



Division of Postsecondary State Authorization

Initial Authorization Training

October 2020

THEC  **TSAC**

Relentlessly focused on increasing the number of
Tennesseans with a postsecondary credential



Initial Authorization Training Manual

Table of Contents

- **Authorized Institutions Overview**
- **Resource Material**
 - **THEC Website**
 - **Statutes and Rules**
- **Annual Obligations**
 - **Reauthorization**
 - **Student Level Statistical Data (SLSD) Collection**
 - **Tuition Guaranty Fund**
- **Website and Advertising Compliance**
- **Student Files**
- **Forms and Applications**
- **Complaints**



Authorized Institutions Overview



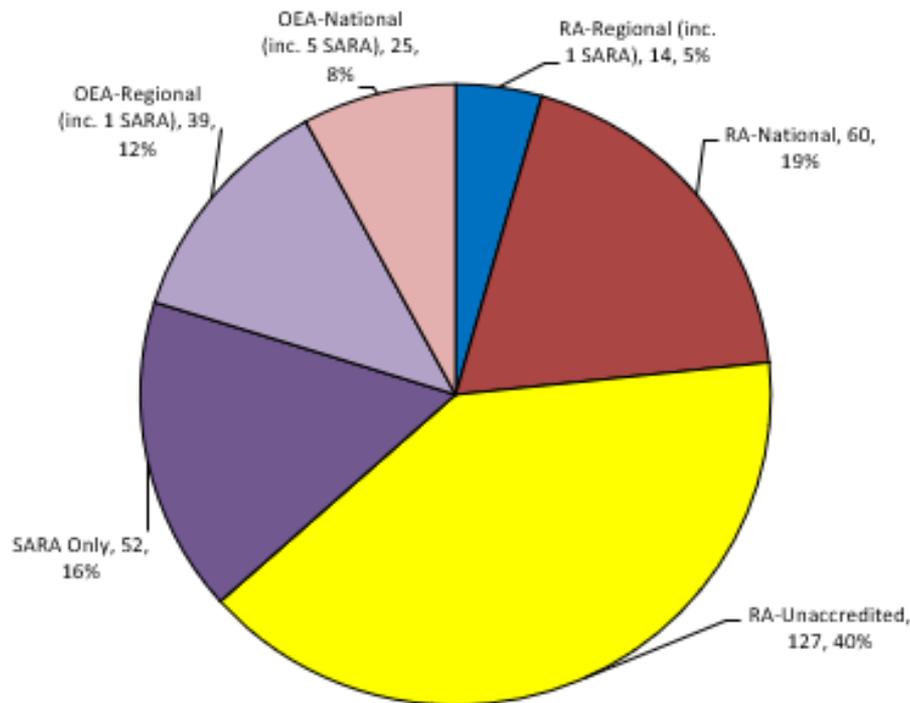
Authorized Institutions Overview

- Pursuant to the Tennessee Higher Education Authorization Act of 2016 (HEAA) (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2001, *et seq.*) the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) is directly responsible for the oversight and operation of degree and non-degree granting accredited and unaccredited institutions that offer a wide variety of academic, career, technical and trade programs.
- The division within THEC that staffs these functions is the Division of Postsecondary State Authorization (DPSA).



Authorized Institutions Overview

(Data as of October 14, 2020)



- 317 Institutions Authorized/Approved
 - 200 RA and 1 RA & SARA
 - 14 are regionally accredited
 - 60 are nationally accredited
 - 127 are unaccredited
 - 139 are for-profit
 - 62 are not-for-profit or government
 - Approximately 815 programs offered
 - 58 OEA and 6 OEA & SARA
 - 39 are regionally accredited
 - 25 are nationally accredited
 - 40 are for-profit
 - 24 are not-for-profit or government
 - Approximately 3060 programs offered
 - 52 SARA only participating institutions
 - 23 institutions are public institutions
 - 26 institutions are private institutions.
- RA and OEA institutions enrolled approximately 48,000 students in June/July 2018-2019.



THEC Website

tn.gov/thec



THEC Website: tn.gov/thec

Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Search all THEC

About THEC | Bureaus | Learn About | Data and Reports | News and Events | Contact Us

Academic Affairs and Student Success

Access and Outreach

Finance and Administration

Legal and External Affairs

Policy Planning and Research

Student Aid and Compliance

COVID-19 INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

COVID-19 CAMPUS & FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

Colleges & Universities

View Tennessee institutions by region

Student Aid and Compliance

Postsecondary State Authorization

Financial Aid Compliance

College Access

Communication Services

FAFSA Grants and Scholarships



THEC Website: tn.gov/thec

Link to
Statutes and
Rules.

Postsecondary State Authorization

The Higher Education Authorization Act of 2016, [T.C.A. 549-7-2001 et seq.](#), [T.C.A. 549-7-144](#) and Rule Chapters [1540-01-02](#) and [1540-01-10](#) govern the regulation of postsecondary educational institutions.

- Institution Closure Information
- Proprietary Schools Complaint Form
- Authorized Institutions and Data
- Exempt Authorized Institutions
- Academic Transcripts
- School and Agent Authorization
- Selecting an Institution
- Consumer Services
- Distance Education Authorization Requirements
- DPSA Links & Forms
- Frequently Asked Postsecondary Questions
- Application Deadlines and Meeting Dates



THEC Website: tn.gov/thec

The screenshot shows the THEC website interface. The browser address bar displays www.tn.gov/thec/article/postsecondary-links. The page title is "Current Forms and Applications".

On the left side, there is a navigation menu with the following items:

- Quality Assurance Funding
- Complete College TN Act
- Grant Programs
- Fiscal Information
- First to the Top
- Academic Programs
- Chairs and Centers
- SAILS

The main content area is titled "Current Forms and Applications" and contains the following sections:

- Rule Chapter 1540-01-10 Optional Expedited Authorization (OEA) Institutions**
 - [Optional Expedited Authorization \(OEA\) Application](#)
 - [Comprehensive Program List](#)
 - [Instructions for the Comprehensive Program List \(PDF File\)](#)
 - [Blank Comprehensive Program List \(Excel file\)](#)
(For use only by institutions seeking Tennessee authorization for the first time)
 - [Individual Student Statistical Data](#)
 - [Instructions Individuals Student Statistical Data \(PDF File\)](#)
 - [Blank Student Level Statistical Data Form \(Excel file\)](#)
(For use only by institutions seeking Tennessee Authorization for the first time)
 - [New Program Notification Form \(Coming Soon\)](#)
- Rule Chapter 1540-01-02 Institutions (Not OEA)**
 - [Initial Authorization Application](#)
 - [Initial Authorization Financial Excel Spreadsheet](#)
 - [New Program Application](#)
 - [School Personnel Application](#)
 - [Program Deletion Form](#)
 - [Program Revision Form](#)
 - [Change of Ownership Application](#)
 - [Change of Address Application](#)
 - [Change of Name Application](#)
 - [Agent Permit Application](#)
 - [Surety Bond for Agents of Out-Of-State Postsecondary Institutions Form](#)
 - [Surety Bond for Postsecondary Educational Institutions](#)
 - [Reauthorization Application \(Email Teresa.Warren@tn.gov for this application.\)](#)
- Exemption Requests**
 - [Information Request Form \(Applies to T.C.A. §49-7-2004\(a\)\(6\) Exemption Requests\)](#)
 - [Exemption Determination Request \(Coming Soon\)](#)

This section is applicable to RA Institutions



THEC Website: tn.gov/thec

Link to
Statutes and
Rules.

Postsecondary State Authorization

The Higher Education Authorization Act of 2016, [T.C.A. 549-7-2001 et seq.](#), [T.C.A. 549-7-144](#) and Rule Chapters [1540-01-02](#) and [1540-01-10](#) govern the regulation of postsecondary educational institutions.

- Institution Closure Information
- Proprietary Schools Complaint Form
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THEC Website: tn.gov/thec

Application Deadlines and Meeting Dates

A current list of the application deadlines and quarterly meeting dates for the Committee on Postsecondary Educational Institutions (CPEI) and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission is available [HERE](#).

If you submitted an Application for Initial Authorization or a New Program Application, please be aware that attendance of a representative from your institution is mandatory at the CPEI meeting at which your application is presented.

Assistance in completing the application is available by telephoning Division of Postsecondary State Authorization (DPSA) staff at 615-741-5293 during business hours of the Commission, 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (Central Time) Monday through Friday.

All applications are reviewed in a three-tier process: first by DPSA staff, second by CPEI, and third by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. Final Commission authorization is required in order to conduct training, advertisement, and recruitment.

Completing the Application for Initial Authorization Training

	Date for Application	Committee Meeting	Commission Meeting
1/9/2020	1/24/2020	4/23/2020 Agenda	5/15/2020
3/31/2020	4/13/2020	7/9/2020 Agenda	7/23/2020
6/30/2020	7/17/2020	10/15/2020	11/6/2020



Reauthorization



Reauthorization

- Institutions are required to submit an annual reauthorization application pursuant to Rule 1540-01-02-.07(3).
- The due date for reauthorization applications is dependent on your authorization date. **For those of you authorized by the Commission in November 2020, your reauthorization application will be due on the due date for the October 2021 CPEI meeting.**
- Generally, we rely on email to send updates to institutions. Therefore, keep your email contact information up-to-date and monitor your spam closely.



Reauthorization

Collected Information & Data

The following information will be requested as part of reauthorization so your institution should put in place procedures now to ensure the information is readily available when needed.

- Licensure Passage Rates - Applies to any program leading to employment in a field where licensure is required for employment and there is an examination. Rules 1540-01-02-.07(3) and .08(4)(b).
- Student enrollment documents or affirmation statements
- Listing of institutional personnel
- Total Gross Tuition Collected and Student Funding Sources - Examples include, federal loans, in-house funding, Workforce Investment Act monies, veterans' benefits, scholarships



Reauthorization

Collected Information & Data

- Updates of certain information on file, including lease documentation, bonds, and ownership information
- Financial Statements (Income Statement and Balance Sheet) as provided for in Rule 1540-01-02-.14

Gross Tuition Revenues of \$1,000,000 or Greater

- Audited Financials Statements Prepared by a CPA in Accordance with GAAP

Gross Tuition Revenues Less Than \$1,000,000 But Greater Than \$100,000

- Reviewed Financials Statements Prepared by a CPA in Accordance with GAAP

Gross Tuition Revenues Equal to or Less Than \$100,000

- Financials Statements on DPSA forms prepared by a CPA or Certified Bookkeeper



Student Level Statistical Data (SLSD) Collection



SLSD Collection

Collected Information & Data

- Put in place procedures now to ensure the information is readily available when needed.
 - For example, start maintaining dates for all student withdrawals, probation, leave of absence, graduation or any other status changes.
- Data is collected on enrolled students. "Enrollment" refers to those students who have attended one (1) session of class, turned in one (1) assignment, or received one (1) distance learning lesson. Rule 1540-01-02-.03(27).



SLSD Collection

Withdrawal and Placement Data

SLSD will be collected on an Excel spreadsheet that includes the following information for each student:

- First Name
- Middle Initial
- Last Name
- Student ID Number
- Social Security Number
- Race
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Program Name
- Program Code
- Delivery Mode
- Program Length
- Credential
- Date Started
- Date Completed
- Date Withdrew
- Special Circumstance Withdrew
- Placed
- Placed In-Field
- Special Circumstance Non-Placement
- Name, Address, and Telephone Number of Employer
- Annual Salary or Hourly Wage



SLSD Collection

Withdrawal and Placement Data

Special Circumstances for Withdrawals:

- Health related situation
- Family emergency
- Death
- Incarceration
- Full-time military service
- Job relocated/transferred
- Transferred to a different program at your institution

Special Circumstances for Non-Placements:

- Health related situation
- Family emergency
- Death
- Incarceration
- Full-time military service
- Job relocated/transferred
- Continuing education at your institution
- Continuing education at a different institution
- Pending fulfillment of licensure requirements
- International students - unable by law to work
- Student could not be contacted/
Refused employment



SLSD Collection

Common Errors

DPSA will send your institution a blank or prepopulated spreadsheet along with instructions. You should read these instructions carefully. Below are some common errors:

- You must provide student's social security or unique ID number. The social security number is preferred.
- You must provide the date of birth.
- The date completed should only be filled in when the student completes (graduates) the corresponding program. If no credential is awarded to the student (e.g., they failed or withdrew) then they did not complete the program.



SLSD Collection

Common Errors, Continued

- Do not enter a completion or withdrawal date that is later than the end of the reporting period or earlier than the DATE STARTED.
- The placed column must be completed if the student completed the program.
- The placed in field column must be completed if the student has completed the corresponding program and is marked as “Y” for Placed.
- The name of the employer and related information must be filled in if the student was placed or employed after completing the corresponding program.



SLSD Collection

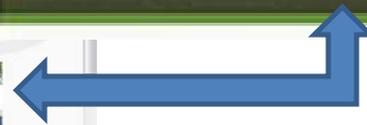
Common Errors, Continued

- Failure to update materials: When you receive your first round of data you will need to update two items:
 1. Website (See discussion later in this presentation.)
 2. Pre-Enrollment Checklist (See Rule 1540-01-02-.13(1)(j))



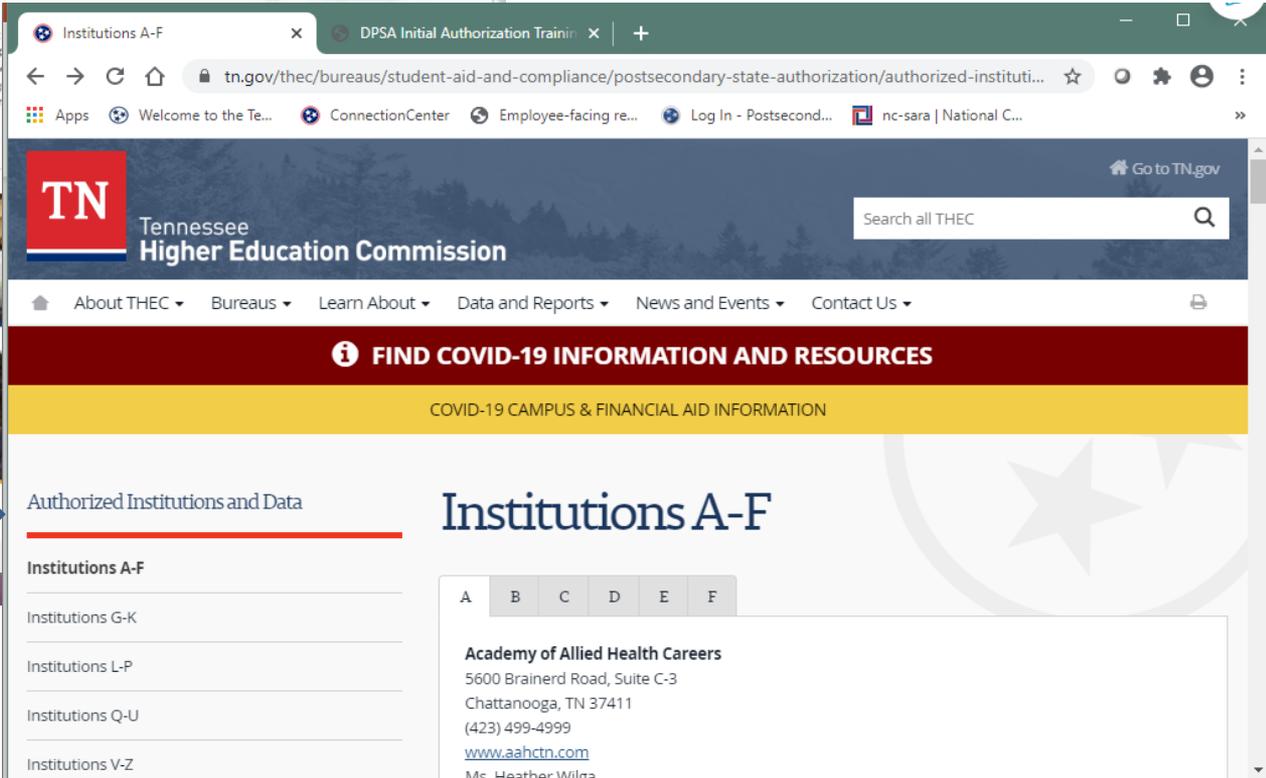
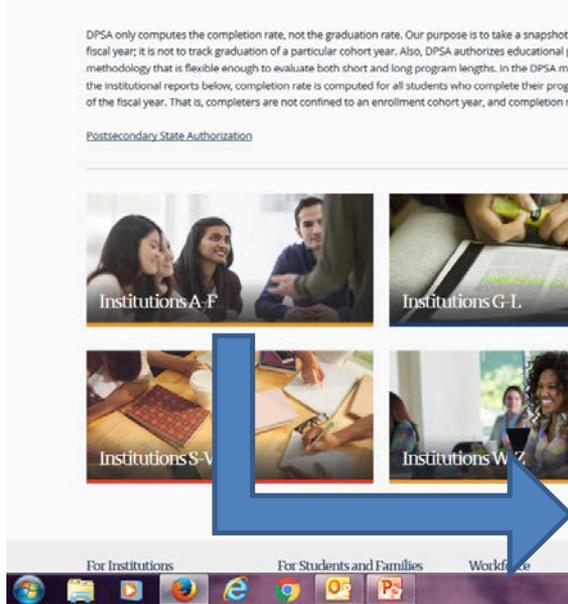
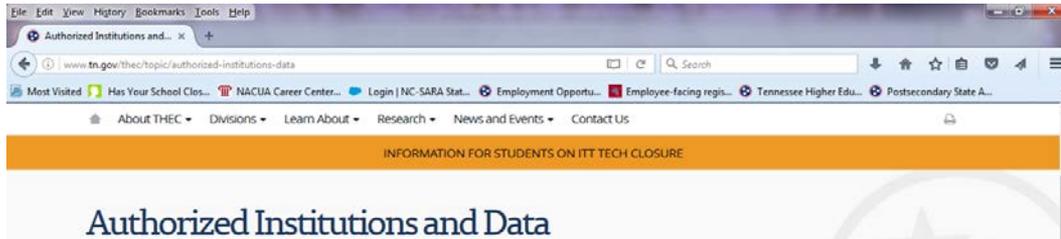
SLSD - THEC Website: tn.gov/thec

The screenshot shows the website interface for the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the TN logo and the text "Tennessee Higher Education Commission". Below this is a search bar and a menu with options like "About THEC", "Divisions", "Learn About", "Research", "News and Events", and "Contact Us". A prominent orange banner reads "INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS ON ITT TECH CLOSURE". The main heading is "Postsecondary State Authorization", followed by a paragraph of legal text: "The Higher Education Authorization Act of 2016, T.C.A. §49-7-2001 et seq., T.C.A. §49-7-144, and Rule Chapters 1540-01-02 and 1540-01-10 govern the regulation of postsecondary educational institutions." Below the text is a grid of nine topic tiles: "Institution Closure Information", "Proprietary Schools Complaint Form", "Authorized Institutions and Data", "Exempt Authorized Institutions", "Academic Transcripts", "School and Agent Authorization", "Selecting an Institution", "Consumer Services", "Distance Education Authorization Requirements", "DPSA Links & Forms", "Frequently Asked Postsecondary Questions", and "Application Deadlines and Meeting Dates".





SLSD - THEC Website: tn.gov/thec





Tuition Guaranty Fund



Tuition Guaranty Fund

Rule Chapter 1710-01-02 & Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2018

- The tuition guaranty fund was created by the Tennessee General Assembly to establish a fund from which reimbursement can be made to students for unearned tuition.
- A Board of Directors administers the fund. The Board is composed of:
 - the Comptroller of the Treasury;
 - the Commissioner of Finance and Administration;
 - the State Treasurer;
 - the Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission
 - a Member of the Committee on Postsecondary Educational Institutions; and
 - a representative of the private postsecondary education industry named by the Chair of the Commission.



Tuition Guaranty Fund

Rule Chapter 1710-01-02 & Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2018

- The Board is authorized to take any actions necessary to administer the fund, including promulgation of rules, regulations and bylaws.
- All institutions must pay into the Tuition Guaranty Fund for six (6) years following authorization.
- Failure to pay Tuition Guaranty Fund assessments could result in adverse action against your institution including a fine or, if necessary, a recommendation to the Commission to change the status of your institution's authorization.



Tuition Guaranty Fund

Rule Chapter 1710-01-02 & Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2018

Institutions will receive the first of **SIX** notifications concerning the need to contribute to the fund in February of the year following receipt of authorization from THEC. Institutions must pay into the fund for the first six years of authorization as follows:

Gross Tuition Collected During Assessment Year	Payment into Fund
\$ 1 - \$ 25,000	200
25,001 - 50,000	250
50,001 - 100,000	300
100,001 - 200,000	400
200,001 - 300,000	500
300,001 - 400,000	600
400,001 - 500,000	700
500,001 - 750,000	1000
750,001 - 1,000,000	1250
1,000,001 - 1,500,000	1500
1,500,001 - 2,000,000	2000
over 2,000,000	2,000 plus 1/10th of 1% of all gross tuition over 2,000,000



Website and Advertising Compliance



Website Compliance

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2019

WHAT ARE INSTITUTIONS REQUIRED TO POST?

- Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2019 requires institutions to post the tuition costs provided to the Commission.

WHERE SHOULD THE INFORMATION BE POSTED WITHIN THE WEBSITE?

- The tuition costs provided to the Commission should be available along with other information on the applicable program web page.



Website Compliance

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2019 and Rule 1540-01-02-.20(4)

1. Information related to graduation and job placement – See Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2019 must be on your website. It is recommended posting the information on the first page of the website, the first Tennessee-specific webpage, or the webpage for each Tennessee authorized site. Commission staff suggests the following language:
 - “In order to view detailed job placement and graduation information on the programs offered by [Name of Institution], please visit <https://www.tn.gov/thec/bureaus/student-aid-and-compliance/postsecondary-state-authorization/authorized-institutions-and-data.html>.”
2. An authorization statement along with a hyperlink to the THEC’s website. See Rule 1540-01-02-.20(4). The authorization statement must be on the institution’s home page or Tennessee specific page.
 - “[Name of Institution] is authorized for operation as a postsecondary educational institution by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.”
 - The entire statement must be used, have the same size font, and type of print.
 - The reference to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission must be a hyperlink to www.tn.gov/thec/.



Website Compliance

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-144

WHAT ARE INSTITUTIONS REQUIRED TO POST?

- Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-144 requires an institution to post the transferability of credit statement as written in paragraph (b)(2) of Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-144.

WHERE SHOULD THE INFORMATION BE POSTED WITHIN THE WEBSITE?

- Commission staff recommends posting this statement or a link thereto on the first page of the website, the first Tennessee-specific webpage, or the webpage for each Tennessee authorized site.



Website Compliance

Next Steps – Check Your Website!

1. Authorization by the Commission \neq Website Compliance You are responsible for ensuring that your website is compliant with all statutes and rules at all times.
2. Student Level Statistical Data – As mentioned previously, Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-2019 requires institutions to post information related to graduation and job placement. After you submit your first set of Student Level Statistical Data, DPSA will provide you with statistical data report related to graduation and job placement rates. As soon as you receive the report, your website must contain the appropriate language and hyperlinks.



Advertising Compliance

Rule 1540-01-02-.20(7)

Rule 1540-01-02-.20(7) states:

“All advertisements seeking prospective students must include and clearly indicate the full and correct name of the institution, the authorized location city, and, if out-of-state, the authorized location state.” (emphasis added)

- This rule applies to all advertisements, including billboards, radio, television, and newspaper advertisements, and advertisements created and purchased by the institution or its agents.
- If your agent takes out an advertisement and it does not comply with .20(7), your institution may be fined.



Advertising Compliance

Rule 1540-01-02-.20(9)

Rule 1540-01-02-.20(9) states:

“Other than entry level salary data available on a Tennessee or federal government website, no dollar amount will be quoted in any advertisement as representative or indicative of the earning potential of graduates without prior approval by Commission Staff.”



Advertising Compliance

Rule 1540-01-02-.20

I have simply highlighted a few Rule 1540-01-02-.20 paragraphs. The rule has 18 paragraphs in total. Review the rules thoroughly to ensure your representations, advertisements, and solicitations are compliant.



Forms and Applications



Program Revisions

- An institution revises a program when it changes any element of a program that has been approved by Tennessee Higher Education Commission, for example, the name of the program, tuition, credit or contact hours, other fees, length, and curriculum.
- Pursuant to Rule 1540-01-02-.07(5)(c), when an institution makes any revision(s) to an approved program, the institution must notify the Commission by submitting a Program Revision and Status Change Notification to Commission Staff at least thirty (30) days prior to implementing the revision. Moreover, “If the program revision amounts to change of more than twenty-five percent (25%) in the last twelve (12) months or if Commission Staff determines a significant revision has occurred, then the institution must submit a New Program Application prior to implementing the revision.



Program Revisions

- However, on October 6, 2020, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission's Executive Director temporarily waived this rule, in part. This temporary waiver allows an institution to revise a program **without** filing a Status Change Notification to Commission Staff. The institution will notify Commission Staff of program revision(s) during annual reauthorization.
- Change of program name or credential: An institution must notify Commission staff at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of the change and must explain the specific change and the proposed effective date.
- The institution will be required to file an Application for New Program:
 - If Commission Staff determines that the institution has implemented program revision of more than twenty-five percent (25%) in the last twelve (12) months, or
 - If Commission Staff determines a significant revision has occurred.
- **Changes to delivery mode (residential, online or blended) are significant and require an Application for New Program.**



Program Revisions

- Rule 1540-01-02-.07(5)(d) provides: “Institutions shall not arbitrarily add a course to an existing program in which a student would incur additional time or expense beyond the catalog requirements at the time of enrollment, unless the addition is in response to: demonstrated educational necessity; a reasonable program completion period elapsed; state approval agency requirements; U. S. Department of Education recognized accreditor requirements or professional licensure requirements.”



School Personnel Applications

- Rule 1540-01-02-.07(7)(a) requires institutions to submit a School Personnel Application for instructors and administrative personnel “no later than ten (10) business days after the hire date.”
 - Unaccredited institutions must submit applications for all instructors and administrative personnel.
 - Accredited institutions must submit applications for administrative personnel only.
- However, on October 6 , 2020, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s Executive Director temporarily waived this rule, in part. With the exception of the institutional director, the temporary waiver suspends the requirement for accredited and unaccredited institutions to file an Application for School Personnel for instructors and administrative personnel.



School Personnel Applications

- Instructors and administrative personnel must meet the minimum qualifications listed in Rule 1540-01-02-.16(5). Institutions must maintain evidence of the qualifications on-site at the institution. Institutions must submit a copy of this evidence at any time upon receiving a request from Commission staff.
 - Administrative personnel are individuals that oversee operational and administrative standards. This includes, but is not limited to, financial aid administrator; director of admissions; director of education; business officer or manager; director of student services and the registrar.
 - Support and clerical staff are **not** considered administrative personnel.



School Personnel Applications

- **Institutional Directors MUST submit an Application for School Personnel to the Commission.**
- Use the Application for School Personnel available on THEC's website.
- When completing the Application for School Personnel, complete the application in its entirety and include the attachments requested in the application's checklist.
- If the institutional director will also be an instructor, list program/subject to be taught.
- Qualifications
 - Place a check mark by applicable qualifications
 - Only mark the qualifications for level to be taught (i.e., instructors for certificate level programs need only to mark certificate level qualifications)
- Submit the application with the signatures of all required persons.
- All information placed on applications is subject to verification by Commission staff.



Agent Permit Applications

- Rule 1540-01-02-.07(8)(a) provides: “Agents must submit an Agent Permit Application, as provided by Commission Staff, and must receive approval and an agent permit from Commission Staff prior to any solicitation.”

WHAT IS AN AGENT?

T.C.A. § 49-7-2003 and Rule 1540-01-02-.03(6)

Agent means any person representing a postsecondary educational institution for payment, who solicits in any form and enrolls, or seeks to enroll, a student for education offered by an authorized institution, or offers to award educational credentials, for remuneration, on behalf of any such institution. **Persons owning an interest in an institution and the institution’s full-time employees and directors shall not be considered agents under this part.**



Agents

Rule 1540-01-02-.07(8) and .16(8)

AGENT REQUIREMENTS

- All agents must:
 1. receive approval and an agent permit; and
 2. If the institution is out-of-state, secure an appropriate bond prior to any solicitation.
- Agent permits must be renewed annually and the renewal application is available on THEC's website.
- Institutional Directors and the Institution are responsible for an Agent's actions.
- An agent whose permit has expired must submit a New Agent Application if submitted more than 60 days following the expiration date.



Agents

Rule 1540-01-02-.07(8) and .16(8)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Any contract signed by a prospective student as a result of solicitation or enrollment by a non-licensed agent may be unenforceable and the student may be entitled to a refund of all moneys paid.
- The institution could be fined or the institution's authorization status changed to conditional or revoked.

ANSWERS TO COMMON AGENT QUESTIONS

- An institution must obtain approval for an agent prior to the individual engaging in any agent activity.
- A full-time employee of the institution is not an agent.
- A part-time or contract employee of the institution, who the institution compensates for enrolling or seeking to enroll students, is an agent. This includes a person working from a remote location, who enrolls students or makes cold calls, or as part of a recruiting firm.



Other Required Forms

- Change of Location – Rule 1540-01-02-.07(6)
 - Your institution may **not** conduct instruction at an unauthorized site. Submit an Application for Change of Institutional Location at least 30 days prior to the scheduled relocation.
 - DPSA must inspect the facilities and equipment.
- Institution Name Change – Rule 1540-01-02-.07(9)
- Change of Ownership – Rule 1540-01-02-.07(4)
- New Program Application – Rule 1540-01-02-.07(5)
 - An institution must receive approval to offer a program **prior** to advertising for or soliciting enrollment.
 - For equipment heavy programs, DPSA will inspect the equipment prior to approving the program.
- Surety Bonds for Agents and Institutions – Rule 1540-01-02-.09



Student Files



Student Files

Pursuant to Rule 1540-01-02-.15(5), “Institutions must maintain a file for each student enrolled in a program or course for three (3) years after the student’s withdrawal from or completion of the program or course of enrollment.” The file shall contain at a minimum¹

- Documentation for the basis of admission;
- Pre-enrollment checklist executed by the student;
- Enrollment agreement executed by the student;
- Transferability of credits disclosure statement in compliance with T.C.A. § 49-7-144;
- Documentation of all special circumstances placement and withdrawal exceptions; and
- Account Ledger

Institutions shall retain student transcripts or certificate of completion from your institution for the life of the institution.

¹ This is not an exhaustive list. See Rule 1540-01-02-.15(5) for a complete list of requirements.



Account Ledger/Tuition Charges

- Institutions must charge the approved tuition amount and the account ledger should reflect that the student was charged the approved amount.
- Rule 1540-01-02-.19(8) states:
 - “An institution may award a scholarship, tuition waiver, or other similar award provided:
 - (a) The eligibility requirements for the offering, including terms, conditions, application procedures, due dates, basis for selection, and amount to be awarded, are clearly defined in writing;
 - (b) The institution has a form and procedure to verify eligibility; and
 - (c) The amount of the award is a flat dollar amount or subject to calculation using a defined formula or scale.”



Admission Standards

- Each institution is approved with specific admission standards set by the institution, subject to Rule 1540-01-02-.12.
- Admission standards must be applied as approved by THEC.
- Do not admit students that you know or should know are ineligible for licensure unless you get written acknowledgement from the student.



Admission Standards

- Students enrolling in a certificate or diploma program must possess a high school diploma, a high school diploma equivalency, a current Tennessee license in the field for which the training is intended, postsecondary credit in a degree program, or a passing score on an ability to benefit test.
- Students enrolling in an associate or bachelor degree program must possess, at a minimum, a high school diploma, a high school diploma equivalency, or postsecondary credit in a degree program.
- Students enrolling in a post-baccalaureate program must possess, at a minimum, a baccalaureate degree from an institution judged to be appropriate by the Commission.



Student Files

- An official high school transcript, high school equivalency transcript or GED score sheet shall be maintained in the student's file, not a copy of the high school diploma, or GED Certificate or HSE diploma. An official high school transcript, high school equivalency transcript or GED score sheet must be:
 - Signed by an institutional official or have an official seal.
 - If a hard copy of the transcript or score sheet is scanned and stored electronically, then it must be accompanied by documentation that verifies it was received directly from the issuing institution/agency such as the envelope that contained the transcript or score sheet. Please note such is not necessary when the document itself is addressed to the receiving institution.
 - If faxed or emailed the transcript or score sheet must include indicia that the transcript or score sheet was received directly from the issuing institution or agency such as accompanying email correspondence or fax cover sheet from the issuing institution/agency.
- If an official postsecondary transcript is used for admission to an undergraduate program, then the transcript must indicate that the student graduated from high school **or** that the student was enrolled in and received credit in a degree program. If used for admission to a graduate program, then the postsecondary transcript must be official and indicate that the person holds a postsecondary degree.



Student Files

As of January 1, 2014 the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) is available as an alternative option to earn the state-government issued high school equivalency diploma. While the GED is still an option, the State of Tennessee and the State Board of Education will not make a distinction between the two tests when awarding the credential. Successful test takers of either test will be issued a Tennessee High School Equivalency Diploma (HSE).

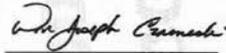


Student Files



State of Tennessee Official Transcript

High School Equivalency Test Results

Candidate's Name					04/16/2015
Last:LOWE	First:JENNIFER	Middle Initial:M	Tennessee State Administrator		Date
Address: _____			Testing Center Name: TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY		
Date of Birth: _____			Center Identification Number: 3000450220		
Social Security Number: XXX-XX- _____			Center Phone Number: (615) 963-7111		
Serial Number: 2022711A3C2F			Center Address: 330 10TH AVE. N./SUITE 346 NASHVILLE TN		

Test Format:

Tests	Test Date	Test Form	**Standard Score	Percentile Rank
WRITING	06/09/2000		49	
SOCIAL STUDIES	06/09/2000		44	
SCIENCE	06/09/2000		49	
MATH	06/09/2000		42	
READING	06/09/2000		45	
Standard Score Total			229	PASS 
Standard Score Average			46	NON-PASS

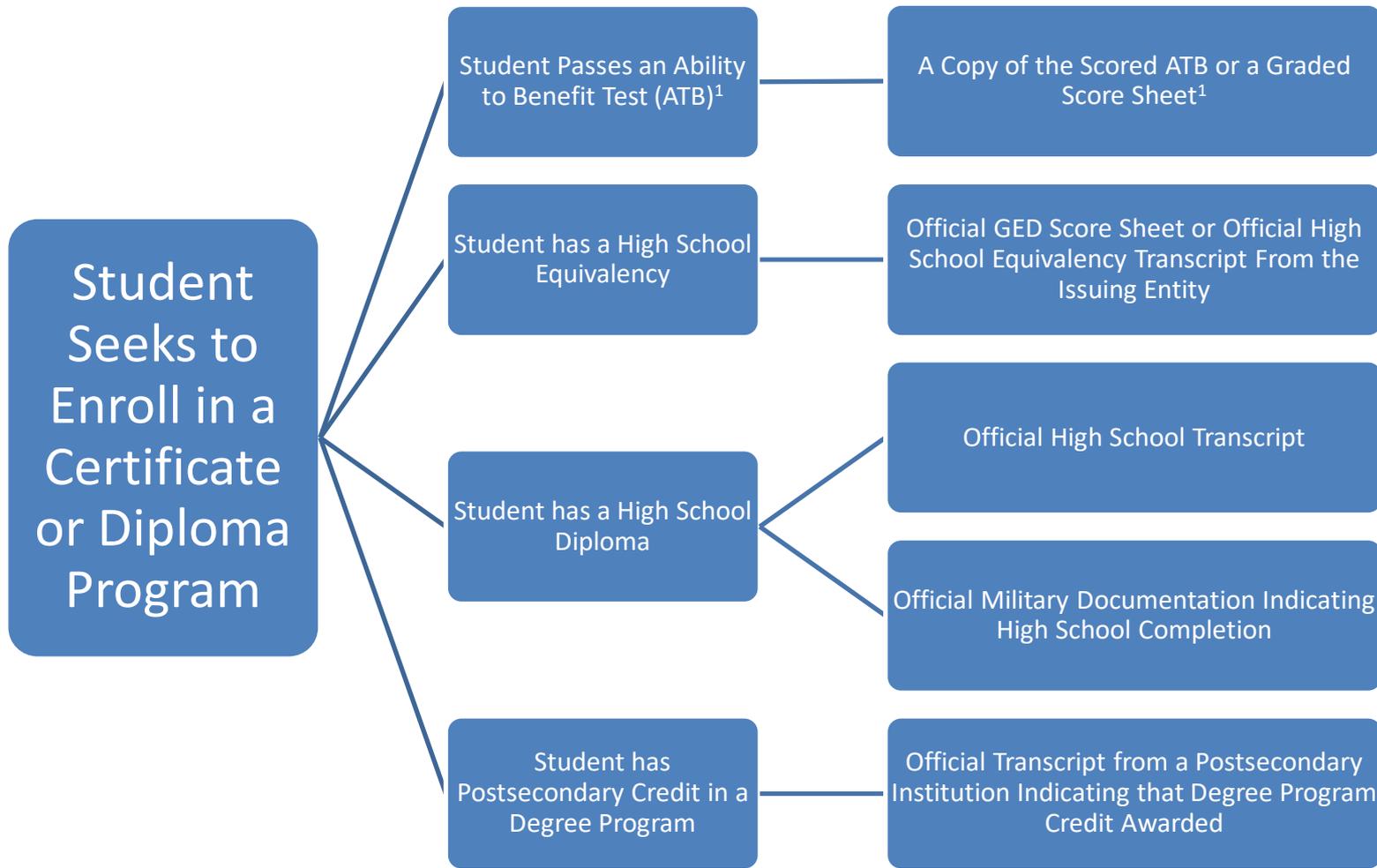
The Standard Scores on this transcript are the **highest scores achieved by the candidate and not necessarily the most recent.

If you photocopy this document, the word "copy" will appear, producing an unauthorized document.



Student Files

The Student File Should Contain:

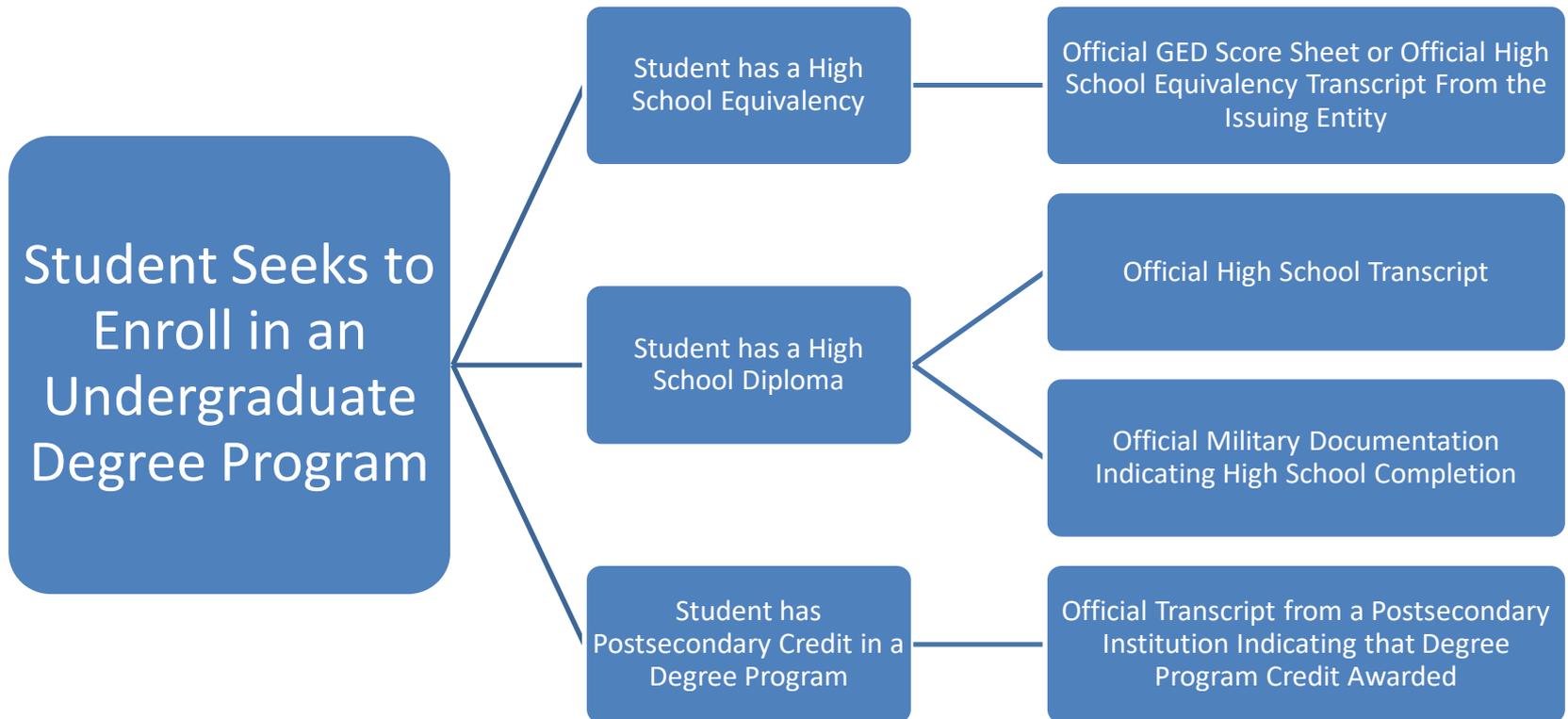


¹ The test should be approved by DPSA or it must be one previously approved by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). The institution must notify DPSA if it intends to use a USDOE approved test.



Student Files

The Student File Should Contain:





Student Files

The Student File Should Contain:

Student Seeks to Enroll in a Post-Baccalaureate Program

Student Has a Baccalaureate Degree or Higher Credential from an Institution Judged to be Appropriate by the Commission

An Official Copy of the Transcript from the Postsecondary Institution Indicating that the Student Received the Credential



Student Files

Student has a Tennessee license in the field for which the training is intended.

The Student File Should Contain:

Verification of current licensure from the issuing Tennessee subject matter expert agency, such as a current screenshot from the agency's website.



Complaints



Complaints

- The investigation of complaints against institutions is one of the most important functions performed by this agency.
- Sources of complaints:
 - Students
 - Parents
 - Employees
 - Elected Officials
 - Better Business Bureau
 - Other State Agencies
- DPSA is a neutral party in the complaint process. It reviews both sides and will make a determination based on the facts presented.
 - Maintain communication with DPSA throughout the process!!



Complaint Process

When a complainant first contacts DPSA by phone, a DPSA staff member

- Documents the call as an informal complaint
- Explains the complaint process and applicable statutes and rules
- Suggests that complainant contact the Institutional Director if the complainant has not already done so
- Follows up with email explaining the process for initiating a formal complaint and copy the Institutional Director if the complainant agrees
 - **Opportunity for institutions to resolve the complaint without any further involvement by DPSA**

If the complainant does not submit a written complaint within 30 days of the informal complaint, the complaint is closed.



Formal Complaint Process

When a complaint is received in writing, it is considered formal and will be investigated. DPSA sends a copy of the complaint to the institution along with a letter requesting a response to specific allegations and documentation to assist with the investigation.

The institution's response to DPSA should fully address the allegations and include all documentation requested by DPSA.



Formal Complaint Process

The complainant will get an opportunity to reply to the institutional response. Afterwards, DPSA may request additional information/documentation from both parties or complete a site visit as part of the investigation process.

DPSA will review all information to determine if there were any violations of statutes, rules, or the institution's internal policies.



Formal Complaint Process

Every attempt is made to resolve the dispute between the parties. If no resolution is reached, DPSA will issue its written determinations.

If DPSA determines that a violation has occurred, the institution is given an opportunity to provide substantial reasons as to why adverse action should not be taken.



Formal Complaint Process

DPSA will evaluate the institution's response and take appropriate action, including recommending that the Executive Director assess a fine, changing authorization status, or requiring the institution to issue a refund or take some other action.

In the event that either party is not satisfied with the determination made by DPSA, the party may seek further review by the Executive Director or through the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act.



Common Issues in Complaints

- Fair Consumer Practices – Rule 1540-01-02-.19
 - Includes violations of institutional policies
- Cancellation and Refund Policy – 1540-01-02-.17
 - Inconsistency in how withdrawal or last date of attendance is recorded
- Personnel and Instructor Qualifications – 1540-01-02-.16
 - Administrative personnel/instructors not approved in timely manner
 - Not evaluated annually by both students and administrators as required by Rule 1540-01-02-.16(7) or evaluations not kept on file



Complaints

How can my institution reduce or eliminate complaints filed with DPSA?

Adhere to DPSA's rules and institutional policies

Document communications

Educate your staff to resolve issues internally



Conclusion

Thank you for your attendance today. Each institution will receive an email by close of business tomorrow. The email will include an affirmation statement, electronic copy of the rules, and this presentation.

This statement must be completed and returned to carolyn.qualls@tn.gov by the due date listed in the email.

Questions regarding this presentation for should be directed to Julie.Woodruff@tn.gov or Latonya.Todd@tn.gov