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MEMORANDUM

TO: Florida College System Chief Academic and Student Affairs Officers

FROM: Julie Alexander, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs 

DATE: July 1, 2014

SUBJECT: House Bill 7015 *Congressman C.W. Bill Young Veteran Tuition Waiver Program*

House Bill 7015 created the *Congressman C.W. Bill Young Veteran Tuition Waiver Program*, authorizing an out-of-state fee waiver for honorably discharged veterans of the United States (U.S.) Armed Forces, U.S. Reserve Forces or the National Guard who physically reside in Florida. The frequently asked questions below focus specifically on section 36 of the bill (attached), which amends section (s.) 1009.26, Florida Statutes (F.S.), *fee waivers*, directing Florida College System (FCS) institutions to waive out-of-state fees for veterans who meet specified criteria. Each FCS institution is encouraged to place information about this waiver in a prominent location on its website.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What is the *Congressman C.W. Bill Young Veteran Tuition Waiver Program*?**
Established in s. 1009.26 (12)(a), F.S., the *Congressman C.W. Bill Young Veteran Tuition Waiver Program* is a program that requires a state university, Florida College System institution, or career center to waive out-of-state fees for an honorably discharged veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, the U.S. Reserve Forces or the National Guard who physically reside in Florida while enrolled in the institution. The waiver will cover the applicable portion of the fees up to 110 percent of the required credit hours for the degree or certificate program in which the student is enrolled.
- 2. Who is eligible to receive the out-of-state fee waiver?**
An honorably discharged veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, U.S. Reserve Forces or the National Guard who physically resides in the state while enrolled in a Florida College System institution is eligible to receive the fee waiver.
- 3. What are the United States Armed Forces?**
The U.S. Armed Forces consist of the: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy.

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Chancellor, The Florida College System

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4. What are the United States Reserve Forces?

The U.S. Reserve Forces are the: Marine Forces Reserve, Navy Reserve, Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve.

5. What are the National Guard Components?

The National Guard components are the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard.

6. What documentation must a veteran present to the FCS institution in order to be considered for this out-of-state fee waiver?

In order to be eligible for this out-of-state fee waiver, veterans will be expected to provide the following documentation:

- Proof that the veteran physically resides in the state. This may include, but is not limited to, a Florida driver license or Florida identification card.
- Proof that the veteran is honorably discharged. Information may be found on the veteran's DD214, discharge certificate or other documentation as deemed appropriate by the Florida College System institution.

7. Are active duty military or National Guard members eligible to receive this out-of-state fee waiver?

No; however, s. 1009.21 (10)(a), F.S., specifies that active duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces residing or stationed in Florida and active drilling members of the Florida National Guard are classified as residents for tuition purposes.

8. May a student receive both the Purple Heart tuition waiver pursuant to s. 1009.26 (8), F.S., and this out-of-state fee waiver?

It is possible that the same student could meet the eligibility criteria for both waivers. However, a student may receive the most benefit from the *Purple Heart and other combat decorations superior in precedence* tuition waiver. If a student is eligible for multiple waivers, he or she should receive the waiver that is most beneficial.

9. May this waiver apply to online programs and courses?

Yes, the waiver may be applied to online programs and courses.

10. May veterans who physically reside in a state other than Florida qualify to receive this waiver?

No, a veteran must physically reside in Florida to be eligible to receive the out-of-state fee waiver. This also applies to veterans who intend to enroll exclusively in online programs and courses.

11. Must student eligibility for this waiver be verified each term?

Yes, the institution must ensure the veteran physically resides in Florida each term. It is recommended that institutions encourage veterans to begin establishing residency for

tuition purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21, F.S., at the time of initial enrollment to facilitate reclassification as a Florida resident when documentation requirements are met. This may be helpful to the veteran since he/she will not have to prove physical presence in Florida each term as with the out-of-state fee waiver.

12. Will this waiver be automatically applied when an eligible veteran transfers from one institution to another?

Each institution must verify eligibility each term of enrollment due to the requirement of proof of physical presence in Florida.

13. This waiver may be applied to 110 percent of the required credit hours of the degree or certificate program for which the student is enrolled. What does this mean?

Students may enroll using the waiver for up to the number of credit hours that would equal 110 percent of the total number of required career or college credit hours of the student's intended degree or certificate program.

14. Would an eligible veteran be able to transfer the waiver to another degree or certificate program? If so, how will the 110 percent limit be applied?

Yes, an eligible veteran may switch programs and continue to be eligible for 110 percent of the program for which he/she is enrolled. All courses and credits applicable to the new program are applicable to the 110 percent cap.

15. Is there a limit on the number of times an eligible veteran may repeat a course using this waiver?

Yes, according to s.1009.285, F.S., *Fees for repeated enrollment in college-credit courses:*

A student enrolled in the same undergraduate college-credit course more than twice shall pay tuition at 100 percent of the full cost of instruction and shall not be included in calculations of full-time equivalent enrollments for state funding purposes.

Therefore, a student will be required to pay 100 percent of the full cost of instruction if a course is repeated more than twice. All course attempts are counted towards the 110 percent limit unless an exception has been granted for extenuating circumstances.

16. Does an eligible veteran need to maintain continuous enrollment in order to remain eligible for this waiver?

No, a veteran who meets the specified criteria will remain eligible for this waiver until the 110 percent limit is reached.

17. Are FCS institutions required to provide this waiver?

Yes, this waiver is not discretionary. This waiver is applicable to all veterans who initiate the verification process and meet the eligibility criteria.

18. May a spouse or dependent of an eligible veteran use this waiver?

No, the waiver is only applicable for the eligible veteran.

19. Does a FCS institution automatically administer this waiver?

No, a veteran must request this waiver. The FCS institution must verify the veteran meets eligibility criteria, including physical residence in Florida, prior to administering this waiver; therefore, it is not automatically applied.

20. When are FCS institutions required to start administering this waiver?

The effective date is July 1, 2014; therefore, this waiver is applicable for eligible veterans for terms starting on or after July 1, 2014.

21. Are currently enrolled veterans who are classified as non-Florida residents for tuition purposes eligible for this waiver?

Yes, all veterans who meet the eligibility criteria are eligible to receive the waiver.

22. Are eligible veterans able to receive a refund of out-of-state fees charged/paid for enrollment prior to July 1, 2014?

No, this waiver is applicable for terms starting on or after July 1, 2014.

The bill also requires that each institution report to the State Board of Education the number and value of all fee waivers granted annually under the *Congressman C.W. Bill Young Tuition Waiver Act*. The addition of a value to the data element titled *Fee Classification Residency* (Student Database, data element 1004, table value "B") has been discussed with reports coordinators (MISATFOR meeting, April 16, 2014) for state reporting purposes and will be implemented with the effective date of the bill, July 1, 2014.

For questions or more information, contact Narcissus Willis, Coordinator of Student Affairs, at narcissus.willis@fldoe.org.

JA/nwc

Attachment

cc: Randy Hanna, Chancellor
Kasongo Butler, Division of Florida Colleges (DFC)
Suzanne Tart, Division of Finance and Operations
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Tanya Cooper, FDOE
Florida College System (FCS) Veterans Certifying Officials
FCS Registrars and Admissions Officers
FCS Lobbyists
FCS Business Officers
FCS Advisors