

# State Scholarships and Grant Programs

Government Finance Officers Spring 2024 Conference





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State Scholarship Policies, Regulations and Administration (LIFE, HOPE, Palmetto Fellows)

#### **Scholarship Regulations**

- Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Regulations (PDF)
- LIFE Scholarship Regulations (PDF)
- SC HOPE Scholarship Regulations (PDF)
- SC Need-based Grant Regulations (PDF)
- <u>Lottery Tuition Assistance Program Regulations (PDF)</u>
- Free Tuition for Residents Over 60 (PDF)
- Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Eligibility at Two-Year Institutions and Technical Colleges for Fall 2021 Term (PDF)

#### **Scholarship Administration**

- <u>Policies and Instructions for Applications for Academic Program and Course Eligibility for Scholarship</u>
  <u>Enhancement (PDF)</u>
- Policy for the Addition and Removal of Programs to the List of Programs Eligible for Scholarship
   Enhancements (PDF)
- LIFE and Palmetto Fellows Math and Science Scholarship Enhancements
- Palmetto Fellows Application Timeline (PDF)
- Notification to Institutions (Regarding Provisos 117.159 and 117.183)
- Final Ranking Reports 2023

#### **Related Trainings**



- Must be a South Carolina resident;
- Must be a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident;
- Must be enrolled as degree-seeking student at an eligible South Carolina public or independent institution;
- Must <u>not</u> owe refund or repayment on any State or Federal financial aid and not be in default on a Federal student loan; and
- <u>Never</u> been convicted of any felonies and have <u>not</u> been convicted of any second or subsequent alcohol/drug-related misdemeanor offenses within the past academic year (excluding Lottery Tuition Assistance).



# Residency

#### **Section 62-600 Rates of Tuition and Fees**

A. Resident classification is an essential part of tuition and fee determination, admission regulations, scholarship eligibility, and other relevant policies of the state. It is important that institutions have fair and equitable regulations that can be administered consistently and are sensitive to the interests of both students and the state. The Commission on Higher Education hereby establishes regulations for the Statute Governing Residency for Tuition and Fee Purposes to be applied consistently by all South Carolina institutions of higher education. These regulations do not address residency matters relating to in county categories used within the State's technical colleges.

#### What this means

Every S.C institution that awards state scholarship or grants, regardless of type, has the responsibility of making residency decisions. It is important that proper training is given to all residency officers so that they can make correct determinations.

## **Typical Steps to a Residency Determination**

#### After Student has Indicated if They are Independent or Dependent

Moves into State and Establishes Domicile

• Establishes Domicile - Rent/Lease/Own - Need paperwork in file for audit purposes

Check Important

Documents

- 45 Days from date of signature on domicile to register vehicle
- 90 Days from date of signature on domicile to relinquish out of state license
- Taxes/Divorce Decree/LES

Check for Exceptions

- Active duty military
- Retirees
- Faculty at Public Colleges/Universities
- Working Full-time in SC
- Veterans and covered individuals using specific education benefits

Wait 12 months

• If no exceptions are met, then 12 months from date of domicile. The next academic term of attendance will be first term of eligibility for in-state rates

<sup>\*</sup> CHE staff's primary role in this process is to provide guidance to institutions as they make their decisions.



### **State Scholarship Eligibility** Requirements

#### QUALIFYING CRITERIA

**SC HOPE** 

\$2,800

LIFE

\$5,000

- Attend an eligible four-year institution
- 3.0 SC UGP GPA

#### CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- 3.0 LIFE GPA; and
- · Earn an average of 30 credit hours by the end of the first academic year\*

If a SC HOPE recipient satisfies the above criteria, they move into the LIFE scholarship program beginning in their 2nd academic year



#### Two-Year Institution

3.0 SC UGP GPA

Four-year Institution (Meet 2 out of 3)

- 3.0 SC UGP GPA
- 1100 SAT or 22 ACT
- Rank in top 30% of graduating class\*

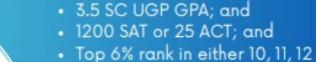


- · 3.0 LIFE GPA; and
- Earn an average of 30 credit hours by the end of the first academic year\*

Up to eight terms of eligibility towards first Bachelors degree

\*Academic year: Fall, Spring, Summer "Can use AP, IB, Dual Enrollment, and CLEP hours towards credit hour requirement





Without regard to rank (Alternative Criteria)

- 4.0 SC UGP GPA; and
- 1400 SAT or 31 ACT

\*Mid-year graduates MUST apply prior to mid-year graduation date



· Earn 30 credit hours each academic year

Up to eight terms of eligibility towards first Bachelors degree

"Academic year: Fall, Spring, Summer "Cannot use AP, IB, Dual Enrollment, or CLEP hours towards credit hour requirement



\$6,700 year 1 \$7,500 year 2-4



# State Grants Eligibility Requirements



- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress
- After attempting 24 hours, earn a minimum 2.0 GPA; and
- Complete the FAFSA annually

Students are not eligible to receive Lottery Tuition Assistance for more than one certificate, diploma, or degree earned within any five-year period unless the additional certificate, diploma, or degree constitutes progress in the same field of study.

- 2.0 GPA; and
- · Earn 24 credit hours; and
- Complete the FAFSA annually, so 'in need' status can be confirmed.

# 62- 253 CAP Program Terms of Eligibility (Student Eligibility) A - B

# Service Members (SM) General Eligibility Requirements

A. Members of the National Guard (NG) enrolled or planning to enroll in an eligible institution may apply to the National Guard for a college assistance program benefit.

B. College assistance program benefits may be applied by giving priority to service members in areas of critical need. The National Guard will determine areas of critical need.

#### 62-254

# Participant Application Process and Continued Eligibility (C)

# Service Members (SM) General Eligibility Requirements

#### C. To qualify, an applicant must:

- (1) Be in good standing with the active NG at the beginning of each academic year and remain a member in good standing with the active NG throughout the entire academic year for which benefits are payable;
- (2) Have valid tuition and fee expenses from an eligible institution;
- (3) Maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the institution;
- (4) Be a U.S. citizen or a legal permanent resident who meets the definition of an eligible non-citizen under State Residency Statutes;
- (5) Be admitted, enrolled, and classified as a degree-seeking full-time or part-time student at an eligible institution in South Carolina; and
- (6) Satisfy additional eligibility requirements as may be promulgated by the Commission.

# Awarding Process

## **SC HOPE**

62-900.125.A. Institutional Policies and Procedures for Awarding

SC HOPE Scholarship awards are to be used only for payment toward the cost-of-attendance as established by Title IV regulations. The award amount shall not exceed two thousand eight hundred dollars (includes \$300 book allowance) during the freshman year only. Half shall be awarded during the fall term and half during the spring term (or its equivalent). The SC HOPE Scholarship in combination with all other gift aid, including federal, State, private and institutional funds, shall not exceed the cost-of attendance as defined in Title IV regulations for any academic year.



62-1200.60.I. Institutional Policies and Procedures for Awarding: LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement

LIFE Scholarship awards are to be used only for payment toward the cost-of-attendance as established by Title IV Regulations. Eligible four-year public and independent institutions shall identify award amounts up to the cost-of-tuition for thirty credit hours, not to exceed four thousand seven hundred dollars, plus a three hundred dollar book allowance (maximum \$5,000 including cost-of-tuition plus book allowance) per academic year. Eligible two-year public or technical institutions shall identify award amounts, which cannot exceed the cost-of-tuition for thirty credit hours plus a three hundred dollar book allowance (maximum \$5,000 including cost-of-tuition plus book allowance) per academic year. For students enrolled at eligible two-year independent institutions, the award amount shall not exceed the maximum cost-of-tuition at the two-year USC regional institutions plus a three hundred dollar book allowance (not to exceed a maximum award amount of \$5,000 including cost-of-tuition plus book allowance) per academic year. Half shall be awarded during the fall term and half during the spring term (or its equivalent), assuming continued eligibility. The LIFE Scholarship in combination with all other gift aid, including Federal, State, private and institutional funds, shall not exceed the cost-ofattendance as defined in Title IV regulations for any academic year.



**62-330.E.** Policies and Procedures for Awarding

In determining the amount awarded for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Enhancement, all other sources of gift aid, including federal, State, private and institutional funds, must be applied to the unmet cost-of-attendance before calculating the Scholarship and Enhancement amounts and making the award. Adjustments to the financial aid package will be made to the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Enhancement in accordance with prescribed Title IV regulations in order to prevent an over-award.

## Awarding PFS at SC Technical College

#### If Student has Palmetto Fellows and SC WINS eligibility:

1 Calculation of Need-based Aid

Cost of Attendance
-SAI (Student Aid Index- FAFSA)

Student's Financial Need

Awarding of Need-based Aid (Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, Direct Subsidized Loan, Federal Work-Study, SC Need-based Grant, etc.)

3 Calculation of PFS Eligibility

Cost of Attendance
- All Awarded Aid
Student's Eligibility for PFS

**2** Determination of Non-Need-based Aid

Cost of Attendance
- All Need-based Aid

Student's Eligibility for Non-need-based Aid

- Awarding of all other sources of Aid (Institutional, Federal, State (SC Tech scholarships, LTAP, LIFE), private scholarships, etc.)

Calculation of SC WINS Eligibility

Cost of Attendance
- All Awarded Aid
Student's Eligibility for SC WINS



\*SC WINS is last dollar to student's COA, per statute.

If the student does <u>not</u> qualify for SC WINS, you would award PFS last to COA, per regulation.



62-900.185 Institutional Disbursement of Funds

A. Actual award amounts are dependent upon the number of eligible students and the amount of funding available each academic year. Lottery Tuition Assistance may not exceed the cost of in-state tuition at the State two-year public institutions for the academic year for which the award is made at the designated institution. At independent two-year institutions, the amount cannot exceed the highest in-state tuition rate at a twoyear public institution. In calculating the amount awarded in Lottery Tuition Assistance, all federal grants and Need-based Grants must be awarded first before determining the amount eligible in Lottery Tuition Assistance to be used for payment towards cost-of-tuition.



**62-470.E. Policies and Procedures** 

In determining the amount awarded for the Need-based Grant, all other sources of gift aid, including Federal, State, private and institutional funds, must be applied to the total cost-of-attendance before calculating the unmet need and awarding the grant. The Need-based Grant shall be awarded only after all other sources of gift aid have been exhausted. Adjustments to the financial aid package will be made to the Need-based Grant in accordance with prescribed Title IV Regulations in order to prevent an overaward.

## **SC National Guard**

**College Assistance Program (CAP)** 

62- 252 Program
 Benefits and
 Maximum
 Assistance

A. Qualified members of the National Guard may receive college assistance program benefits up to an amount equal to one hundred percent of college cost of attendance, provided, however, these college assistance program benefits in combination with all other grants and scholarships shall not exceed the cost of attendance at the particular eligible institution in any given award year.

1) CAP benefits cover the cost of attendance; however, the benefit maximum per award year may be reduced if, in combination with other financial aid, the cumulative total of all aid received would exceed the cost of attendance.

## **SC National Guard**

**College Assistance Program (CAP)** 

62- 252 Program
 Benefits and
 Maximum
 Assistance

- (2) The annual maximum grant will be determined prior to the beginning of each academic year based on the amount of available program funds.
- (3) Disbursements of this grant will typically be paid in two (fall semester, spring semester, or its equivalent) equal disbursements. Any remaining funds can be used in any succeeding terms prior to annual expiration date.

Lifetime Max (Air and Army) – 4 Year Institutions \$ 22,000.00 Max per Academic Year (AY) 5,500 per year - \$ 2,750 per term

Lifetime Max (Air ONLY) - 2-year Institutions \$ 22,000.00 Max per Academic Year (AY) \$11,000 per year - \$5,500 per term





# Financial Aid Awarding Language and Auditing



Lottery Tuition Assistance

 62-900.150. Purpose of the Lottery Tuition Assistance Program

Need-based Grants  62-455.(B) Allocation of Need-based Grant Funds to Public and Independent Institutions.

SC HOPE Scholarship

• 62-900.85. Purpose of the SC HOPE Scholarship Program

LIFE Scholarship

• 62-1200.1.Purpose of the LIFE Scholarship Program.

Palmetto Fellows Scholarship • 62-300. (C) Purpose of the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and Scholarship Enhancement.

Independent and public institutions of higher learning in this, or any other state in the U.S., are prohibited from using State Scholarship and Grants in programs that promote financial aid incentives or packages. Any mention of State Scholarships and Grants in these financial aid packages must indicate the scholarships and grants to be separate from the University that is offering the financial aid package, and reference the State Scholarship and Grant as a separate financial aid award, provided to the student by the State of South Carolina.



Lottery Tuition Assistance

 62-900.195. (C) Program Administration and Audits.

Need-based Grants  62-500. (D) Program Administration and Audits

SC HOPE Scholarship

• 62-900.135. (C) Program
Administration and Audits

LIFE Scholarship 62-1200.70. (C) Program
 Administration and Audits: LIFE
 Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship
 Enhancement.

Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

• 62-370. (C) Program Administration and Audits

The Chief Executive Officer at each eligible independent and public institution shall identify to the Commission on Higher Education an institutional representative who is responsible for the operation of the Program on the campus and will serve as the contact person for the Program. The institutional representative will act as the student's fiscal agent to receive and deliver funds for use under the Program.

# **Program Administration**

The institution is responsible for determining SC residency and lawful presence of all State **Scholarship and Grant** recipients. If it is determined that the institution has failed to verify the lawful presence and **SC** residency of all State **Scholarship and Grant** recipient, the institution shall immediately reimburse the funds disbursed in error.

#### **Lottery Tuition Assistance (LTAP)**

62-900.190. (A) Refunds and Repayments.

#### **Need-Based Grants**

62-495. (D) Refunds and Repayments.

#### **SC HOPE Scholarship**

62-900.140. (D) Suspension or Termination of Institutional Participation

#### LIFE Scholarship

62-1200.75. (D) Suspension or Termination of Institutional Participation: LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement.

#### **Palmetto Fellows Scholarship**

62-365. (C) Refunds and Repayments.



Lottery • 62-900.195. Program Administration **Tuition** and Audits. **Assistance** • 62-500. Program Administration and **Need-based Grants SC HOPE** • 62-900.135. Program Administration **Scholarship** and Audits • 62-1200.70. Program Administration and Audits: LIFE Scholarship and LIFE **Scholarship** Scholarship Enhancement. **Palmetto** • 62-370. Program Administration and **Fellows Audits Scholarship** 

A. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education shall be responsible for the oversight of functions (e.g., guidelines, policies, rules, regulations) relative to this Program with the eligible independent and public institutions. The Commission on Higher Education shall be responsible for the allocation of funds, promulgation of guidelines and regulation governing the Program, any audits, or other oversight as may be deemed necessary to monitor the expenditure of funds.



Lottery • 62-900.195. Program Administration **Tuition** and Audits. **Assistance** • 62-500. Program Administration and **Need-based Grants SC HOPE** • 62-900.135. Program Administration **Scholarship** and Audits • 62-1200.70. Program Administration and Audits: LIFE Scholarship and LIFE **Scholarship** Scholarship Enhancement. **Palmetto** • 62-370. Program Administration and **Fellows Audits Scholarship** 

B. According to the Audit Policies and Procedures for Scholarship and Grant Programs Manual, all eligible independent and public institutions must abide by all Program policies, rules and regulations. Institutions also agree to maintain and provide all pertinent information, records, reports or any information as may be required or requested by the Commission on Higher Education or the General Assembly to ensure proper administration of the Program.



Institutions may retain annual paper or electronic documentation for each award to include at a minimum. These are located in CHE's Audit Policies & Procedures for Scholarship and Grant Program Manual.

- LTAP: 62-900.195. (B) Program Administration and Audits.
- Need-Based Grants: 62-500. (B)
   Program Administration and Audits.
- **SC HOPE:** 62-900.135. (B) Program Administration and Audits
- LIFE: 62-1200.70. (B) Program
   Administration and Audits: LIFE
   Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship
   Enhancement.
- Palmetto Fellows: 62-370. (B)
   Program Administration and Audits.

- Award notification;
- Enrollment status and degree-seeking status;
- Student's residency status and citizenship status;
- Affidavit/Certification documenting that the student is <u>not in default or</u> does not owe a <u>refund</u> on any state/federal financial aid;
- Affidavit/Certification documenting that the student has <u>never been</u>
   <u>convicted of any felonies</u> and has not been convicted of any second or
   subsequent alcohol/ drug related misdemeanor offense within the past
   academic year;
- Institutional disbursements to student;
- Military orders (if appropriate);
- Verification from Institutional Disability Services Provider of student's disability and approval of reduced course-load requirement (if appropriate);
- Verification of cumulative GPA and annual credit hours for renewal purposes;
- Verification from academic department of enrollment in a declared major in an eligible degree program (Enhancement purposes);
- Verification student met fourteen credit hour requirement at the end of the first year of college enrollment for the 07-08 freshman class and thereafter;



#### Α. В. The Commission on Higher Upon receipt of evidence If an audit indicates that a **Lottery Tuition Assistance (LTAP) Education may review** that an institution has failed violation(s) may have 62-900.200. Suspension or Termination of Institutional institutional administrative occurred or are occurring at to comply, the Commission Participation. practices to determine on Higher Education shall any eligible independent or notify the institution in public institution, the **compliance** with pertinent **Need-Based Grants** writing of the nature of such statutes, guidelines, rules or Commission on Higher 62-505. Suspension or Termination of regulations. If such a review allegations and conduct an Education shall secure Institutional Participation. determines that an audit. immediate reimbursement institution has failed to from the institution in the **SC HOPE Scholarship** 62-900.140. Suspension or comply with Program event that any funds were Termination of Institutional expended out of compliance statutes, guidelines, rules or Participation regulations, the Commission with the provisions of the on Higher Education may Act, any relevant statutes, LIFE Scholarship suspend, terminate, or place guidelines, rules, and 62-1200.75. Suspension or certain conditions upon the regulations. Termination of Institutional Participation: LIFE Scholarship and LIFE institution's continued Scholarship Enhancement. participation in the Program and require reimbursement to the Program for any funds **Palmetto Fellows Scholarship** lost or improperly awarded. 62-375. Suspension or Termination of Institutional Participation.

# Audit Requirements





South Carolina State Appropriations Act, Section 3.1 of the Lottery Expenditure Account states:

- "For institutions of higher learning, adopted procedures to monitor expenditures of lottery funds shall be reported to the Commission on Higher Education and the Executive Budget Office by October [first of each year], and
- O [T]hese expenditures are subject to <u>annual verification and audit</u> by the Commission on Higher Education on a <u>rotation schedule not to exceed three years</u>."



# Audit Review Process



# **Review Process**

Engagement Letter Initial Desk Review Remote or On-Site Review Draft Report Final Report





- Review initial documentation requested in engagement letter
  - Institutional policies and procedures including polices on refunds, credit hour transfers, cumulative GPAs, residency, post-award evaluation and continued eligibility
  - Cost of Attendance budgets and any supporting documents
  - Institutional list of scholarship recipients
- CHEMIS Reconciliation
  - Invoices
  - Award File
- Sample Selection from the Institutional list of scholarship recipients
  - Randomly selected
  - Provided prior to remote or on-site review





#### **Remote or On-Site Review**

- **▶** Entrance Conference
  - ▶ Policies and Procedures
  - Compliance Questionnaire
- Data Verification
  - Eligibility –General, Initial and Continued
  - Awarding and Disbursement
  - ► Record Retention
- Exit Conference
  - Findings
  - Observations





#### Eligibility

- Citizenship and residency
- Student classification
- Initial enrollment date and enrollment status
- SAT/ACT scores
- Final High School Transcript
- Ranking Report
- Collegiate GPA
- Needs Analysis

#### **Award Disbursement**

- Award amounts disbursed to students for each term
- Number of credit hours students were enrolled at the time of disbursement
- Total Gift Aid
- COA

#### **Record Retention**

- Award Notifications/Award Letter
- LIFE GPA Verification/Calculation
- Annual Scholarship Certification /Affidavit
- Scholarship Terms and Conditions



#### **Exit Conference Observations and Issues**

#### **Observations**

- Residency verification process is documented and in place
- Awarding policies and procedures are documented and in place
- Student files contain required documentation

#### Issues

- High School Transcripts
  - Independent High Schools
  - Home School Associations
- CHEMIS Reconciliation
  - Late Awards & Adjustments
- Scholarship Terms and Conditions



## Reporting

- O Preliminary Draft Report
  - E-mailed to the Institution's President
  - Includes findings, criteria, and recommendations
  - Written response within 10 business days
  - Electronic copy provided to Financial Aid Director and others as directed
- Final Report
  - Includes written response(s) from Institution
  - E-mailed to the Institution's President
  - Electronic copy provided to Financial Aid Director and others as directed



# Recovered Funds And Invoicing





Institutions must reimburse the applicable scholarship and grant program the amount of the award in question pursuant to the refund policy of the institution for students who:

- drop below full-time enrollment;
- withdraw from the institution;
- are suspended or expelled from the institution; or
- are awarded a scholarship or grant in error as a result of not meeting the eligibility requirements for the program.

Institutions should ensure the Office of Financial Aid maintains records to support all refunds or repayments.



#### **Recovered Funds**

Refunds mail to:

Ms. Yolanda Myers
Office of Fiscal Affairs
1122 Lady Street, Suite 400
Columbia, SC 29201

- Remember to mail the following with the refund check:
  - Scholarship or Grant name
  - Term and year (Fall, Spring, Summer, Winter of 20XX)
  - Dollar amount(s)
  - Student name(s)





## **Invoicing CHE for Grants and Scholarships**

- Send invoices for PFS, LIFE, HOPE ,SCNBG and LTAP to: <a href="mailto:invoice@che.sc.gov">invoice@che.sc.gov</a>.
- Send invoices for Foster Care Youth Program, College Transition Grant Program & Scholarship to: kharris@che.sc.gov.
- Send invoices for SC National Guard College Assistance Program to: <a href="mailto:amincy@che.sc.gov">amincy@che.sc.gov</a>.
- O No limit on how many invoices can be submitted during a term.
- Effective July 1, 2024, CHE will no longer accept invoices for any academic years before 2024-2025.
- Exception may be granted for Summer 2024 adjustments:
- Current Due Dates:

Spring 2024 and Before Invoices due April 1, 2024 / Due Now

Summer 2024 Invoices due June 1, 2024

Summer 2024 Adjustments *only* Invoices due August 20, 2024

Refunds 20XX No due date



# Questions?



# **CHE Contact Information**

#### Dr. Karen Woodfaulk

Director of Student Affairs (803) 856-0578 <a href="mailto:kwoodfaulk@che.sc.gov">kwoodfaulk@che.sc.gov</a>

#### Dr. Gerrick Hampton

Associate Director and Program Manager (803) 856-0609 <a href="mailto:ghampton@che.sc.gov">ghampton@che.sc.gov</a>

#### Ms. Kathryn (Katie) Harris

Scholarships and Grants Program Manager (803) 856-0738 <a href="mailto:kharris@che.sc.gov">kharris@che.sc.gov</a>

#### Ms. Tanya Weigold

Scholarships and Grants Program Coordinator (803) 856-0672 <a href="mailto:tweigold@che.sc.gov">tweigold@che.sc.gov</a>

#### Ms. Alfie Mincy

SCNG CAP Program Coordinator (803) 856-0579 <a href="mailto:amincy@che.sc.gov">amincy@che.sc.gov</a>

#### Mr. Bryce Wilson, CPA, CGFO

Director of Fiscal Affairs (803) 856-0555 bwilson@che.sc.gov