

Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant

REGULATIONS

2008 - 2009 Award Year



Effective Date – July 1, 2008



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

2008- 2009 AWARD YEAR
LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL DEPENDENTS (LEPD) GRANT
REGULATIONS

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LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL DEPENDENTS GRANT

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Georgia's Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents (LEPD) Grant program was created to provide educational grant assistance to the dependent children of law enforcement personnel, firefighters, and corrections officers/prison guards permanently disabled or killed in the line of duty who plan to attend eligible public and private institutions in Georgia. LEPD is funded by State Appropriations. The program began with the Fall Term of 1972 (FY 1973), as authorized by Official Code of Georgia Annotated § 20-3-450 et. seq.

The award amount received by the students each academic year, and the total amount of funds appropriated for the program, are established each year by the Georgia General Assembly during the preceding legislative session. The maximum grant assistance for which a student is eligible is \$2,000 per academic year, not to exceed a total of \$8,000 for four academic years.

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I. DEFINITIONS

As used in these regulations, and unless the context requires a different meaning:

“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.

“Application Deadline Date” means the last date on which a student can file an application for a grant.

“Audit Student” means a student who enrolls in a course for personal development and who does not earn college credit or a grade for the course.

“Award Year” means four consecutive quarters or three consecutive semesters, beginning with the summer term and ending with the spring term.

“Certificate” means a credential indicating satisfactory completion of training in an organized technical program of study offered by a postsecondary educational institution, which is not an associate or baccalaureate degree.

“Commission” means 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.

“Degree” means a two-year associate degree or four-year bachelor’s degree conferred on students by a postsecondary educational institution upon completion of an organized program of study at the undergraduate level.

“Diploma” means a credential indicating satisfactory completion of training in an organized technical program of study offered by a postsecondary educational institution, which is not an associate or baccalaureate degree.

“Early Admissions” means a program in which a high school student enrolls as a full-time postsecondary student and pursues a postsecondary degree in lieu of a high school diploma or simultaneously fulfills requirements for obtaining a high school diploma.

“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 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 Student” means a resident of Georgia who is attending an eligible postsecondary educational institution in Georgia and who meets all of the other eligibility requirements of these regulations.

“Eligible Postsecondary Institution” means a college, university, technical college, hospital school of nursing, or other hospital school located in the State of Georgia and meeting all of the institutional eligibility requirements outlined in these regulations.

“Federal Title IV Programs” means 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.

“Full-Time Student” means a matriculated student attending an eligible postsecondary educational institution who is enrolled for the equivalent of at least 12 quarter or semester hours, or a minimum of 25 clock hours per week for those institutions not utilizing the quarter or semester systems, and meeting all of the other full-time student requirements outlined in these regulations.

“Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant” or “GTEG” means a State of Georgia program providing non-repayable grant awards to residents of Georgia who are full-time undergraduate students attending eligible private colleges and universities in Georgia.

“Graduate Student” means a student who is in the process of attaining an academic degree beyond the bachelor’s degree.

“Joint Enrollment” means an arrangement between a high school and a postsecondary institution wherein a student enrolls in postsecondary classes and earns Carnegie units of credit that count toward high school graduation requirements and hours of postsecondary credit.

“Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant” or “LEPD Grant” means a State program of non-repayable grants to Georgia residents who are dependent children of law enforcement officers, firefighters, or corrections officers/prison guards who were permanently disabled or killed in the line of duty.

“Matriculated Status” means the student is a recognized candidate for an appropriate degree, diploma or certificate at eligible postsecondary educational institutions as outlined in these regulations.

“Parent” means the natural mother or father, adoptive parent, and/or legal guardian whom a court has directed to provide financial support to the student.

“Resident of Georgia” means a United States citizen or Eligible Non-Citizen who is domiciled in the State of Georgia and meets all of the other residency requirements

outlined in the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulations and Section I* of these regulations.

“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).

“Transient Student” means a visiting student enrolled in another institution who is granted temporary admission for the purpose of completing work to transfer back to the home institution; one who expects to return to the institution in which he or she was previously enrolled.

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

“Undergraduate Student” means a student who is in attendance at an eligible postsecondary institution and who is in the process of obtaining an associate degree, a bachelor’s degree, a diploma, or a certificate.

“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.

II. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

CITIZENSHIP

A student must be a United States citizen or an Eligible Non-Citizen, according to Federal Title IV requirements, for 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the first day of classes of the school term for which the LEPD Grant is sought. The Eligible Postsecondary Institution a student is attending cannot waive the requirements of this section.

RESIDENCY

A student must be a resident of Georgia, in accordance with the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulations*, for a minimum of 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the first day of classes of the school term for which the LEPD Grant is sought.

ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION

The student must be enrolled or accepted for admission in an eligible postsecondary educational institution located in the State of Georgia as specified in *Section II* of these regulations.

FULL-TIME STUDENT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The student must be fully admitted, classified and enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student. A student in full-time attendance as specified in these regulations may be enrolled in courses that are remedial in nature or undertaken to remove entrance conditions. If such remedial and/or non-credit study is required or recommended by the educational institution as part of the regular instructional program for that student, he or she may be considered eligible. However, non-credit courses taken entirely on a personal or voluntary basis by the student shall not be included in determining full-time status of the student.

Full-time enrollment is required during the final school term in the same manner as any other school term, even if the student needs less than a full program in order to complete graduation requirements. In certifying full-time attendance, the educational institution bears a responsibility for wise discretion to assure conformity with the intent of the law.

MATRICULATED STATUS OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

The student must be in a “matriculated status” in an organized program of study leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate approved for that award. The student is considered “matriculated” when he or she is fully accepted by the institution and enrolled in courses fully recognized at that time as contributing toward requirements for completion of the program. The student, who may be required to complete certain courses to make up for deficiencies in background or training and yet is recognized by the institution as a degree, certificate, or diploma candidate, is not considered to be

fully matriculated by the Commission and would not be eligible for an LEPD Grant if credit toward the degree, certificate, or diploma is conditional upon satisfactory completion of certain special requirements.

STUDY ABROAD AND OUT-OF-STATE PROGRAMS

Students enrolled full-time in a matriculating status at eligible postsecondary institutions are eligible for grant payment, even though they may not be physically present in Georgia during all or part of the term. The student's institution must approve for credit the study abroad/out-of-state program. The student's award must be owed or paid through the home institution. Those who meet all of the above requirements are eligible to receive payment for a maximum of two semesters or three quarters while studying outside of the State of Georgia.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS AND STANDING OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

A full-time student is academically qualified to receive an award during any given term for which he or she is matriculated in an approved organized program of study. The student must maintain satisfactory academic progress in a course of study in accordance with the standards and practices of the institution the student is enrolled. To determine student eligibility for state grant programs, the institution must apply the same Satisfactory Academic Progress policy as used for federal Title IV programs.

ACADEMIC LEVELS OF ELIGIBLE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Students enrolled in programs such as engineering or pharmacy, which are typically designed to be five-year baccalaureate degree programs, are eligible as undergraduates. EXCEPTION: Students entering a school of pharmacy that does not grant a baccalaureate degree will be eligible for an LEPD Grant for two years, or 110 quarter or 74 semester hours. Upon entering the fifth year, such students will not be eligible for an LEPD Grant.

A student matriculating for a degree in medicine, dentistry, law, optometry, veterinary, chiropractic, or podiatry is considered a graduate student, and ineligible for an LEPD Grant, even though the student may not have yet received an undergraduate degree.

JOINT ENROLLMENT AND EARLY ADMISSION STUDENTS

A student meeting all of the eligibility requirements of these regulations, who is enrolled in a secondary educational institution (high school) and who is then permitted to enroll in an eligible postsecondary institution on a joint-enrollment or an early admission basis, is eligible to receive a grant award provided he or she meets the matriculated status criterion of these regulations and meets all other eligibility requirements, including full-time status.

AUDIT AND TRANSIENT STUDENTS

The "special" or "irregular" student is not eligible for assistance. Examples of the special student include the audit student, the transient student, and any student

deemed by the postsecondary educational institution not to be in a “matriculated status.”

SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION

A student must meet federal Selective Service registration requirements.

DEFAULT AND REFUND

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 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.

DRUG-FREE ACT

A student is ineligible if, in accordance with the Drug-Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990, he or she has been convicted for committing certain felony offenses involving marijuana, controlled substances, or dangerous drugs. A student is ineligible to receive an LEPD Grant from the date of conviction to the completion of the next academic term. Institutions are not required to obtain criminal justice records of LEPD applicants.

PARENT KILLED OR DISABLED

To be eligible for an LEPD Grant:

1. A student applicant must be the natural or adopted child of a law enforcement officer, firefighter, or corrections officer/prison guard who has been permanently disabled or killed in the line of duty, or while performing the duties as to which he or she was assigned in the normal course of employment.
2. For a student who is the adopted child of any such law enforcement officer, firefighter, or corrections officer/prison guard, any final order of adoption must have been issued prior to the date of the event or accident causing the death or permanent disability of such parent.
3. A student’s parent who is a deceased or permanently disabled law enforcement officer, firefighter, or corrections officer/prison guard must have been an employee, either full or part-time, or an officer or official, whether elected or appointed by the State of Georgia, of any county, municipality, department, board, bureau, branch, agency, commission, authority, or political subdivision of the state on the date of the accident or event from which death or permanent disability resulted.

III. ELIGIBLE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Any branch of the University System of Georgia and private college or university located in Georgia and which is eligible to participate in the Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant program is eligible for participation in the Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents grant program.

HOSPITAL SCHOOLS OF NURSING

All non-profit hospital schools of nursing located in Georgia which are accredited by the National League for Nursing, Inc., or whose graduates are authorized by State law to become licensed as a registered nurse through the Board of Examiners of Nurses in Georgia are eligible to participate.

OTHER HOSPITAL SCHOOLS

All other non-profit hospital schools located in Georgia whose program of study is accredited by the national association collaborating with the AMA Council on Medical Education are eligible for participation.

TECHNICAL COLLEGES

All state-supported technical postsecondary educational institutions that are a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia are eligible to participate.

IV. LEPD APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. The student or other family member shall complete a Preliminary Information and Documentation Report provided by the Commission.
2. The Commission shall request documentation of the circumstances surrounding the death or claim to permanent disability of the parent while in the line of duty from the sources named by the family on the Preliminary Information and Documentation Report.
3. The Commission shall review the completed file to verify and determine the eligibility of the claim of the student applicant for an LEPD Grant and notify the student or family of the determination.
4. If the student meets the eligibility requirements, the Commission shall provide the student with a Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant Application. After the student completes the application, it is forwarded to the institution for certification. The institution then forwards the application to the Commission.
5. The student shall also submit a photocopy of his or her certificate of live birth.

6. A student must file the application online or in the institution's financial aid office on or before the last day of the academic term (semester or quarter) or the student's withdrawal date, whichever occurs first, in order to be paid for that academic term. The last day of the academic 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.
7. The student and institution will receive a notice of award from the Commission.

V. MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY

1. The student must continue to make satisfactory academic progress and meet all of the other eligibility requirements set forth in *Section I* of these regulations.
2. The student must submit a renewal application to the Commission for subsequent periods of study at such times as designated by the Commission.

VI. LEPD AWARD AMOUNTS

ACADEMIC YEAR AMOUNTS

The amount of grant payable to an eligible student under the LEPD program is \$2,000 per academic year as specified in the General Appropriations Act. Grants shall be provided on a school-term basis, as follows:

	<u>Semester System</u>	<u>Quarter System</u>
Summer Term	\$1,000	\$ 666
Fall Term	\$1,000	\$ 667
Winter Term	-----	\$ 667
Spring Term	\$1,000	\$ 666

GRANT LIMITATIONS

The maximum grant assistance for which a student is eligible shall not exceed a total of \$8,000.

VII. PAYMENT OF LEPD AWARDS BY THE COMMISSION

1. The student's award is prorated according to the number of quarters or semesters of attendance during the academic year, as follows:
 - a. QUARTER SYSTEM: Students enrolled in schools employing the quarter system will receive each school term one third (1/3) of the student's maximum entitlement for the regular academic year.

- b. SEMESTER SYSTEM: Students enrolled in schools employing the semester system will receive each school term one-half (1/2) of the student's maximum entitlement for the regular academic year.
2. LEPD awards are payable to student recipients on a school-term basis. Individual student checks for each school term award amount are mailed to the eligible institution for disbursement to the student recipients during the school term registration process.
3. The educational institution must return un-disbursed checks to the Commission within 45 days following the school term registration process, or within 45 days after receipt of the checks if the school term is in progress.

VIII. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION HANDLING OF LEPD CHECKS

LOSS OF LEPD AWARD CHECK

In the event an LEPD check is lost, either by the school, through the mail, or by the student, the procedures described below should be followed:

1. The appropriate school official must contact the Commission and request a replacement check.
1. After following normal verification procedures that the lost check has not been cashed, the Commission will place a "Stop Payment" order on the original check. A replacement check will then be issued to the school for delivery to the student.
2. If the original check should subsequently be found, it should be voided and returned to the Commission.

UNCLAIMED OR UNCASHED CHECKS

1. Any checks issued on behalf of a student who fails to claim his or her check within the 45-day period allowed after registration day, or after receipt of the check, whichever is later, must be returned to the Commission immediately at the close of the 45-day period.
2. Students who fail to cash their checks within the 90-day period indicated on the face of the check lose the right to receive awards for the term in question.

IX. LEPD REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURES

If a student withdraws from school or drops below full-time attendance during the drop-add period of the school and is entitled to a refund in accordance with the institution's refund policy, such refund may become payable to the Commission. The amount of refund due the Commission, if any, should be determined as outlined below:

GTEG AWARD

If a student also has a GTEG award, as in the case of private college and university students, first apply the refund policy for the GTEG program to the net cost to the student, and then determine if any of the remaining portion of that cost is due to be refunded under the LEPD program according to the formula below.

LEPD REFUND FORMULA

Direct Institutional Charges to Student (Tuition, Fees, Room and Board) **minus**
Amount of Institutional Refund Due to Student **equals** Net Cost to Student.

IF NET COST TO STUDENT EXCEEDS STUDENT'S TERM LEPD AWARD

Result: No refund is due Commission for student.

IF NET COST TO STUDENT IS LESS THAN STUDENT'S TERM LEPD AWARD

**Result: Refund to the Commission the difference between
Net Charge to student and Student's Term LEPD Award.**

LEPD REFUND EXAMPLES

The LEPD Semester/Quarter Refund Examples are as follows:

	Example A (Semester System)	Example B (Quarter System)
DIRECT CHARGES FOR THE TERM	\$1,300	\$400
INSTITUTION'S REFUND DUE ON BEHALF OF STUDENT (after the GTEG Refund Policy is applied, if applicable):	<u>\$ 200</u>	<u>\$350</u>
TOTAL NET COST TO THE STUDENT	\$1,100	\$ 50
LEPD AWARD FOR THE SCHOOL TERM	\$1,000	\$666
MINUS NET COST TO THE STUDENT SHOWN ABOVE	<u>\$1,100</u>	<u>\$ 50</u>
TOTAL REFUND DUE GSFA	\$ 0	\$616

REMITTANCE OF REFUND

The institution must have a procedure in place to ensure that the LEPD funds do not go to an unintended third party (i.e. State, institution).

In remitting refunds due the Commission, the following information should be given:

1. The name of the student, and the name of the award being refunded.
2. The Social Security Number of the student.
3. The date the student withdrew or dropped a course, and the term being repaid.

X. RECORDS RETENTION

- a. An Eligible Postsecondary Institution shall maintain accurate records, books, documents and other evidence concerning the LEPD Grant 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.
- b. 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 calendar years after the most recent Award Year for which the student received LEPD funds. 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.
- c. Such documentation may include, but is not limited to, copies of Permanent Resident Alien Cards, Georgia State Income Tax Returns, student financial aid applications and academic transcripts from previous institutions. 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 review. It is the institution's responsibility to resolve any inconsistencies or conflicting information within a student's records, prior to awarding or disbursing LEPD funds to the student.
- d. An institution may be required to 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.