

SECTION: Fringe Benefits
SUBJECT: Employee/Dependent Tuition Assistance
SOURCE REFERENCE: Board of Trustees Policy 612.02

NUMBER: G/1.2

Employee/Dependent Tuition Assistance

Full-time benefits eligible employees and benefits eligible Salary Schedule H employees of System colleges or entities, as well as benefits eligible ACCS system office employees, certain retirees and their dependents are eligible for tuition assistance for courses taught for credit by community and technical colleges under the control of the Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees and, when applicable, Athens State University.

I. GENERAL

This tuition assistance program is designed for all full-time benefits eligible employees, retirees, and benefits eligible H Salary Schedule employees of The Alabama Community College System and the Alabama Community College System office and their dependents as defined under Section II. This program will not include non-benefits eligible, temporary, or part-time employees, or persons serving as independent contractors to any of the Alabama Community College System colleges or entities or to the Alabama Community College System office.

The program will be coordinated by each college and entity for employees within The Alabama Community College System and the Alabama Community College System office.

An application form for the tuition assistance program is available at each college or entity and should be completed prior to registration for classes. A copy of the completed form must be maintained by the college of attendance. **(See Form G/1.2-A)**

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Employee:

1. any full-time benefits eligible employee of any Alabama Community College System college or entity
2. any benefits eligible employee of the Alabama Community College System office;
3. any benefits eligible Salary Schedule H employees of any Alabama Community College System college or entity.

B. Retiree: for purposes of this policy, a "retiree" is

1. any employee who has twenty-five (25) years or more of continuous service in The Alabama Community College System or the Alabama Community College System office and retires from The Alabama Community College System or the Alabama Community College System office;
2. any employee who retires from the Alabama Community College System or the Alabama Community College System office under disability retirement.

C. Dependent:

1. the spouse of any eligible employee or retiree;
2. the unmarried children of any eligible employee or retiree residing in the household of the employee or retiree, residing in the household of the employee's or retiree's former spouse, or residing in temporary housing while enrolled in college such as

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- college dormitories, apartments, and student housing;
- 3. the unmarried stepchildren of any eligible employee or retiree residing in the household of the employee or retiree;
- 4. a legal ward (a minor child placed by the court under the care of a guardian) when the guardian is a benefits eligible employee or retiree.

III. ELIGIBILITY

A. Requirements

Employees: Employees must have been employed by an Alabama Community College System college or entity or the Alabama Community College System office for the equivalent of one full academic year for faculty or at least 12 months for non-instructional employees, prior to the first scheduled day of class for the term for which the employee is applying.

Dependents: Dependents will be eligible when said employee or retiree is eligible, and to the same degree to which the employee or retiree is eligible, except as herein modified.

Retirees: Only those former employees who have 25 years of continuous service and retired from an ACCS entity or system office or those former employees who have a disability retirement from an ACCS entity or system office are eligible for tuition assistance under this policy.

B. Termination of Eligibility

Employees: Eligibility terminates if the employee discontinues full-time employment or becomes ineligible for benefits at the respective college or entity or ACCS system office for any reason.

Dependents: Dependents will be ineligible when their respective eligible employee or eligible retiree becomes ineligible.

Retirees: Eligibility terminates for retirees and their dependents five years after the retiree's effective retirement date on file with the System entity or System office.

C. Approved tuition assistance waivers are honored through the completion of the current term only.

IV. AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE, LIMITATIONS, CONDITIONS, AND AUDITING

A. Tuition Cost

All eligible employees and their dependents will be allowed a waiver of one-third (1/3) of the normally-charged tuition after the first (1) year (the equivalent of one(1) full academic

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year for faculty or at least twelve (12) months for non-instructional employees) of employment. A waiver of two-thirds (2/3) tuition after the second (2) year of employment (the equivalent of two (2) full academic years for faculty or at least twenty-four (24) months for non-instructional employees) is allowed for eligible employees and their dependents. A waiver of full tuition after the third (3) year of employment (the equivalent of three (3) full academic years for faculty or at least thirty-six (36) months for non-instructional employees) is allowed for retirees, eligible employees, and their dependents.

Partial tuition adjustments are to be rounded down to the nearest dollar. Eligible Salary Schedule H employees will be allowed a waiver calculated at a prorated rate of full-time employment. Expenses for supplies, books, and fees other than tuition will not be waived. Each college or entity will be allowed to count the credit hours generated by these enrollees.

B. Limitation

There is no limitation as to the number of credit hours taken, other than the regular academic limitations that apply at the respective colleges. All students will be required to abide by the academic policies that are in effect at the college they are attending.

C. Conditions

Any eligible student under this policy must maintain at least a "C" average (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) to be eligible for tuition waiver in the courses for which the student receives tuition assistance. Failure of the eligible student to meet this grade requirement causes the student to be ineligible for further tuition assistance until the student (1) brings his cumulative grade point average at the same college in which the tuition assistance was previously provided to a 2.0, or (2) provides satisfactory evidence that the student paid tuition at a college after he/she became ineligible for tuition assistance for the same number of hours in which the student failed to make a 2.0 in tuition assistance classes with evidence that he/she obtained at least a 2.0 in the paid classes. If a student has become ineligible for tuition assistance at one college due to his/her inability to maintain a 2.0 in tuition assistance courses, the student is ineligible to receive tuition assistance at any other college

D. Auditing

An eligible student will be allowed to audit one (1) course (up to five (5) credit hours) per term and will be allowed the appropriate percentage of waiver of the normally charged tuition. The eligible student must meet all attendance requirements, class participation, and assignments as required of credit-enrolled students except the final examination is not required. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in the student becoming ineligible for further participation as an audit student in credit hour-producing courses reported for funding purposes. Expenses for supplies, books, and fees will not be waived.

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E. Repeating Class

An eligible student may not receive tuition assistance to repeat a course for which tuition assistance was already provided. Tuition assistance, if obtained by an eligible student for a repeated course, must be repaid by the student.

Tuition assistance will be disallowed at any college for repeating a class for which the grade of "W" was originally received.

F. Recertification of Eligibility.

The eligible student must re-certify eligibility, as specified in Condition IV.C. above, prior to registering for a new term by completing, submitting, and receiving approval of the "Employee-Dependent Tuition Waiver" form. Providing false information will result in exclusion from all tuition assistance benefits and result in a requirement to repay all tuition paid for the student under this program and possible other disciplinary action.

G. Work Week

Participation in this program is **in addition** to the employee's full-time work week, and should not be considered when computing the employee's time for financial compensation. However, in certain cases the employee's work schedule may be adjusted to permit course attendance. Adjustments to an employee's weekly work schedule must be recommended by the employee's supervisor and/or Dean, and approved by the President.

H. Eligible Student Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the eligible student under this benefit program to ensure that all documents and forms required in this process are completed, submitted, and approved by the appropriate personnel in a timely manner. Any information or forms deemed incomplete will cause a delay in the processing of the tuition waiver. It is the eligible student's responsibility to verify with the college of enrollment that all documentation and forms are completed and approved in a timely manner.