

## **Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award Policies and Procedures**

The Cowlitz Tribe views trade/vocational training and college or university degrees as an investment in both the Tribal member and the future of our Tribal community.

The Education Committee and staff administer the Tuition Assistance Award program and will use these Policies and Procedures as guidelines. These Policies and Procedures are effective on the date they are approved by the Tribal Council.

By accepting Tribal funds from the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award program, the applicant/award recipient agrees to comply with these Policies and Procedures.

The Cowlitz Tribe will support tribal members who meet the eligibility requirements and are progressing toward a certificate or degree. The amount of funding available is dependent on the Tribe's ability to fund and the Tribal Council's annual budget approval. The Cowlitz Tribe does not guarantee the amount of funding beyond the current budgeted year.

Tribal funding will support one of each of the following certificates/degrees:

- Trade/Vocational/Professional Certificate
- Associate Degree
- Bachelor Degree
- Master Degree
- Doctorate Degree

Students must be enrolled in a course of study leading to a certificate or degree from an accredited trade/vocational/professional certificate program or an accredited college or university.

Study abroad and study at stateside schools will be funded at the same level and under the same rules.

Applications will be accepted beginning January 1 of each year until funds are exhausted. Applications will then be accepted for a waiting list. If additional funding becomes available, assistance will be offered to those on the waiting list in the order the applications were received.

Academic year is defined as June 1, current year through May 31, following year. Funds must be spent for tuition and tuition related fees in the academic year they are awarded and may be drawn down for classes beginning on or after June 1. Unused award funds from the current academic year will not rollover to future academic years. Refunds and unused funds will be returned to the Tribe.

An award recipient cannot benefit by adjusting the start date of their academic year. The recipient is limited to one award in a twelve month period and not more than two awards in a twenty-four month period. Start date of an alternate academic year is defined as the first day of classes of an academic quarter/semester/term.

Following committee approval of an application, a letter of award including a Request for Payment form and instructions on how to draw down the award will be e-mailed to the successful applicant. Reminders will be e-mailed periodically throughout the academic year.

A student will confirm their enrollment status at the start of each academic quarter/semester/term by submitting a Request for Payment form and an invoice/statement with school name, student name and student identification number as proof of enrollment.

Students changing enrollment status must notify the Cowlitz Education Office via e-mail within two weeks of the change in enrollment. Examples of change in enrollment status: a delay in start date, withdrawal from one or more classes, or a change of school. When you notify the Cowlitz Education Office of the change in enrollment status; include the reason for this change. Examples of reasons: health or academics. Future awards may be reduced by the amount of loss as a result of withdrawing from classes.

A student may appeal Education Committee actions within 30 days of notification of that action. All appeals requesting reconsideration must be submitted via e-mail to the Cowlitz Education Office. On receipt of the appeal, the Education Committee will review the reasons for reconsideration and determine if the appeal should be rejected or upheld. The appellant will be notified within 30 days of the result of their appeal.

Issues not covered in these Policies and Procedures will be addressed by the Education Committee on a case-by-case basis.

The Education Committee may amend Policies and Procedures from time to time.

These Policies and Procedures will be included in the Tuition Assistance Award application packet.

Approved by Education Committee: December 18, 2018

Approved by Cowlitz Tribal Council: January 5, 2019