



## TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

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**CONSENT CALENDAR ITEM:** II.D.

**MEETING DATE:** May 16, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Off-Campus Center  
Tennessee College of Applied Technology Chattanooga/Chattanooga State  
Community College – Hamilton County Jail and Detention Center

**ITEM TYPE:** Action

**ACTION RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

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### BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-202(q)(3), the Tennessee Higher Education Commission is to review and approve or disapprove all proposals for off-campus locations at public institutions. Per THEC Policy A1.4A Off-Campus Instruction for Community Colleges and Universities, an off-campus center is defined as a location that is geographically apart from the main campus where students can enroll and complete academic programs. Additionally, there must be a continuing administrative presence, evidenced by at least one (1) full-time or part-time administrator housed on-site. Typically, Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology are not subject to this policy. However, Section 1.4A.1A distinguishes: “[i]n cases where a Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) is considered a part of a community college, as is the case with TCAT Chattanooga and Chattanooga State Community College, the joint institution will be considered under this policy.”

Tennessee College of Applied Technology Chattanooga (TCAT Chattanooga) requests a center code for the Hamilton County Jail and Detention Center located at 7609 Standifer Gap Rd. Chattanooga, TN 37421. The proposed center will provide programming to incarcerated individuals. These individuals will be offered opportunities for self-improvement, provided with goals for re-entry, and helped to attain a livable wage upon program completion. This program aims to extend access to postsecondary education to a population that otherwise would not have access. The initial program offering will be a Diploma in Cosmetology. Following the successful implementation of the Cosmetology program, there are plans to expand with other programs such as Industrial Electricity/Residential-Commercial Electricity and Carpentry/Building Construction. These programs will provide adult students with the necessary skills and credits needed to pursue further education in schools or college post incarceration.

TCAT Chattanooga projects an annual enrollment of 15 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. The initial trimester is expected have an enrollment of 5-10 students, with a projected increase of three (3) FTE students in the following year. However, enrollment is expected to stabilize at 18 students for the foreseeable future. In accordance with the 2021 Re-Entry Success Act, this program will provide compensation to Tennessee counties that provide evidence-based programming for inmates housed in county jails. Providing postsecondary education has been proven to lower recidivism rates and enables schools to reach marginalized communities, therefore expanding access to individuals who otherwise would not have these opportunities. While students are incarcerated, they have the opportunity to earn credits toward their education, setting the groundwork for potentially earning their diploma within the Hamilton center or upon re-entry at another school.

TCAT Chattanooga will utilize traditional face-to-face instruction methods in a renovated space within the Hamilton facility. The Hamilton County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) has been awarded a grant to bring education to incarcerated individuals as part of their preparation for re-entry. This grant allowed them to renovate their space based off the needs of the program as prescribed by the faculty. The grant will cover the contract salary for an instructor to teach at the facility and cover the book, tools, and supplies that are to be utilized by students. A portion of the tuition revenue will be used to cover the costs of travel for faculty and staff to and from the jail. TCAT Chattanooga will provide a full-time faculty member to instruct and oversee the 5-10 adult students participating in the program. HCSO will provide a coordinator at the detention center to assist with schedules, ordering of products, and selection of students. The anticipated total recurring expenditures are projected to be \$30,400, while total revenue is expected to reach \$44,192. The HCSO will provide the facilities, materials, and equipment to facilitate the success of the program.