

**Governors State University
Policy on Tuition and Fees Waivers**

Purpose: This policy establishes the University processes for authorizing tuition and fee waiver programs and the purposes of such programs, establishing waiver budget and expenditure levels, and allocating waivers to waiver programs. Tuition and fee waivers are an agreement between the student and the University to reduce or eliminate assessed tuition and/or fees. All Illinois public universities are authorized to award two general types of tuition and fee waivers: Mandatory Waivers and Discretionary Waivers.

Mandatory Waiver means a waiver that an institution is required by State statute to grant to students who meet the specific parameters and criteria included in the statute.

Discretionary Waiver means a waiver that is granted at the discretion of the institution.

Discretionary waivers include the following categories:

- Faculty and Staff Waiver means a discretionary waiver awarded to public university faculty, staff, or other employees, or their dependents.
- Student Talent or Merit Waiver means a discretionary waiver awarded to students based on talent in a particular field, academic merit, or special status.
- Student Need Waiver means a discretionary waiver granted to students demonstrating financial need.
- Student Service Waiver means a discretionary waiver granted to students to support the University mission, goals, and objectives through participation in outside contracts; graduate or undergraduate research, teaching, or other assignments; training or grant programs; external internship programs; clinical portions of degree programs conducted at other institutions; or other student experiences.

Descriptions of Tuition Waiver Programs:

Mandatory Waivers

1. **Teachers Scholarships: Special Education Grants:** Provides tuition and necessary fee awards to encourage current teachers and academically talented students to pursue careers in any area of special education as a public or private elementary or secondary school teacher in Illinois. Recipients are exempt from paying tuition and fees at an eligible institution for up to four years.

Purpose: To provide financial incentives to pursue special education teacher training. **Eligibility and Criteria:** As determined by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), participants must be a United States citizen or an eligible non-citizen; an Illinois resident; agree to take

courses to prepare for the teaching of handicapped children or children with learning disabilities; be an Illinois high school graduate and rank in the upper half of the graduating class, or hold a valid teaching certificate that is not in the discipline of special education; and not have received a waiver under this program in the past. Participants are required to contract with the Illinois State Scholarship Commission and teach special education for two years within the five-year period following graduation.

2. General Assembly Scholarships: Each member of the General Assembly may grant, annually, two four-year scholarships, one for the University of Illinois, and the other for any state-supported university, to persons from his/her district. The scholarships exempt the holder from paying tuition or fees, with the exception of fees for book rental, service, laboratory, supply, union building, hospital and medical insurance, and any fees pledged for the payment of interest and principal on bonds for the operation and maintenance of buildings. **Purpose:** To extend opportunities to attend the University of Illinois or other state-supported universities. **Eligibility and Criteria:** Students must live in the nominating legislator's district and are required to sign a waiver of confidentiality concerning scholarship information. This program was abolished in 2012. Only persons nominated to receive or awarded such a scholarship before September 1, 2012 are entitled to the scholarship.

3. Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Scholarships: Scholarships are offered to residents of Illinois whose scholastic standing enables them to enroll in ROTC programs. The scholarships exempt the holder from paying tuition or fees, with the exception of fees for book rental, service, laboratory, supply, union building, hospital and medical insurance, and any fees pledged for the payment of interest and principal on bonds for the operation and maintenance of buildings. **Purpose:** To encourage their participation in the ROTC programs. **Eligibility and Criteria:** Residents of the State of Illinois whose scholastic standing will enable them to enroll in the ROTC programs available at universities supported by the State of Illinois are eligible. Applicants are required to take an examination each year according to rules prescribed by the presidents, or designees, of participating institutions. Scholarships are awarded on a merit basis to those eligible recipients receiving the highest grades with evidence of leadership ability. Applicants also must submit to the institution Selective Service registration compliance documentation. Waivers shall be awarded at each university on the basis of the equivalent of 10 scholarships per class, per branch of service, each academic year.

4. Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Scholarships and Fee Waiver: DCFS annually selects 48 children, at least four of whom are children of veterans, for scholarship and fee waivers for four consecutive years at any university or college maintained by the State of Illinois. Selection is based on scholastic record, aptitude, and general interest in higher education. **Purpose:** To give financial assistance for college expenses to selected children under the care of the Department. **Eligibility and Criteria:** DCFS may select 48 students under

their care, at least four of whom must be children of veterans, on the basis of scholastic record, aptitude, and interest in higher education, and who have completed four years of high school.

5. Partial Tuition Waivers for Children of University Employees: Public University governing boards must offer fifty percent tuition waivers for undergraduate education to the children of employees who have been employed by the granting university and/or any public university in Illinois for an aggregate of at least seven years. Participants must be under the age of 25 and qualify for admission to the University. **Purpose:** To grant partial tuition waivers to the children of employees to attend the University. **Eligibility and Criteria:** The parent or guardian of the waiver recipient must have been employed by any public university for at least seven years. Children receiving the waivers must be undergraduates, under age 25 at the commencement of the academic year in which the waiver takes effect, must qualify for admission, and can only receive a maximum of four years of partial tuition waiver benefits.

6. Senior Citizen Courses Act: Permits senior citizens, over the age of 65, to enroll in regularly scheduled credit courses at public institutions of higher education without payment of tuition. This does not include payment of fees. Limited to persons whose annual income is less than the threshold amount in the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief and Pharmaceutical Assistance Act. **Purpose:** To provide tuition-free credit courses for senior citizens that attend public institutions of higher education in Illinois. **Eligibility and Criteria:** Must be age 65 or older with an annual household income below the threshold amount of the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief and Pharmaceutical Assistance Act.

7. Illinois Veterans Grants: Veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States are entitled to grants to pay for eligible tuition and mandatory fees for undergraduate or graduate education. Benefits are limited to use at Illinois public two- and four-year institutions, and can be used for a maximum of four academic years of full-time enrollment. This program is administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission. **Purpose:** To provide tuition and fee grants to veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States. **Goals:** **Eligibility and Criteria:** Veterans must have served at least one year of federal active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, or have served in a foreign country during a time of hostilities in that country regardless of length of service. Individuals who were medically discharged for service related reasons or were discharged prior to August 11, 1967 are also eligible. Recipients must have been honorably discharged or be honorably serving. Members of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) are not eligible for these grants. Eligible applicants must have been a resident of Illinois or a student at an Illinois public two- or four-year institution at the time of entering federal active duty service. If not currently serving federal active duty service, eligible applicants must also have returned to Illinois within six months after leaving federal active duty service, or if married to a person in continuing military service stationed outside Illinois, returned to Illinois within six months after the spouse left service or was stationed in Illinois. Recipients must satisfy the

institution's minimum grade level requirements and maintain a satisfactory student loan repayment record.

8. Illinois National Guard Grants: Members of the Illinois National Guard are entitled to grants to pay for eligible tuition and certain fees for undergraduate and graduate education. Benefits are limited to use at Illinois public two- and four-year institutions, and can be used for a maximum of four academic years of full-time enrollment. This program is administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission. **Purpose:** To provide tuition and fee grants to members of the Illinois National Guard. **Eligibility and Criteria:** Active members of the Illinois National Guard who have completed one full year of service are eligible. Former members of the Illinois National Guard may also be eligible if they were active for at least five consecutive years and had their studies interrupted by federal active duty for at least six months. These individuals must be within 12 months of their discharge date from the Illinois National Guard to be eligible. Eligibility is also contingent on enrollment in an Illinois public two- or four-year institution. Recipients must satisfy the institution's minimum grade level requirements and maintain a satisfactory student loan repayment record.

9. MIA/POW Scholarships: Dependents of an "eligible veteran or serviceperson" may be awarded a MIA/POW Scholarship consisting of the equivalent of four calendar years of full-time enrollment at an Illinois public two- or four-year institution. The scholarship covers eligible tuition and certain fees. This scholarship program is administered by the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs. **Purpose:** To provide tuition and fee scholarships to dependents of MIA/POW veterans. **Eligibility and Criteria:** Any spouse, natural child, legally adopted child, or any step-child of an "eligible veteran or serviceperson" shall be awarded a MIA/POW scholarship consisting of the equivalent of four calendar years of full-time enrollment at an Illinois public two- or four-year institution. "Eligible veteran or serviceperson" is a person who was an Illinois resident at the time that he/she entered active duty and has been declared to be a prisoner of war, missing in action, dead as the result of a service-connected disability, or disabled with a 100 percent disability as the result of a service-connected cause as recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or the U.S. Department of Defense.

Discretionary Waivers

- 1. Faculty/Staff Waivers:** Tuition and fee waivers awarded to University faculty, staff, or other employees or their dependents. **Purpose:** To provide educational benefits to the employees of the University, their dependents, and employees of other institutions. **Eligibility and Criteria:** Must be a member of the University faculty or administrative staff or an employee covered by the State Universities Civil Service System.

- Civil Service Staff: University Employees
- Civil Service Staff: Interinstitutional and Related Agencies

- Faculty and Staff
- Retired University Employees
- Children of Deceased Employees

2. **Student Talent/Merit Waivers:** Tuition and fee waivers awarded to students based on talent in a particular field, academic merit, or special status. **Purpose:** To provide financial assistance to students with academic talent or special status. **Eligibility and Criteria:** Based on academic record, other academic talent, or special status.

- Athletic
- Gender Equity in Intercollegiate Athletics
- Freshman
- Dual Degree Program (DDP) - Honors

3. **Student Need Waivers:** Tuition and fee waivers granted to students demonstrating financial need. **Purpose:** To provide financial assistance to students who demonstrate financial need or hardship. **Eligibility and Criteria:** Recipients must demonstrate financial need and/or be enrolled in special academic programs or other University activities.

- Dual Degree Program (DDP) - Promise
- Special Program Waivers

4. **Student Service Waivers/Assistantships:** Tuition and fee waivers granted to students to support the University mission, goals, and objectives through participation in outside contracts; graduate or undergraduate research, teaching, or other assignments; training or grant programs; external internship programs; clinical portions of degree programs conducted at other institutions; or other student experiences. **Purpose:** To provide educational benefits and financial incentives to students. **Goals:** To provide students with valuable educational experiences. **Eligibility and Criteria:** Recipients must be enrolled in the University or under contract and, for the educational experiences and benefits, agree to perform related services.

- Teaching Assistantship
- Research Assistantship
- Laboratory Assistantship
- Tutoring Assistantship
- Graduate Assistantship

Waiver Procedures:

The application procedures, eligibility criteria, and selection processes for mandatory waivers are managed by waiver agency. The administering office maintains the list of waiver recipients:

- Teacher Scholarships – Office of Financial Aid
- ROTC Scholarships – Veterans Resource Center
- DCFS Scholarships – Office of Financial Aid
- Partial Tuition Waivers for Children of University Employees – Human Resources
- Illinois Veterans Grant – Veterans Resource Center
- Illinois National Guard Grants – Veterans Resource Center
- MIA/POW Scholarships – Veterans Resource Center
- Faculty/Staff Waivers – Human Resources
- Student Talent/Merit Waivers – Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
- Student Need Waivers – Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
- Student Service Waivers/Assistantships – Academic Colleges

For discretionary waivers the administering unit must provide and maintain all documents involved in eligibility criteria and selection processes. During the annual budget development process, the discretionary tuition and fee waiver budget is established for the next fiscal year. The Governors State University's Board of Trustees (BOT) annually reviews data on tuition and fee waiver classifications, approvals, and allocations. The University has established a cut-off date of August 31 to facilitate fiscal year reporting. Adjustments made after the cut-off date will be allocated to the following fiscal year. The amount of undergraduate tuition revenue that a public university may waive is limited to three percent of total available undergraduate tuition revenue with the exception of Gender Equity in Intercollegiate Athletics waivers, Civil Service Staff, University Employee waivers, Civil Service Staff: Interinstitutional and Related Agencies waivers, and Financial Aid waivers for Illinois resident students demonstrating financial need. Tuition and fee waiver records are maintained for five years.

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