

Florida State University Policy 5-2

Title of Policy: HOMELESS STUDENT TUITION AND FEE WAIVER

Responsible Executive: Vice President for Student Affairs

Effective Date: July 1, 2022

Revision History: ~~Established~~ New 4/8/2020, Amended _____

I. INTRODUCTION

The Florida Homeless Tuition Waiver is available to a student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private shelter designed to provide temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

A multi-disciplined committee is established to review applications at the beginning of each term. The committee is comprised of individuals from: the Department of Student Support & Transitions, CARE, Financial Aid, Student Business Services. Each individual identified on the committee, will also have a proxy who has the authority of the designated area, to approve/deny an application in the event that a member is unavailable. This is to ensure a swift process for students experiencing homelessness. The Department of Student Support & Transitions coordinates the process for determining a student's eligibility for the waiver. Student Business Services collects documentation from University entities to support students' eligibility and to process the waivers. Student Financial Aid provides information to the committee pertaining to the impact of the waiver on the students' overall financial aid package. CARE provides connection to and information regarding students currently involved in the process. The Purpose of the committee is to review applications and to determine if the student meets the Homeless waiver criteria that is set forth by BOG regulation: 7.008(3) (i). The committee will proceed under the procedures in Appendix A.

II. POLICY

A. Eligibility Criteria

To qualify students must:

1. Provide appropriate documentation pursuant to (B) Documentation.
2. Complete and file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) - recommended
3. Be enrolled at FSU (non-degree, undergraduate, and graduate programs)

B. Documentation

To qualify for the Homeless Tuition Waiver a student must provide official documentation stating that the "individual lacks fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence". Documentation can be:

1. Letter from Federal/State Agency, within the State of Florida (may include any of the following)
 - i. Local School district personnel
 - ii. State homeless education coordinators
 - iii. Financial aid administrators from other colleges
 - iv. Staff from college access programs (like Unconquered Scholars), college or high school counselors

2. Official record of being a homeless child or youth as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Any student who is determined to be a homeless child or youth for a preceding award year is presumed to be a homeless child or youth for each subsequent year unless the student informs the institution that the student's circumstances have changed or the institution has specific conflicting information about the student's independence, and has informed the student of this information. Examples of students who fall under this definition are as follows:
 - i. Children and youth living in motels, hotels, or camps grounds due to lack of alternative accommodation
 - ii. Children and youth living in emergency or transitional shelters
 - iii. Children and youth abandoned in hospitals
 - iv. Children and youth awaiting foster care placement
 - v. Children and youth whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc.)
 - vi. Children and youth living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations.

3. Official statement from a third party who can verify the student's homelessness. An Official Statement must be on letterhead and contain an original signature of the individual providing the documentation.
 - i. Private or publicly funded homeless shelters and service providers
 - ii. Mental health professional, social worker, doctor, clergy, or local law enforcement
 - iii. Department of Student Support & Transitions Case Manager

4. Verification from previous institution of waiver approval (applicable to transient or transfer students)

C. Award Amount

The tuition waiver provides exemption from paying any tuition and fees as defined by BOG 7.001 Tuition & Fees (1) & (5). Any costs or fees not defined in the statute are not included in the waiver.

D. Renewing the Homeless Tuition Waiver

1. Students previously approved by FSU for the Homeless Waiver remain eligible for each subsequent semester unless the student informs the institution that the

student's circumstances have changed or the institution has specific conflicting information about the student's independence, and has informed the student of this information.

2. Students must continue to meet the eligibility requirements pursuant to Sections A and B.

III. LEGAL SUPPORT, JUSTIFICATION, AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

- A. Section 1009.25(1)(f), Florida Statutes
- B. BOG Regulation: 7.008(3)(i)
- C. HB1577 Homeless Youth
- D. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Vice President for Student Affairs to determine if it continues to comply with applicable State and Federal regulations.

_____ Signature of approving Authority, date

Appendix A

Homeless Waiver Committee Procedures – Initial Application

1. Application is submitted and uploaded into Canvas.
2. Committee members meet and review the application. The committee will meet approximately two weeks prior to the start of the semester to review applications. The committee will hold two additional meetings during the first and second week of classes.
3. Applications reviewed outside of the review window will be reviewed by the committee members independently and a review sheet will be formulated with the reviewers' signatures.
4. During the review the applications are discussed and the committee determines if the applications meet the criteria as outlined by the Board of Governors.
5. The reviewers will fill out a recommendation form that advises if the application meets criteria, is insufficient, or does not meet criteria. These review sheets are then uploaded into canvas.
6. If the recommendation meets criteria, Student Business Services will apply the waiver and notify the student.
7. If the recommendation does not meet or documentation is insufficient, Case Management Services will reach out to the student to discuss the reason for the denial, process to appeal, and to offer supportive services.

Students Previously Approved for Waiver

1. Student Business Services will pull a query of all students currently receiving the waiver and carry them forward to the subsequent term, as long as they are enrolled.
2. Students currently approved to receive the Homeless Waiver will be grandfathered into the policy.