

# **Economic Development Scholarship Program**

## **REGULATIONS – 2100.**

**2009 - 2010 Award Year**



**Effective Date – July 1, 2009**



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

## **2101. Table of Contents.**

Section	Page
2100. Economic Development Scholarship Program	1
2101. Table of Contents.	2
2102. Program Overview.	5
2103. Definitions.	6
2104. General Eligibility Requirements.	13
2104.1. Citizenship.	13
2104.2. Georgia Residency.	13
2104.3. Enrollment Status.	13
2104.4. Satisfactory Academic Progress.	14
2104.5. Selective Service Registration.	14
2104.6. Defaulted Loan or Refund Due.	14
2104.7. Georgia Drug-Free Act.	14
2104.8. Incarceration.	14
2105. Program Specific Eligibility Requirements.	15
2105.1. Eligible Candidates.	15
2105.2. Scholastic Requirements.	15
2105.3. First-Year Level Scholastic Requirements.	15
2105.4. Upper Level Scholastic Requirements.	15
2105.5. ED Scholarship Paid-Hours Limit.	15
2105.6. Attainment of a Baccalaureate Degree.	15
2106. Eligible Coursework.	16
2106.1. Learning Support Coursework.	16
2106.2. Coursework Exemptions.	16
2106.3. Distance Learning Coursework.	16

2106.4. Continuing Education and Audit Coursework.	16
2106.5. Board of Regent's Test Preparation Coursework.	16
2106.6. Total Withdrawal from Coursework.	16
2107. Student Application Requirements.	17
2107.1. Application Forms.	17
2107.2. Application Deadline Date.	17
2108. Award Requirements.	18
2108.1. USG or TCSG Institution Awards.	18
2108.2 Private Postsecondary Institution Awards.	19
2108.3 Awards Per School Term.	19
2109. Disbursement of Funds.	21
2109.1. School Term Disbursements.	21
2109.2. Method of Payment.	21
2110. Student Refunds.	22
2110.1. Calculation of Refunds.	22
2110.2. Collection of Refunds.	22
2111. Reconciliation Requirements.	23
2111.1. Award-Year Reconciliation.	23
2111.2. Return of Funds.	23
2112. Records Retention Requirements.	24
2112.1. Length of Retention.	24
2112.2. Documentation.	24
2112.3. Extended Retention.	24
2113. Appeals and Exceptions.	25
2113.1. Filing an Appeal or Exception.	25
2113.2. Appeals.	25

2113.3. Exceptions.	25
2114. Compliance Reviews.	26
2114.1. Compliance Review Policy.	26
2114.2 Compliance Review Process.	26
2114.3 Institutional Repayment.	26

## **2102. Program Overview.**

The Economic Development Scholarship Program provides academic-based postsecondary educational scholarship funds to students identified as Eligible Candidates by the Department of Economic Development (DEcD). The Economic Development Scholarship Program supports and enhances DEcD efforts to promote trade, economic development, tourism, and business within the State of Georgia.

The Georgia Student Finance Commission, referred to in these regulations as the "Commission", is responsible for the administration of the Economic Development Scholarship Program, in accordance with these regulations, and as stipulated by the *Economic Development Scholarship Program Agreement* between the Commission and DEcD. Recipients of these scholarship funds must be enrolled in eligible public or private postsecondary institutions located within Georgia.

Eligible Candidates, who meet all other requirements, may enter the Economic Development Scholarship Program as First-Year Level college students (freshmen) or as undergraduate students beyond the First-Year Level (Upper Level). The scholastic requirement for eligibility at the First-Year Level is based upon the student's secondary (high school) grade point average. The scholastic requirement for eligibility at the Upper Level is based on the student's postsecondary (college) grade point average. The scholarship is awarded to eligible students for the equivalent of one academic year of full-time study (30 semester or 45 quarter hours), and is not renewable.

The Economic Development Scholarship Program Regulations for the 2009-2010 award years were approved by the Board of Commissioners of the Georgia Student Finance Commission, effective July 1, 2009.

### **2103. 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.

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

**“Approved Mandatory Fees”** means fees charged by an Eligible Postsecondary Institution to every student Enrolled at that institution, regardless of their program of study. The Approved Mandatory Fees award amount at each public Eligible Postsecondary Institution is exactly the same as the HOPE-approved mandatory fees for that institution, as defined in the *HOPE Scholarship Program at Public Institutions Regulations*.

**“Associate Degree”** means a two-year 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 credit hours.

**“Attempted-Hours”** means the number of Degree quarter or semester hours, after high school graduation or equivalent, for which a postsecondary student was Enrolled. Degree credit hours attempted by a student prior to high school graduation, are not considered to be Attempted-Hours for purposes of the ED Scholarship Program. For a student who did not earn a high school diploma or equivalent, and is otherwise eligible to enter the ED Scholarship Program at the Upper Level, the Degree credit hours are counted as Attempted-Hours at the point the student stopped pursuing a high school diploma. Credit hours are considered Attempted-Hours regardless of whether or not the course was completed, the hours were earned, or a letter grade was recorded on the student’s official academic transcript. Credit hours are considered Attempted-Hours regardless of whether or not the student receives payment for those hours from the ED Scholarship Program. For purposes of ED Scholarship eligibility, credit hours attempted as part of a technical Certificate or Diploma program of study are only counted as Attempted-Hours if a postsecondary institution ever accepted those hours as credit hours toward a Degree. Credit hours earned by examination are not counted as Attempted-Hours. Continuing Education or Audit coursework is not considered Attempted-Hours. Credit hours earned as a result of military training or experience are not counted as Attempted-Hours, unless such hours were granted or accepted as Degree credit by any postsecondary institution that is separate and independent of the military.

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

**“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 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 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 credit hours.

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

**“Book Allowance”** means ED Scholarship Program funds made available to students attending TCSG or USG institutions to purchase books and/or supplies for their course of study.

**“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 Degree, Baccalaureate Degree, or Graduate 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.

**“Compliance Review”** means an assessment by the Commission of an Eligible Postsecondary Institution by evaluating the Eligible Postsecondary Institution’s compliance with the regulations governing programs administered by the Commission, in accordance with the Commission’s *Compliance Review Process and Procedures* document.

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

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

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

**“Department of Economic Development” or “DEcD”** means the agency or branch of the government of the State of Georgia that is primarily responsible for promoting trade, economic development, tourism, and business within Georgia.

**“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 Degree, Baccalaureate Degree, or Graduate 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.

**“Economic Development Scholarship Program” or “ED Scholarship”** means the academic merit-based and non-repayable postsecondary student financial aid program administered by the Commission, for students who are identified as Eligible Candidates by the Department of Economic Development, and who meet all other requirements of these regulations.

**“Eligible Candidate”** means a student who is identified by the Department of Economic Development as meeting the requirements of the ED Scholarship Program, as specified in *The Economic Development Scholarship Program Agreement* between the Georgia Student Finance Commission and DEcD, and who is nominated by DEcD to the Commission for verification of eligibility and approval by the Commission for payment from the ED Scholarship Program.

**“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.

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

- (1) a unit of the University System of Georgia; or
- (2) a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia; or
- (3) a private non-profit postsecondary institution located in Georgia that is eligible to participate in the Tuition Equalization Grant program, 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
- (4) a private proprietary (for-profit) postsecondary institution located in Georgia that is eligible to participate in the Tuition Equalization Grant program, 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 which is not a Graduate 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 Pell Grant program, which has been reviewed and approved for operation and for receipt of Tuition Equalization Grant funds by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission, and which has been in existence for at least ten years. Once any Eligible Postsecondary Institution 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; such institution is ineligible to participate in the ED Scholarship Programs until approval for participation in Federal Title IV Programs has been restored by the United States Department of Education.

**“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 action by the GSFC Board of Commissioners to waive a specific program regulation for a student.

**“Federal Title IV Programs”** means the student financial aid programs administered by the United States Department of Education that are authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

**“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.

**“First-Year Level”** means, for purposes of the ED Scholarship Program, the first academic classification of a postsecondary student who is seeking a Degree. The First-Year Level may or may not exactly correlate with the institution’s classification of students as college freshmen. A First-Year Level student has accumulated less than 30 semesters or 45 quarter Attempted-Hours.

**“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.

**“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 is domiciled in the State of Georgia and meets the in-state tuition requirements of the Board of Regents or the governing body of the TCSG Eligible Postsecondary Institution he or she attends, as specified and limited by these regulations, or for students attending private/independent Eligible Postsecondary Institutions, meets the criteria of the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulations*, as specified and limited by these regulations.

**“Graduate”** means a postsecondary program of study beyond the Baccalaureate Degree.

**“Half-Time”** means a Matriculated student attending an Eligible Postsecondary Institution that is Enrolled for the equivalent of at least 6 quarter or 6 semester credit hours, but not more than 11 quarter or 11 semester credit hours, during a school term.

**“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.

**“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.

**“Lawful Non-Immigrant Alien”** means a person admitted to the United States for a temporary period of time and for a specific purpose, who is granted a visa.

**“Learning Support”** means remedial coursework 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 coursework.

**“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.

**“Naturalized Citizen”** means a person not born as a United States Citizen, but has since become a lawful citizen of the United States.

**“Non-Standard Term”** means a school term where all coursework 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 quarter or semester hours used to determine when a student has reached the maximum number of hours for which he or she can receive ED Scholarship Program payment.

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

**“Permanent Resident Alien”** means a person residing in the United States under legally recognized and lawfully recorded permanent residency as an immigrant.

**“Postsecondary Cumulative Grade Point Average”** means the calculation of grades earned at the postsecondary Degree, after high school graduation. The Postsecondary Cumulative Grade Point Average is calculated on a 4.00 scale, to the hundredth decimal, without rounding.

**“Satisfactory Academic Progress”** means the academic standards required of students by their postsecondary institution in order to be eligible to receive payment from Federal Title IV Programs, in accordance with Federal Title IV Regulations.

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

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

**“Undergraduate”** means coursework that is included in a postsecondary program of study leading to an Associate Degree, Baccalaureate Degree, Diploma, or Certificate and is not a Graduate program of study.

**“Undocumented Alien”** means a person who may have crossed the border of the United States illegally and/or been smuggled into the United States, or who has violated their Lawful Non-Immigrant status.

**“United States Citizen”** means a person born in the United States of America or within specific territories of the United States of America as identified in law or born abroad to a parent or parents who were United States Citizens at the time of the person’s birth, in accordance with the law.

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

**“Upper Level”** means, for purposes of the ED Scholarship Program, the second academic classification of a postsecondary student who is seeking a Degree. The Upper Level may or may not exactly correlate with the institution’s classification of the student as a college Sophomore, Junior, or Senior. An Upper Level student has accumulated at least 30 semesters or 45 quarter Attempted-Hours.

**“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.

(The remainder of this page is intentionally blank.)

## **2104. General Eligibility Requirements.**

### **2104.1. Citizenship.**

a. A student meets the Citizenship requirements of the ED Scholarship if he or she is classified as one of the five following categories:

1. United States Citizen;
2. Naturalized Citizen;
3. Permanent Resident Alien;
4. Eligible Non-Citizen; or
5. Lawful Non-Immigrant Alien.

b. Undocumented Aliens are ineligible for the ED Scholarship.

### **2104.2. Georgia Residency.**

Georgia Residency is not an eligibility requirement for the ED Scholarship. A student is not required to be classified as a Georgia Resident according to the USG in-state tuition policy, or the TCSG in-state tuition policy, or *the Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs*.

### **2104.3. Enrollment Status.**

a. A student must be Enrolled at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution in a Matriculated status leading to a Degree.

b. A student Enrolled at a USG or TCSG Eligible Postsecondary Institution is eligible for the ED Scholarship regardless of the number of credit hours for which he or she is Enrolled during a school term. Half-Time or Full-Time Enrollment is not a requirement at a USG or TCSG Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

c. A student Enrolled in a private Eligible Postsecondary Institution must be classified as Full-Time for 14 consecutive calendar days following the last day of the institutions drop/add period in order to be eligible for the Full-Time award amount

d. A student Enrolled in a private Eligible Postsecondary Institution must be classified as Half-Time for 14 consecutive calendar days following the last day of the institution's drop/add period in order to be eligible for the Half-Time award amount. A student Enrolled for less than 6 hours is ineligible for the ED Scholarship award at a private Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

#### **2104.4. Satisfactory Academic Progress.**

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress, as certified by his or her Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

#### **2104.5. Selective Service Registration.**

A student must be in compliance with the United States Selective Service System requirements, if such requirements are applicable.

#### **2104.6. 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 ED Scholarship funds 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 four 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, or 4) by receiving an approved Title IV debt settlement.

#### **2104.7. Georgia Drug-Free Act.**

A student convicted for committing certain felony offenses involving marijuana, controlled substances, or dangerous drugs, is ineligible for ED Scholarship 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, O.C.G.A. § 20-1-24..

#### **2104.8. Incarceration.**

A student seeking a college Degree from an Eligible Postsecondary Institution is ineligible for ED Scholarship payment while Incarcerated. Upon release from Incarceration, such student may become eligible, if he or she meets all requirements. College Degree level credit hours attempted by a student while Incarcerated must be counted as Attempt-Hours.

## **2105. Program Specific Eligibility Requirements.**

### **2105.1. Eligible Candidates.**

In order to be considered for the ED Scholarship, a student must be identified as an Eligible Candidate by the Department of Economic Development.

### **2105.2. Scholastic Requirements.**

- a. A student may enter the ED Scholarship Program for the first time as either a First-Year Level student or as an Upper Level student.
- b. A student entering the ED Scholarship Program as a First-Year Level student must meet the scholastic requirements of Section 2105.2., in addition to basic eligibility requirements of Section 2104.
- c. A student entering the ED Scholarship Program as an Upper Level student must meet the scholastic requirements of Section 2105.3., in addition to the basic eligibility requirements of *Section 2104*.

### **2105.3. First-Year Level Scholastic Requirements.**

A student must graduate from high school with a minimum of a 3.00 cumulative grade point average on a 4.00 scale for all core curriculum coursework (English, Mathematics, Science, Social Science and Foreign Language) to meet the scholastic requirements for the ED Scholarship Program at the First-Year Level.

### **2105.4. Upper Level Scholastic Requirements.**

A student must have a Postsecondary Cumulative Grade Point Average of at least a 3.00, on a 4.00 scale, upon entering the ED Scholarship Program at the Upper Level.

### **2105.5. ED Scholarship Paid-Hours Limit.**

The ED Scholarship Paid-Hours limit is 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours. Regardless of whether a student enters the ED Scholarship Program at the First-Year Level or the Upper Level, he or she is eligible for ED Scholarship payment for a maximum of 30 semester or 45 quarter hours.

### **2105.6. Attainment of a Baccalaureate Degree.**

Regardless of the number of Attempted-Hours or Paid-Hours a student has accumulated, such student is ineligible for ED Scholarship Program payment if he or she has attained a Baccalaureate Degree of any kind at any time from any postsecondary institution.

## **2106. Eligible Coursework.**

### **2106.1. Learning Support Coursework.**

A student seeking a Degree, who Enrolls in Learning Support (remedial) coursework, is eligible for ED Scholarship payment for such coursework, if he or she meets all other eligibility requirements.

### **2106.2. Coursework Exemptions.**

A student is ineligible to receive ED Scholarship payment for coursework that was exempted or given credit by examination, testing, training, or experience.

### **2106.3. Distance Learning Coursework.**

A student participating in Distance Learning coursework is eligible to receive ED Scholarship payment if all other eligibility requirements are met. The institution offering the Distance Learning coursework must be an Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

### **2106.4. Continuing Education and Audit Coursework.**

A student is ineligible to receive ED Scholarship payment for coursework classified by his or her Eligible Postsecondary Institution as Continuing Education or Audit coursework and such coursework is not counted as Attempted-Hours.

### **2106.5. Board of Regent's Test Preparation Coursework.**

A student seeking a Degree at a USG Eligible Postsecondary Institution who is required to participate in coursework to prepare for the Board of Regent's Test (Examination) is eligible for ED Scholarship payment for such coursework. Credit hours attempted for such coursework must be counted as Attempted-Hours and Paid-Hours.

### **2106.6. Total Withdrawal from Coursework.**

A student is ineligible for ED Scholarship payment for coursework from which he or she totally withdrew if, as a result, such coursework does not appear on the student's academic transcript as a "Withdrawal" or any other type of identification. Such coursework is not counted as Attempted-Hours.

## **2107. Student Application Requirements.**

### **2107.1. Application Forms.**

A student must complete and submit to the Commission an ED Scholarship Program Application. The ED Scholarship Program Application is only available directly from the Commission to students officially identified as Eligible Candidates by the Department of Economic Development.

### **2107.2. Application Deadline Date.**

A student must file the application with the Commission 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.

(The remainder of this page is intentionally blank.)

## **2108. Award Requirements.**

### **2108.1. USG or TCSG Institution Awards.**

- a. For a student Enrolled at a USG or TCSG Eligible Postsecondary Institution, the ED Scholarship covers Tuition and Approved Mandatory Fees. The award amount for Tuition must not be greater than the in-state Tuition rate of the USG or TCSG Eligible Postsecondary Institution. In addition, it must not be greater than the Undergraduate Tuition rate. Award amounts may include cents and must not be rounded. ED Scholarship funds awarded for Tuition and Approved Mandatory Fees can only be applied to Tuition and Approved Mandatory Fees, not other expenses such as room and board.
- b. If a student is receiving student financial aid from a source other than the ED Scholarship and such aid is required by the donor to be applied to the student's Tuition and Approved Mandatory Fee charges, then the student's ED Scholarship award for Tuition and Approved Mandatory Fees must be reduced by the amount of such aid.
- c. A student's ED Scholarship award amount for Tuition and Approved Mandatory Fees is not reduced if the student is receiving financial aid from sources that is applied to educational expenses other than Tuition and Approved Mandatory Fees, even if the student's total aid exceeds his or her Cost of Attendance.
- d. The ED Scholarship award amount for a student Enrolled at a USG or TCSG Eligible Postsecondary Institution includes a Book Allowance payment of \$100 per quarter or \$150 per semester if the student is at least Half-Time. A student who is Enrolled for less than Half-Time will receive \$50 per quarter or \$75 per semester.
- e. A student's eligibility for the Book Allowance is based on his or her Enrollment status at the end of the first day of classes of the school term. If a student withdraws from courses on or before the first day of classes, his or her eligibility for the Book Allowance is calculated by using the hours for which he or she was Enrolled at the end of the first day of classes. If a student adds coursework after the first day of classes, bringing his or her total hours to six or more, the student is eligible for a full Book Allowance payment. A student who Enrolls after the first day of classes is eligible for a Book Allowance based on the number of hours for which he or she Enrolled. An institution that Disbursed the Book Allowance to a student who later drops or withdraws from courses is held harmless if the award was correct at the time of Disbursement.
- f. A student is eligible for the Book Allowance regardless of whether his or her Cost of Attendance or financial need is met or exceeded by other types or sources of student financial aid.

- g. Funds for the Book Allowance must be made available by the Eligible Postsecondary Institution to the student for the purchase of books and supplies. Book Allowance funds cannot be applied by the institution to a student's direct charges, such as fees, room, and meals, unless the institution obtains written or electronic authorization from the student to do so.

**2108.2 Private Postsecondary Institution Awards.**

- a. The ED Scholarship award amounts per quarter or semester for a Full-Time student are provided below. A student who meets all eligibility requirements may receive payment for four quarters or three semesters for the Award Year.

	Quarter System	Semester System
Summer:	\$1166	\$1750
Fall:	\$1167	\$1750
Winter:	\$1167	-----
Spring:	\$1166	\$1750

- b. The ED Scholarship award amounts per quarter or semester for a Half-Time student are provided below. A student who meets all eligibility requirements may receive payment for four quarters or three semesters for the Award Year

	Quarter System	Semester System
Summer:	\$583	\$875
Fall:	\$584	\$875
Winter:	\$583	-----
Spring:	\$583	\$875

- c. ED Scholarship funds can only be applied to Tuition and fees, not other expenses such as room and board. If a student is receiving student aid from a source other than the ED Scholarship and such aid is required by the donor to be applied to the student's Tuition and fee charges, and such award plus the ED Scholarship funds are equal to or greater than the student's Tuition and fee charges, then the student's ED Scholarship award must be reduced so that the total aid is equal to the Tuition and fee charges.
- d. A student's ED Scholarship award amount is not reduced if the student is receiving aid that is applied to educational expenses other than Tuition and fees, even if the student's total aid exceeds the Cost of Attendance budget.

**2108.3 Awards Per School Term.**

The ED Scholarship is available to students for the standard school terms of Summer, Fall, and Spring semesters or Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters. An 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 be awarded ED Scholarship funds for a maximum of three semesters or four quarters per Award Year.

(The remainder of this page is intentionally blank.)

**2109. Disbursement of Funds.**

**2109.1. School Term Disbursements.**

ED Scholarship awards are disbursed by the Commission to the Eligible Postsecondary Institution, on behalf of the student, on a school term basis.

**2109.2. Method of Payment.**

The Commission shall disburse ED Scholarship Program funds to Eligible Postsecondary Institutions, on behalf of eligible students, by method of electronic transfer.

(The remainder of this page is intentionally blank.)

## **2110. Student Refunds.**

### **2110.1. Calculation of Refunds.**

- 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 Commission.
- b. If applicable, the institution must first follow the Federal Title IV Return of Funds policy for any federal aid the student may have received. To determine the refund for the ED Scholarship, the institution must follow their institutional refund policy, which may or may not be different from Federal Title IV Return of Funds policy.
- c. The Eligible Postsecondary Institution must determine the amount of the refund and return that amount to the Commission within 45 days of the determination. The remainder of the award is retained by the institution to cover the institution's cost for the portion of the school term that the student was Enrolled. At public Eligible Postsecondary Institutions, the Book Allowance awarded to the student is not included in the refund calculation.

### **2110.2. 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.

## **2111. Reconciliation Requirements.**

### **2111.1. Award-Year Reconciliation.**

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 July 15, immediately following the completion of the Award Year.

### **2111.2. Return of Funds.**

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

(The remainder of this page is intentionally blank.)

## **2112. Records Retention Requirements.**

### **2112.1. Length of Retention.**

An Eligible Postsecondary Institution shall maintain accurate records, books, documents and other evidence concerning the ED Scholarship 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.

### **2112.2. 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 for at least three years after the most recent Award Year for which the student received ED Scholarship funds. 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. Rather than retaining the original hard copies of such documentation, 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.

### **2112.3. Extended Retention.**

An institution may be required to retain student records involved in a Compliance 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.

## **2113. Appeals and Exceptions.**

If a student wishes to Appeal a determination of eligibility made by an Eligible Postsecondary Institution or the Commission, or to request an Exception to these regulations, then he or she must follow the Appeals and Exceptions process.

### **2113.1. Filing an Appeal or Exception.**

In order for an Appeal or Exception to be considered, the student must write a request for an Appeal or an Exception 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.

### **2113.2. Appeals.**

The ED Scholarship Program regulations are applied to each student considered for ED Scholarship funds by appropriate officials of Eligible Postsecondary Institutions and by the administrative staff of the Commission. If a student believes an ED Scholarship 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.

### **2113.3. Exceptions.**

Requests for Exceptions to the ED Scholarship Program regulations cannot be considered, reviewed, or granted under any circumstances.

## **2114. Compliance Reviews.**

### **2114.1. Compliance Review Policy.**

The Commission may, upon its own discretion, conduct Compliance Reviews of Eligible Postsecondary Institutions participating in the ED Scholarship Program in order to assess institutional administration of the program and compliance with the program's regulations. Compliance Reviews are conducted in accordance with the Commission's Compliance Review Process and Procedures document, which is available on the *gsfc.org* website, under *School and Lender Information-Compliance Documents*.

### **2114.2 Compliance Review Process.**

The Commission selects a sampling of the institution's 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 ED Scholarship 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 1112*.)

### **2114.3 Institutional Repayment.**

If a recipient is determined to have been ineligible for payment, the institution or the recipient may be required to repay to the Commission the ED Scholarship funds awarded to the recipient. If later evidence not available at the time of awarding indicates that a student should not have received the ED Scholarship payment, then all future 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 will be ineligible to receive additional state aid from the Commission until the refund is paid in full, in accordance with *Section 2110.2*. If the student's file is determined not to be adequately documented by the Commission while conducting a Compliance Review, then the Eligible Postsecondary Institution may be responsible for the repayment.