

GENERAL INFORMATION

THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHER

OUR MISSION

The Education and Training Voucher Program will allow Texas to help youth make a smoother transition to self-sufficiency and independence by providing funding that will help youth receive education, training and services not covered by another funding source.

WHAT CAN ETV PAY FOR?

The ETV Program can help with:

- Residential housing
- Room and board costs/food
- Tuition/fees (for non state-supported institution or if youth is not eligible for the state tuition and fee waiver for former foster care youth)
- Personal items
- Books/supplies
- Childcare
- Some transportation needs
- Computer or other required equipment
- Medical insurance through school
- Student loans and fees from the loans
- Costs for attendance at an institution of higher education that do not exceed the lesser of \$5,000 per year or the total cost of attendance as defined in section 472 of the Higher Education Act

AM I ELIGIBLE?

- Youth in DFPS foster care who are at least 16 and who are likely to remain in foster care until turning 18, or
- Youth who age out of DFPS foster care but have not yet turned 21, or
- Youth who are adopted from DFPS foster care after turning 16 years old who are not yet 21, or
- Youth participating in the education/training voucher program on their 21st birthday can remain eligible until 23 as long as they are enrolled and making satisfactory progress toward completing their postsecondary education or training program

DO I QUALIFY?

- Youth between 16 and 21 who have a high school diploma or equivalent and who **are enrolled** at least part-time (6 hours) in an accredited or pre-accredited public or non-profit program that provides a bachelor's degree or not less than a 2 year program that provides credit towards a degree or certification, or
- Youth who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance (age 18) and who **are enrolled** at least part-time (6 hours) in an accredited or pre-accredited program that provides training toward gainful employment
- Online/Correspondence/Distance Students PLEASE Contact ETV to seek approval for your program

WHAT DOES ETV EXPECT OF ME?

- Each semester send in a copy of your unofficial transcript (request this from the admissions and records office)

APPLICATION FORM

To be considered for the Education and Training Voucher Program you must complete the application and attach all supporting documents **before** you mail in the application.

An application requires the following:

- A completed application form. Please print or type to ensure that we have the most accurate information
- A copy or verification of your high school diploma or GED certification
- Your own personal written plan for your future (your vocational/ educational goals as well as your target date for completion). Attachment for your Plan is included in the application materials.
- Verification from your PAL Coordinator or Aftercare Case Manager of your eligibility to participate in the program. In cases where verification cannot be obtained through the PAL Coordinator or Aftercare Case Manager, verification of eligibility may be obtained through a copy of your state tuition waiver letter
- A copy of your **financial aid** award letter and a billing statement from the vocational training program (FAFSA)
- A print out of your "current" class schedule
- A letter of recommendation from your PAL Coordinator, caseworker, foster parent or foster care provider, aftercare case manager, mentor, or employer. The letter should focus on personal and academic performance

Other Resources- State Tuition Fee Waiver

Please Contact your PAL regional staff to see if you qualify

Youths who are in DFPS substitute care on or after their 18th birthday, or who obtain their high school diploma or its equivalent while they are in foster or other residential care, may attend state supported vocational schools, colleges, and universities with tuition and fees waived. Youths who are adopted from foster care or who are eligible for adoption at age 14 or older may also be eligible for the waiver. This legislation was enacted in 1993, with revisions made in 1997.

- [FAQ about College Tuition and Fee Exemption](#)
- In Sept. 2003, a new provision of Texas State Law, Section 54.2111 of the Texas Education Code was added.
- The tuition and fee waiver program includes any person who was adopted and the subject of a written adoption assistance agreement.

Texas Education Code

54.211. Exemptions for Students in Foster or Other Residential Care

A student is exempt from the payment of tuition and fees authorized in this chapter if the student:

(1) Was in foster care or other residential care under the conservatorship of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services on or after:

- (A) The day preceding the student's 18th birthday;
- (B) The day of the student's 14th birthday, if the student was also eligible for adoption on or after that day; or
- (C) The day the student graduated from high school or received the equivalent of a high school diploma; and

(2) Enrolls in an institution of higher education as an undergraduate student not later than:

- (A) The third anniversary of the date the student was discharged from the foster or other residential care, the date the student graduated from high school, or the date the student received the equivalent of a high school diploma, whichever date is earliest; or
- (B) The student's 21st birthday.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 435, § 3, eff. June 6, 1993.
Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 731, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Texas Education Code

Sec. 54.2111. Exemptions For Adopted Students Formerly In Foster Or Other Residential Care

A student is exempt from the payment of tuition and fees authorized by this chapter if the

student:

- (1) was adopted; and
- (2) was the subject of an adoption assistance agreement under Subchapter D, Chapter 162, Family Code.

What is an Institute of Higher Education?

The ETV Program provides financial assistance for eligible youth who are enrolled in an "institution of higher education." This term is defined in the Higher Education Act (20 USCS §1001) as an "institution of higher education" which is a legally authorized public or nonprofit educational institution that is accredited or granted pre-accreditation status and, either:

1. Provides a bachelor's degree program or at least a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree, and admits only students having a high school diploma or its equivalent; or
2. Provides training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation, and admit only students who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance (i.e., at least 18 years old).

For a complete listing of Texas Institutions of Higher Education please go to:

<http://www.collegefortexans.com/cfbin/inst.cfm>

The website provides listings for:

Public Institutions

Universities

Community Colleges

Technical Colleges

Health Related Institutions

State Colleges

Independent Institutions

Universities

Junior/Community Colleges

Health Related Institutions

Distance Education Campuses

Independent Career Colleges Authorized to offer Applied Associate Degrees

Proprietary Schools

"PRIORITY APPLICATION DEADLINES"

Completed applications received on or by the deadline will receive priority consideration. Please provide information on which school year and semester you are applying for ETV Program assistances section provided:

DEADLINES:

- FALL - OCTOBER 1
- SPRING & SUMMER- MARCH 1

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If I am awarded \$5000 dollars how will I get my money?

A: Depending on which semesters you check on the application or applicant update form, the ETV award will be divided by the number of semesters you choose. For example, if you choose the Fall, you will have access to your full award. If you choose the Fall and Spring, you will have access to half for the Fall and half for the Spring. If you choose the Fall, Spring and Summer, your award will be divided by three.

Q: If I do not go to school in the Summer (3 hours the first summer session and 3 hours the second summer session) will I be able to use my money in the Fall and Spring?

A: Yes. You must indicate on your application what semesters you plan to attend. ETV will not be able to change your choice once you make it on the application.

Q: If I attend a vocational/training school, how will my money be divided?

A: Most vocational and training programs are not covered under your tuition waiver benefit. In most cases, all of your ETV award will then be used to pay for tuition and fees. If you do not use your entire ETV award for tuition, your ETV balance will be divided by the number of months in the program.

Q: Should I create a budget?

A: Yes!

Q: Can changing schools change my award amount?

A: Yes. ETV needs to be informed prior to change to adjust the cost of attendance.

Q: Should I make copies of all documents submitted to ETV?

A: YES! Mail gets lost; fax machines are not 100% reliable. If we did not receive your information the first time it is a good idea to keep records on file so it will not delay you from receiving benefits

Q: Is ETV an entitlement Program?

A: NO. ETV's purpose is to assist young people that are eligible and qualify for the program who have chosen to attend a postsecondary/vocational school. We strive to encourage our youth to commit themselves to a career or education.

Q: Who can help me apply for ETV?

A: Please contact your local Preparation for Adult Living Coordinator (PAL) or After-Care caseworker to assist you with applying for our program. If you do not have either one please contact ETV.

PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU WANT TO POST YOUR QUESTION ON OUR WEBSITE