Georgia Drug-Free Act.**

A student convicted of committing certain felony offenses involving marijuana, controlled substances, or dangerous drugs, is ineligible for TEG payment from the date of conviction to the completion of the following school term, in accordance with the Georgia Drug-Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990.

#### **604.8. Incarceration.**

The law governing the TEG program (O.C.G.A. § 20-3-410 et. seq.) does not prohibit students, who are otherwise eligible, from being awarded TEG funds while Incarcerated. The law specifically provides for an exemption for Incarcerated students regarding status as Full-Time students. Incarcerated students are considered Full-Time, for purposes of TEG payment, if Enrolled for 10 hours, rather than 12 hours, per school term.

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## **605. Program Specific Eligibility Requirements.**

### **605.1. Undergraduate Student Eligibility.**

- a. A student Enrolled in a program of study designed to be a 5-year Baccalaureate Degree program, is eligible for TEG payment as an Undergraduate student, if he or she meets all other TEG requirements, including the Paid-Hours limit.
- b. A student Enrolled in a program of study leading to a Doctor of Pharmacy Degree, at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution that does not offer a Baccalaureate Degree in Pharmacy, is eligible for TEG payment as an Undergraduate student (third and fourth years), if he or she meets all other TEG requirements, including the Paid-Hours limit. Upon entering the fifth year, such student is no longer considered an Undergraduate student, for purposes of the TEG program, and is ineligible for TEG payment.
- c. A student Enrolled in Medicine, Dentistry, Law, Optometry, Veterinary, Chiropractic, Podiatry, or other Graduate Level programs of study is not considered an Undergraduate student and is ineligible for TEG payment, even though he or she may not have received a Baccalaureate Degree.

### **605.2. Paid-Hours Limit.**

- a. A student is eligible to receive TEG payment for a maximum of 127 semester or 190 quarter hours of TEG payments, referred to as Paid-Hours.
- b. As part of the invoicing process, Eligible Postsecondary Institutions must report to the Commission the actual number of hours attempted, not just the hours earned, by each student for which TEG payment is requested for a school term. The actual hours attempted, for which a student received TEG payment, are counted as Paid-Hours and are not limited to the minimum Full-Time requirement of 12 hours.
- c. A student is eligible to receive the full amount of the TEG award for a school term in which he or she first exceeds the Paid-Hours limit of 127 semester or 190 quarter hours. For example, if the student has a total of 120 semester of Paid-Hours prior to the beginning of a school term, and he or she attempts 12 semester hours during that school term, then the student is eligible for the full amount of the TEG payment for such term.

### **605.3. Attainment of a Baccalaureate Degree.**

A student is eligible for TEG payment regardless of whether he or she has earned a Baccalaureate Degree. An otherwise eligible student who has already obtained a Baccalaureate Degree, and who is in a Matriculated status working

toward a second or additional Undergraduate Degree, is eligible for TEG payment.

**605.4. Activity Detrimental to the Institution.**

A student who knowingly promotes or engages in any activity that is determined by the Eligible Postsecondary Institution's governing body to be detrimental to the institution is ineligible to receive TEG payment.

**605.5. TEG Payment at Out-of-State Institutions.**

- a. A student, who meets all other TEG eligibility requirements, is eligible to receive TEG payment while attending an Eligible Postsecondary Institution located outside of the State of Georgia.
- b. Such student must be in a Matriculated status at an out-of-state Eligible Postsecondary Institution that is a four-year Baccalaureate Degree granting public institution that is owned and operated by a state other than Georgia.
- c. The out-of-state Eligible Postsecondary Institution must be located within 50 road miles, by the nearest practical route of travel, of such student's home residence.
- d. Such student's home residence must not be located within 50 road miles, by the nearest practical route of travel, of a unit of the University System of Georgia that is classified as a four-year postsecondary institution by the Board of Regents.
- e. The out-of-state Eligible Postsecondary Institution must classify such student as a junior or senior.
- f. Such student must be paying the out-of-state Tuition rate to the Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

## **606. Eligible Course Work.**

### **606.1. Joint and Dual Credit Enrollment Course Work.**

A student seeking a high school diploma, who is simultaneously Enrolled in college Degree level course work as a Joint Enrollment or Dual Credit Enrollment student at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, is eligible for TEG payment for such postsecondary college Degree level course work, if such student meets all TEG eligibility requirements, including Full-Time status at the postsecondary level. Such college Degree level course work credit hours are counted as Paid-Hours.

### **606.2. Learning Support Course Work.**

A student seeking a Degree, who is required by his or her Eligible Postsecondary Institution to participate in Learning Support (remedial) course work, is eligible for TEG payment for such course work, if he or she meets all TEG program eligibility requirements. Learning Support credit hours are counted as Paid-Hours.

### **606.3. Exemption by Examination Course Work.**

A student is ineligible to receive TEG payment for course work that was exempted or given credit by examination, testing, training, or experience.

### **606.4. Distance Learning Course Work.**

A student participating in Distance Learning course work is eligible to receive TEG payment if all other eligibility criteria are met, including Enrollment as a Full-Time (12 hours) student at a private Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

### **606.5. Transient Course Work.**

- a. A Transient student is eligible for TEG payment, if the private Eligible Postsecondary Institution at which he or she is normally Enrolled and Matriculated (Home Institution) has a written agreement with another private Eligible Postsecondary Institution (Host Institution) to transfer the credit hours from the Host Institution, for application toward the student's Degree at the Home Institution. The TEG payment must take place through the Host Institution. The Transient student must be Enrolled as Full-Time (12 hours) at the Host Institution and meet all other TEG eligibility requirements. Less than Full-Time status at the Home Institution and less than Full-Time status at the Host Institution for the same school term cannot be combined to establish Full-Time status.
- b. A Transient student is ineligible for TEG payment, if either the Home Institution or the Host Institution is not a private Eligible Postsecondary Institution approved for participation in the TEG program.

#### **606.6. Study Abroad Course Work.**

- a. A student Enrolled in a Matriculated status at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, who meets all other TEG eligibility requirements, may qualify for TEG payment while participating in a Study Abroad program.
- b. A student's Eligible Postsecondary Institution, which is his or her Home Institution, must approve the Study Abroad program for credit toward the student's Degree program prior to the student's departure.
- c. The TEG award must be the amount the student would normally receive at the Home Institution.
- d. The TEG payment must take place through the Home Institution, unless the student is participating in a Study Abroad program via another private Eligible Postsecondary Institution serving as the student's Host Institution. In this situation, the Host Institution must treat the Study Abroad student as a Transient student, as prescribed by *Section 606.5*. The Home Institution may also coordinate the Study Abroad program through a postsecondary institution that is not an Eligible Postsecondary Institutions. For example, the student's Home Institution may have an arrangement with a Study Abroad program offered by an out-of-state institution or a Georgia public institution. In this case, the TEG payment must take place through the Home Institution, which must be an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, and the student must be considered to be in a Matriculated status by his or her Home Institution.

#### **606.7. Alternative Study Course Work.**

- a. A student Enrolled in a Matriculated status at Eligible Postsecondary Institution may qualify for TEG payment while participating in an Alternative Study program.
- b. A student's Eligible Postsecondary Institution, which is his or her Home Institution, must approve the Alternative Study program for credit toward the student's Degree program prior to the student's departure.
- c. The TEG award must be the amount the student would normally receive at the Home Institution.
- d. TEG payment must take place through the Home Institution, which must be an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, and the student must be considered to be in a Matriculated status by his or her Home Institution.

**606.8. Continuing Education and Audit Course Work.**

- a. A student is ineligible to receive TEG payment for course work classified by his or her Eligible Postsecondary Institution as Continuing Education course work.
- b. A student who Audits a course is ineligible to receive TEG payment for the Audited course.

**606.9. Total Withdrawal from Course Work.**

A student is ineligible for TEG payment for course work from which he or she totally withdrew if, as a result, such course work does not appear on the student's academic transcript as a "Withdrawal" or any other type of identification.

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## **607. Student Application Requirements.**

### **607.1. Application Forms.**

- a. A student must apply for a TEG by completing: (1) the TEG application provided by the GSFAPPS electronic application system, or (2) the HOPE Scholarship application provided by the GSFAPPS electronic application system, or (3) the paper application for TEG/HOPE that is printable from the GAcollge411 website. (Paper TEG/HOPE applications must be forwarded to the Commission for input into the electronic GSFAPPS system.) A student must apply for TEG by completing just one of the three applications identified above, and no other form or application can serve as a substitute. In addition to, but not in replacement of, one of the three applications identified above, an Eligible Postsecondary Institution may require students to complete the institution's application for student financial aid and/or provide supplemental information for the purpose of determining TEG eligibility.
- b. Once a student has submitted a GSFAPPS or paper TEG/HOPE Application, and it has been accepted on the Commission's system as a valid application, it will remain on the Commission's system as a valid application for 72 consecutive months following the application's approval date. The student's application will remain valid during the 72-month period, regardless of whether or not an institution submits a TEG invoice to the Commission on behalf of the student during the 72-month period. Upon conclusion of the 72-month period, the student's application will expire. Once an application has expired, the student will be required to submit a new application in order for a TEG invoice to be processed for the student by the Commission. If during the original application's 72-month period, the student submits to the Commission a new application for TEG, or an application for a program other than TEG, both applications will remain valid for 72 consecutive months following the second application's approval date. The above stipulations of *Section 607.1. Part b.* apply to all GSFAPPS and paper TEG/HOPE Applications accepted as valid applications on the Commission's system, including such applications that were submitted to and accepted by the Commission prior to the 2008-2009 Award Year.
- c. If a student submitted an e-HOPE or e-TEG application in a previous year, it will continue to serve as a valid application for TEG, until November 30, 2011, when, at that time, all e-HOPE and e-TEG applications will expire.
- d. If the Eligible Postsecondary Institution has a paper application on file that was completed before the 2006-2007 Award Year, and it was not submitted to the Commission for data-entry, the Eligible Postsecondary Institution may award on that application, until November 30, 2011, when, at that time, all paper applications completed before the 2006-2007 Award Year, that were not submitted to the Commission for data-entry, will expire.

### **607.2. Application Deadline Date.**

A student must complete and submit a GSFAPPS electronic application, or a file a paper TEG/ HOPE application with the financial aid office of his or her Eligible Postsecondary Institution, on or before the last day of the school term (semester or quarter) or the student's Withdrawal Date, whichever occurs first, in order to be paid for that school term. The last day of the school term is the last day of classes or exams for the institution, whichever occurs later. Supplemental documentation required by the institution or the Commission to support or verify a student's application information may be submitted after the deadline without jeopardizing the student's eligibility.

### **607.3. Application Renewal.**

It is not mandatory, except as provided for in *Section 607.1.b.* of these regulations, for a student to complete a new TEG application for each Award Year. However, Eligible Postsecondary Institutions may require its students to complete a new TEG application each Award Year for renewal.

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## **608. Award Requirements.**

### **608.1. Awards Amounts.**

The TEG award amount for a Full-Time student enrolled for two semesters or three quarters during the 2008-2009 Award Year at a private Eligible Postsecondary Institution shall not exceed a total of \$1,200. However, an eligible student who enrolls for three Full-Time semesters or four Full-Time quarters during the 2008-2009 Award Year may receive TEG payment for three semesters or four quarters during the 2008-2009 Award Year, and his or her total TEG award may exceed \$1,200 for the Award Year, as follows:

	Semester System:	Quarter System:
Summer:	<b>\$600</b>	<b>\$400</b>
Fall:	<b>\$600</b>	<b>\$400</b>
Winter:	-	<b>\$400</b>
Spring:	<b>\$600</b>	<b>\$400</b>

However, the award amounts per semester or quarter are subject to change during the Award Year.

### **608.2. Awards Per School Term.**

TEG payment is available to students for the standard school terms of Summer, Fall, and Spring semesters or Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters. An Eligible Postsecondary Institution may combine mini-terms or modules to form the equivalent of a standard semester or quarter. An institution may offer Non-Standard Terms or Non-Terms, in which courses or modules are taken consecutively to form the equivalent of a standard semester or quarter. Regardless of the structure of an Eligible Postsecondary Institution's school terms, a student may only be awarded TEG funds for a maximum of three semesters or four quarters per Award Year.

### **608.3. Student Notification of Award.**

An Eligible Postsecondary Institution, participating in the TEG program, must notify each TEG recipient of the amount of TEG funds he or she is awarded for the Award Year, and identify such funds as a Tuition Equalization Grant award.

### **608.4. Adjustments to Award Amounts.**

A student's TEG award amount shall not be reduced or withheld because of other aid the student may be receiving, even if the student's total aid exceeds the student's Cost of Attendance. (Refer to *Section 609.3.*)

**608.5. Insufficient Funding.**

Should TEG funds available to the Commission from state appropriations be insufficient to fulfill TEG payments for all eligible students for the Fiscal Year, it may be necessary to reduce the TEG award amounts payable to students for a particular school term or terms or to eliminate TEG payments, all together, for a school term or terms.

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## **609. Invoicing Requirements.**

### **609.1. Submission of Invoices.**

An Eligible Postsecondary Institution may submit invoices to the Commission as early as 15 days prior to the first day of classes for the school term. This provision does not release an Eligible Postsecondary Institution from its responsibility to verify the Enrollment requirements of *Section 604.3*.

### **609.2. Payment of Invoices.**

Upon submission of a valid invoice to the Commission, funds are paid to an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, on behalf of eligible invoiced students for a school term, by method of check or electronic transfer of funds.

### **609.3. Payment to Students.**

TEG funds may be applied to any of the Eligible Postsecondary Institution's direct charges, such as Tuition, fees, room and meals. If a student does not owe a balance, the institution shall pay over the same or any remaining amount of the TEG award to the student.

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## **610. Refund Requirements.**

### **610.1. Calculation of Refund Amounts.**

- a. If the student officially withdraws, drops out, drops hours, is expelled, or otherwise fails to complete a period of Enrollment, and is entitled to a refund, a portion of such refund may need to be returned to the institution's TEG fund.
- b. If the student received Federal Title IV funds, in addition to TEG funds, the institution must first apply the Federal Title IV Return of Funds policy for any federal aid received. To determine the refund to TEG, the institution must then apply the institution's refund policy, if different from Federal Title IV Return of Funds policy, to the student's original TEG award.
- c. If the student received TEG funds, but did not receive Federal Title IV funds, the institution must apply the institution's refund policy, if different from Federal Title IV Return of Funds policy, to the student's original TEG award.
- d. The Eligible Postsecondary Institution must determine the amount of the TEG refund, post the refund on the student's record in the Commission's system within 45 days of the determination, and return that amount to the Commission at the time of the End-of-Year Reconciliation. The remainder of the TEG award is retained by the institution to cover the institution's cost for the portion of the school term that the student was Enrolled.

### **610.2. Collection of Refunds.**

A student who owes a refund to the Commission should pay the Eligible Postsecondary Institution and the Eligible Postsecondary Institution should pay the Commission or, at its sole discretion, the Commission may require the student to pay the refund directly to the Commission. Nothing herein shall be deemed to prohibit the Commission or the Eligible Postsecondary Institution from using all available legal and equitable remedies to collect the refund.

### **610.3. Unavailable Evidence.**

If later evidence, not available at the time of awarding, indicates that a student should not have received the TEG payment, then all future TEG awards must be canceled. The Eligible Postsecondary Institution is held harmless by the Commission, if the student's file is appropriately documented with available evidence and it is determined by the Commission that the institution was not at fault. Evidence is considered unavailable at the time of awarding if it is not available in the student's institutional files (i.e. financial aid, admissions, registrar, etc.). The institution must notify the student and the Commission of a refund due. The student is ineligible to receive additional state aid from the Commission until the refund is paid in full, in accordance with *Section 610.2*.

#### **610.4. Emergency Military Duty.**

A student who is a member of the U.S. Armed Services, National Guard, or Armed Forces Reserve receiving funds from the TEG program who is called to emergency military duty during a school term that is already in progress should not have their TEG eligibility negatively impacted by the loss of Paid-Hours. If the Eligible Postsecondary Institution the student attends allows the student to totally withdraw and receive a grade such as “WM” for “military withdrawal” or the institution totally removes all course work for that term (grades and corresponding credit hours) from the student’s records, the institution should cancel the student’s TEG award on SURFER, and return the full amount of the student’s TEG payment to the institution’s TEG account. This regulation may also be applied to students who are not members of the military but are otherwise unusually and detrimentally affected by the emergency activation of members of the military, as determined by the president of the Eligible Postsecondary Institution that such student is attending.

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## **611. Reconciliation Requirements.**

### **611.1. Term-Reconciliation.**

An Eligible Postsecondary Institution must conduct a Term-Reconciliation prior to the end of each term. A Term-Reconciliation consists of an official acknowledgement by an authorized school official that the number of students and amount invoiced by the institution and the number of students awarded and amount issued by the Commission, according to the SURFER system, is accurate on that date. The Commission will not issue TEG funds for the following school term until the Term-Reconciliation is complete. Surplus funds are not returned to the Commission as part of the Term-Reconciliation process.

### **611.2. Award-Year Reconciliation.**

In addition to the Term-Reconciliations, the Eligible Postsecondary Institution must conduct the Award-Year Reconciliation. The institution must conduct a complete student-by-student Award-Year Reconciliation with the Commission, and submit a Reconciliation Certification Form to the Commission by August 1, immediately following the completion of the Award Year.

### **611.3. Return of Funds.**

The institution must return to the Commission any TEG funds not utilized according to the Award-Year Reconciliation within 30 days of completing the Award-Year Reconciliation process. The institution must have a procedure in place to ensure that the TEG funds do not go to an unintended third party (i.e. State, institution).

## **612. Records Retention Requirements.**

### **612.1. Length of Retention.**

An Eligible Postsecondary Institution shall maintain accurate records, books, documents and other evidence concerning the TEG program, including, but not limited to individual student files for the later of three years after the Award Year in which the aid was awarded; or for such other period as required by an applicable statute, rule, or regulation; or such other time as requested in writing by the Commission.

### **612.2. Documentation.**

Documentation contained within an individual student file or record, which supports the original determination of a student's eligibility must be retained by the institution and available for review by the Commission on the institution's campus, located within the State of Georgia, for at least three years after the most recent Award Year for which the student received TEG funds. (Refer to *Section 614.*) Institutions are permitted to maintain these documents in an imaged media format. The imaged media format must be capable of reproducing an accurate, legible, and complete copy of the original document.

Such documentation may include, but is not limited to, copies of Permanent Resident Alien Cards, Georgia State Income Tax Returns, and applications for student financial aid. Documentation regarding a student's eligibility is not limited to files, records, and other information received and maintained by the institution's Student Financial Aid Office. Documentation supporting a student's eligibility that is received and maintained by the institution's Admissions Office, Registrars Office, Business Office, and other administrative operations of the institution must be available to the Commission for the purpose of Program Reviews. It is the institution's responsibility to resolve any inconsistencies or conflicting information within a student's records, prior to awarding or disbursing TEG funds to the student.

### **612.3. Extended Retention.**

An institution must retain student records involved in a Program Review, audit, or investigation for more than the three-year retention period, described above, if the three-year retention period expires before the issue in question is resolved. The institution must continue to retain all associated records until resolution is reached.

## **613. Appeals and Exceptions.**

### **613.1. Appeals.**

The Tuition Equalization Grant Program Regulations are applied to each student considered for TEG funds by appropriate officials of Eligible Postsecondary Institutions and by the administrative staff of the Commission. If a student believes a TEG rule or regulation was incorrectly applied in his or her case, the student has the right to file an Appeal with the Commission. The Commission will review the case and determine whether the rule or regulation was applied correctly and notify the student and institution of the determination.

In order for an Appeal to be considered, the student must write a request for an Appeal to the Commission office within 45 days of receiving notice of denial. If additional information is requested from the student, it must be provided within the time frame specified by the Commission. The Commission decides a case based only on documentation provided, rather than a personal presentation.

### **613.2. Exceptions.**

Requests for Exceptions to the Tuition Equalization Grant Program Regulations cannot be considered, reviewed, or granted under any circumstances.

#### **614. Program Reviews.**

The Commission shall conduct Program Reviews of Eligible Postsecondary Institutions participating in the TEG program in order to assess institutional administration of the program and compliance with the program's regulations. The Commission selects a sampling of the institution's TEG recipients, for the Award Year under review, and the institution's files and records for the sample are examined to assure compliance. Each Eligible Postsecondary Institution must have all student-records, which document and support the eligibility of that institution's TEG recipients, available for review by the Commission on the campus of the Eligible Postsecondary Institution, and such campus must be located within the State of Georgia. (Refer to *Section 612.*) If a recipient is determined to have been ineligible for payment, the institution may be required to repay to the Commission the funds awarded to the recipient. The recipient, rather than the institution, may owe the repayment to the Commission, as described in *Section 610.3.* of these regulations.

Detailed information regarding the Commission's Program Review process and procedures is available on the *gsfc.org* website, under *School and Lender Information - Compliance Documents.*

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