

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the process and procedures regarding educational assistance for spouses and dependents of Nashville State Community College ("College").

This policy pertains only to undergraduate courses taken by spouses and dependent children at Tennessee Board of Regents and University of Tennessee institutions.

DEFINITIONS

N/A

POLICY/GUIDELINE

- I. Support for Educational Assistance
 - A. The College is committed to the need for the continued professional growth and development of employees. Support for educational assistance of employees and their dependents is an important vehicle for addressing that need.
 - B. The programs described in this policy provide benefits to spouses and dependents of employees at the College.
 - C. The programs described in this policy for employees and dependents are available subject to funds being budgeted and available within the institution.
 - D. For-credit coursework attempted through one of the programs mentioned in this policy must be through an institution accredited by one of the Regional Accrediting Organizations recognized by the Council for Higher Education (www.chea.org).
- II. Fee Discount for Spouse and/or Dependent Children Program
 - A. The purpose of this policy is to establish the provisions for such fee discounts up to 50% of the undergraduate fee and all mandatory student fees payable at the time of registration for spouses and dependent children of regular full-time and regular part-time employees, and to encourage qualified students to attend TBR and UT institutions.
 - B. These mandatory student fees include maintenance fees, registration fees, tuition, debt service fee, online course fees, TN eCampus (formerly RODP/ROCC) fees, service charges, student activity fee, general access fee, student government fee, and technology access fee.
 - C. The mandatory student fees do not include the application fee, off-campus facilities fee, or any special course fees.
 1. Eligibility- The following groups will be eligible under this program:
 - a. Regular full-time employees are eligible for a student fee discount for their spouses and dependent children who have been admitted to any of the institutions in the TBR or UT systems as undergraduate students through regular admission procedures.
 - b. Spouses and dependent children of regular part-time employees who have one or more years of continuous service within either system working a minimum of fifty percent (50%) time shall receive a pro rata discount based on the employee's percentage of employment.

- c. Part-time employees with temporary service immediately preceding regular service shall receive credit for such service if they are eligible for leave accrual adjustments.
2. Spouses of employees having ten (10) or more years of continuous full-time service within the Tennessee Board of Regents system immediately preceding retirement or death are eligible for the fee discount for five (5) years from the date of death or retirement of the employee whichever shall occur first.
 - a. Dependent children of employees having ten (10) or more years of continuous full-time service within the Tennessee Board of Regents system immediately preceding retirement or death that are age 26 and under are eligible for the fee discount.
3. Spouses of employees having less than ten (10) years of full-time continuous service within the Tennessee Board of Regents system immediately preceding retirement or death are eligible for the fee discount for two (2) years from the date of death or retirement of the employee, whichever shall occur first.
 - a. Dependent children of employees having less than ten (10) years of full-time continuous service immediately preceding retirement or death are eligible for the fee discount for two (2) years from the date of death or retirement of the employee, whichever comes first.
 - b. The fee discount is only available for dependent children age 26 and under.
 - c. However, in accordance with T.C.A. § 8-50-115, dependents under age 24 at the end of the two-year period become eligible for a 25% discount if the parent:
 - (1) Died while employed full-time; (effective May 31, 1997) or
 - (2) Was killed on the job or in the line of duty while a full-time employee
 - (a) Example 1: A dependent is 24 years of age when an employee with less than ten (10) years of service retires/dies. The dependent is eligible for the 50% discount for two (2) years or through age 26, whichever comes first. Since the dependent is 26 at the end of two (2) years, no additional benefit is available under T.C.A. § 8-50-115.
 - (b) Example 2: A dependent is eighteen (18) years old when an employee dies with less than ten (10) years of service. The dependent is eligible for a 50% discount for two (2) years. Since the dependent is 20 when the two-year period expires, the dependent is then eligible for a 25% discount through age 23.
4. Spouses of employees who had ten (10) or more years of continuous regular part-time service immediately preceding retirement or death are eligible for the fee discount on a pro rata basis for two (2) years from the date of death or retirement of the employee.
 - (1) Dependent children of such employees are eligible for the fee discount for two (2) years from the date of death or retirement of the employee.
 - (2) The pro rata discount will be based on the employee's percentage of employment at the time of retirement or death.
 - (a) Spouses and dependent children must be admitted to the Tennessee Board of Regents or University of Tennessee institutions through standard admissions procedures.
 - (b) For the purpose of this program, dependent children shall be defined as:
 - (3) The employee's natural children 26 years of age or under;
 - (4) The employee's stepchildren, provided such children are 26 years of age or under;

- (5) The employee's legally adopted children who are 26 years of age or under; or
 - (6) Any other individuals who are 26 years of age or under and living in a parent/child relationship with the employee, such as children of deceased parents who are being raised by a grandparent who is a TBR system employee.
 - (a) The College, at its discretion, may require satisfactory proof of the relationship or criteria qualifying an employee's dependent for eligibility under this program.
 - b. Benefits provided by the Veterans' Dependents' Post-Secondary Education Program are greater than those provided by the Student Fee Discount for Spouse and Dependent Children of Employees Program. Therefore, dependents receiving such benefits are not simultaneously eligible for benefits from this program.
 - (1) Example: A female employee has an eighteen (18) year old son whose father died while serving in the U.S. military during a qualifying period of armed conflict as defined in the Veterans' Dependents' Post-Secondary Education Program. The dependent has been approved for monetary benefits under that program. As a result, he is no longer eligible for benefits under the Student Fee Discount for Spouse and Dependent Children of Employees Program.
 - c. The employment status of the employee on the first day of classes for each term in which the spouse and/or dependent enrolls shall be used to determine eligibility and the amount of the student fee discount for the spouse and/or dependent children; a change in employee status after the first day of classes shall not affect eligibility for the student fee discount for that term.
 - d. For employees who meet eligibility requirements after the first day of classes in which the spouse and/or dependent enrolls, the discount will be available at the beginning of the next term.
 - e. The Office of Human Resources shall be responsible for certifying employee eligibility for fee discounts under this policy.
 - f. Employees who are on leave of absence with pay will retain eligibility under this policy; the employee's percentage of employment immediately prior to the effective date of the leave of absence shall determine the amount of the student fee discount.
 - g. Employees who are on leave of absence without pay are not eligible for the spouse/dependent discount under this policy unless the leave of absence (a) is due to an on-the-job injury, (b) complies with the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, or (c) is approved by the College to permit employees to engage in teaching or other job-related activities intended to increase their efficiency as employees.
 - (1) Examples are activities such as student teaching or internships that are required parts of a degree program being sought.
 - h. If a regular employee also qualifies under this policy as an employee's spouse or dependent child, other fee waiver and staff development provisions for employees shall take precedence.
 - i. Employees are responsible for notifying the Office of Human Resources of any changes in eligibility.
5. Fees Paid/Type Course Paid/Number of Hours

- a. This program is applicable to undergraduate courses at Tennessee Board of Regents and University of Tennessee institutions up to and including full-time study.
 - b. Correspondence or non-credit courses are not eligible.
 - c. If the spouse or dependent child is receiving Title IV Financial Aid, the employee must notify the Financial Aid Office.
 - d. The amount remaining after financial aid and the discount rendered under this program may be paid in accordance with the provisions of Deferred Payment Plan Guideline B-070, provided a Deferred Payment Plan has been implemented at the institution the employee's spouse/dependent is attending.
 - e. Auditing a course is allowed if the course is a credit course.
6. Payback Provisions
 - a. Payback provisions do not exist.
 7. Accounting/Budgeting Provisions
 - a. Discounts of 50% of the undergraduate maintenance fee and mandatory student fees are available for dependents of full-time employees; discounts for dependent children and spouses of eligible part-time employees are prorated based on percentage of time worked.
 - b. The discount shall not be applicable to other fees, i.e., application for admission fees, applied music fees, lab fees, books and supplies, parking fees, dormitory charges or meal plans. The amount of the discount shall be rounded to the nearest dollar.
 - c. The request needs to be submitted two weeks prior to enrollment, using the College's Request for Fee Discount for Spouse and/or Dependent form. Employees may obtain forms from the Office of Human Resources.
 - d. The institution where the person is an employee shall account for the chargeback as an employee benefit to indicate that the employer is paying the cost for the benefit of the employee. The charged institution shall remit the tuition fees to the institution providing instruction as maintenance income.
 8. Where the Participants May Attend
 - a. Spouses and dependent children may enroll in undergraduate courses in either the Tennessee Board of Regents or the University of Tennessee Systems.

SOURCES

T.C.A. §§ 49-8-203; 8-50-115

RELATED POLICIES

TBR Guidelines B-070 and P-131

Approved by President's Cabinet 11/14/22