

Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation

Tuesday, January 27, 2022

DECISION ITEM D

TELS Rules

Staff Recommendation

(1) Adopt Chapter 1640-01-19 as Rulemaking Hearing Rules;
(2) Authorize the Executive Director to make any necessary technical corrections to these rules including changes suggested by the Tennessee Attorney General.

Background

Rules submitted for review include the following modifications:

1. Added, deleted, and revised definitions to be consistent with current terminology and practice
2. Removed duplicative or unnecessary language already sufficiently articulated in statute
3. Added clarifying provisions to support expansion of eligibility for the HOPE Scholarship for Non-Traditional Students enacted by PC 1116
4. Edited common administrative provisions, such as application deadlines, Leave of Absence, Refund Policy, Award Made in Error, and Appeal and Exception Process, to be consistent with other TSAC programs
5. Reworded and reorganized existing provisions to provide better clarity around existing concepts and practices, such as eligible program of study and exceptions to minimum required enrollment levels to be consistent with other TSAC programs
6. Removed DEG Rules

A public Rulemaking Hearing was held on September 16, 2022. No members of the public attended, and no comments were submitted. No modifications have been made to the draft rules since the hearing.

These rules will be implemented following approval by the Tennessee Attorney General and subsequent filing with the Secretary of State.

Supporting Document

Rules of the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation, Chapter 1640-01-19, Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship.

**RULES OF
THE TENNESSEE STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION
(TSAC)**

**CHAPTER 1640-01-19
TENNESSEE EDUCATION LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

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1640-01-19-.01 DEFINITIONS.

- (1) Academic year: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (2) ACT: The ACT Assessment offered by ACT, Inc., exclusive of the essay and optional subject area battery tests.
- (3) Adjusted gross income attributable to the student: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (4) Alternative study program: A program of study including, but not limited to study abroad, student exchange programs, practicums, co-op programs, and internships, that may include travel outside the State of Tennessee that is sponsored or offered by:
 - (a) An eligible postsecondary institution; or
 - (b) An eligible postsecondary institution in conjunction with either another eligible postsecondary or a postsecondary institution that is accredited by a regional accrediting association.
- (5) ASPIRE award: An award for study in pursuit of an associate or baccalaureate degree at an eligible postsecondary institution to a student who meets the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-915.
- (6) Award year: A period of time, typically nine (9) months, in which a full-time student is expected to complete the equivalent of a minimum of two (2) semesters of academic study.
- (7) Certificate or diploma: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (8) Continuing education: Courses and programs that do not lead to a certificate, diploma, or degree that are designed for personal development and are an extension of the traditional on-campus learning process.
- (9) Continuous enrollment: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (10) Cost of attendance: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (11) Credit hours attempted: The number of semester hours for which a degree-seeking or diploma/certificate-seeking student attending a postsecondary institution is enrolled as of

the institutionally defined census date shall be considered credit hours attempted, regardless of whether a grade has been assigned. This standard shall apply to any change to a non-credit status, notwithstanding anything in Rule 1640-01-19-.13.

- (12) Degree: A two-year associate degree or four-year baccalaureate degree conferred on students by an eligible postsecondary institution.
- (13) Distance education: An educational process that is characterized by the separation, in time or place, between instructor and student. It may include credit hours offered principally by television, audio, or computer transmissions, such as open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, or satellite transmission; audio or computer conferencing; video cassettes or discs, or correspondence.
- (14) Eligible high school: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (15) Eligible postsecondary institution: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (16) Eligible program of study: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (17) FAFSA: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (18) Foster child: A child who was in the custody of the Tennessee Department of Children's Services as described in T.C.A. §49-4-933.
- (19) Full-time student: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (20) GED: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (21) General Assembly Merit Scholarship: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (22) Gift aid: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (23) Grade point average (GPA): The numbered grade average calculated using a 4.0 scale, calculated to the hundredth decimal.
- (24) High school grade point average: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (25) HiSET: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (26) Home school: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-6-3050.
- (27) Home institution: The eligible postsecondary institution in which the student is enrolled and is in a matriculating status working toward a degree, diploma, or certificate.
- (28) Host institution: The eligible postsecondary institution the student is temporarily attending as a transient student.
- (29) Immediate family member: Spouse, parents, grandparents, legal guardians, children, or siblings.
- (30) Incarcerated: Currently confined to a local, state, or federal correctional institution, as well as work release or educational release facilities.
- (31) Matriculating status: The student is a recognized candidate for an appropriate degree, diploma, or certificate at an eligible postsecondary educational institution.
- (32) Medical disability: A documented condition, as certified by a licensed physician, which requires a HOPE Scholarship recipient to attend part-time at an eligible postsecondary

institution.

- (33) Non-traditional student: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (34) Parent: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (35) Part-time student: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (36) Regional accrediting association: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (37) SAT: The SAT administered by the College Board, exclusive of the essay and optional subject area battery tests.
- (38) Satisfactory academic progress: Progress in a course of study in accordance with the standards and practices used for Title IV programs by the eligible postsecondary institution at which the student is currently enrolled.
- (39) Semester: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (40) Semester grade point average: The grade point average for the semester as calculated by the postsecondary institution utilizing its institutional grading policy.
- (41) Semester hour: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (42) TCAT: Tennessee College of Applied Technology.
- (43) TELS (Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship) award: Any scholarship and/or grant provided for by these rules that a student is eligible to receive.
- (44) Tennessee HOPE Access Grant: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (45) Tennessee HOPE Foster Child Tuition Grant: A grant in addition to the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship to a foster child to only be used towards the costs of tuition, maintenance fees, student activity fees, and required registration or matriculation fees at the eligible postsecondary institution the student attends.
- (46) Tennessee HOPE Scholarship: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (47) Tennessee National Guard: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-926.
- (48) Tennessee resident: A student classified as a resident of Tennessee pursuant to the provisions of §49-8-104.
- (49) Test date: The date designated for the ACT test administered by ACT, Inc., or the date designated for the SAT test administered by the College Board at national and state test centers. This shall also include the administration of either test on other dates as approved by the respective testing entities to accommodate an individual student's documented disability or other hardship, as well as a statewide test date established by the State Department of Education that is sanctioned by the respective test entities.
- (50) Title IV: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.
- (51) Transient student: A visiting student enrolled in another institution who is granted temporary admission for the purpose of completing work to transfer back to the home institution and who expects to return to the institution in which the student was previously enrolled.
- (52) TSAC: Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation.

- (52) Unofficial withdrawal: The determination by an institution that a student has ceased to be academically engaged and otherwise failed to officially withdraw from a course prior to the institution's established deadline or other applicable institutional guidelines.
- (54) Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Grant: A grant program, as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-923, for students seeking a diploma or certificate at a TCAT.
- (55) Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-912, 49-4-913, 49-4-914, 49-4-915, 49-4-916, 49-4-919, 49-4-920, 49-4-921, 49-4-922, 49-4-924, 49-4-926, 49-4-930, 49-4-931, 49-4-933, 49-4-934, and 49-4-935.

1640-01-19-.02 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD AMOUNTS AND CLASSIFICATIONS.

- (1) The TELS program is intended to provide financial awards to offset costs associated with pursuing postsecondary education. The TELS awards governed by these rules include the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, Tennessee HOPE Scholarship for Non-traditional Students, Tennessee HOPE Access Grant, Tennessee ASPIRE Award, Tennessee HOPE Foster Child Grant, General Assembly Merit Scholarship, Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant, and Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Grant.
- (2) The amount of a TELS award shall be based on the number of credit hours attempted in a semester that are applicable to the student's eligible program of study. Award amounts for full-time students are set in Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 9, and the General Appropriations Act.
- (3) A student enrolled in nine (9), ten (10), or eleven (11) credit hours in the student's eligible program of study will receive three-fourths (3/4) of the award of a full-time student. A student enrolled in six (6), seven (7), or eight (8) credit hours in the student's eligible program of study will receive one-half (1/2) of the award of a full-time student.
- (4) A student enrolled in less than six (6) credit hours in the student's eligible program of study will receive one-fourth (1/4) of the award of a full-time student, but only in the following circumstances:
 - (a) In the semester of graduation, if less than six (6) credit hours are required to complete the student's eligible program of study;
 - (b) In any semester in which the eligible postsecondary institution does not offer at least six (6) credit hours of coursework applicable to the student's eligible program of study; or
 - (c) The student's eligible program of study requires enrollment in less than six (6) credit hours for a semester.
- (5) Receipt of student financial aid from sources other than TELS that are applied to educational expenses will not operate to reduce the student's TELS award if the student's total aid does not exceed the total cost of attendance. If a student's total aid exceeds the cost of attendance, the eligible postsecondary institution shall, to the extent it does not violate applicable federal regulations, use its institutional policy in reducing the student's total aid package.
- (6) All tuition waivers and discounts for which a student or parent qualifies shall first be deducted from the student's tuition and mandatory fees before gift aid is credited.
- (7) Fractional award amounts for a semester may be rounded up or down to the nearest dollar, but in no event shall such rounding result in a student receiving a total annual award higher

than the maximum yearly award amount authorized by the applicable statute or these rules.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-912, 49-4-914, 49-4-915, 49-4-916, 49-4-919, 49-4-920, 49-4-921, 49-4-922, 49-4-924, 49-4-930, and 49-4-933.

1640-01-19-.03 APPLICATION PROCESS.

- (1) The FAFSA shall be the application for all first-year TELS awards and the FAFSA, or Renewal FAFSA, shall be the means by which eligible students reapply for TELS awards after their initial year of eligibility. The FAFSA must be submitted by mail or electronically as directed in the FAFSA instructions. Regardless of the adjusted gross income attributable to the student, the student is required to complete the FAFSA for each academic year to apply for and receive a TELS award.
- (2) Application deadlines shall be determined by the TSAC Executive Director and published on TSAC's website. It is the responsibility of the student to submit the FAFSA in a timely manner to ensure it is received by the published deadlines.
- (3) The TSAC Executive Director is authorized to modify published deadlines for well-documented extraordinary cause, where necessary to protect the public interest.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-924, and 49-4-930.

1640-01-19-.04 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY.

- (1) To be eligible for a TELS award a student shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. §§ 49-4-904 and 49-4-905.
- (2) The receipt of a TELS award is contingent upon admission and enrollment at an eligible postsecondary institution. Academically qualifying for any of these award programs does not guarantee admission to an eligible postsecondary institution.
- (3) Except for approved medical or personal leaves of absence as provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.11 or emergency military duty as provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.12, award recipients must be continuously enrolled and maintain satisfactory academic progress at an eligible postsecondary institution.
- (4) A student reaches the terminating event of earning a baccalaureate degree under T.C.A. § 49-4-913 when the student completes all academic course requirements of the student's declared eligible program of study. Failure of the student to complete institutional requirements related to the process of conferring the credential, but unrelated to the completion of the required courses such as an exit interview, application to graduate, or others, will not allow the student to continue to be eligible for the scholarship in subsequent semesters.
- (5) Notwithstanding paragraph (4) above, a student who meets all requirements for a fourth or fifth year of eligibility except that the student is classified at the professional level rather than as an undergraduate and has not met a terminating event in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-4-913, is eligible if the student was accepted into a professional-level program of study that is an extension of the student's bachelor's degree program.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-904, 49-4-905, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.05 ELIGIBILITY – TENNESSEE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP FOR NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS.

- (1) In addition to the requirements of T.C.A. §§ 49-4-902 and 49-4-931, to be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, a non-traditional student shall enroll in the semester

immediately succeeding the semester in which eligibility is established.

- (2) Credit hours attempted and the cumulative grade point average earned by a student while receiving another TELS award, or prior to the student being determined to be an independent student by the FAFSA, shall not be considered when determining eligibility to receive the HOPE Scholarship as a non-traditional student.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-924, and 49-4-931.

1640-01-19-.06 ELIGIBILITY – TENNESSEE ASPIRE AWARD AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY MERIT SCHOLARSHIP.

- (1) Any student eligible for the ASPIRE award under T.C.A. § 49-4-915 or the General Assembly Merit Scholarship under T.C.A. § 49-4-916 may receive the applicable award in addition to the base Tennessee HOPE Scholarship award.
- (2) The adjusted gross income attributable to a student shall be reviewed each academic year to determine eligibility for the ASPIRE award.
- (3) A student eligible for both the ASPIRE award and the General Assembly Merit Scholarship shall be awarded whichever award amount is higher but shall not simultaneously receive both awards. If a student becomes ineligible for one of these awards in subsequent years but is eligible for the other award, the student shall receive the other award regardless of whether they received it in prior years.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-915, 49-4-916, 49-4-917, 49-4-924, 49-4-930, and 49-4-931.

1640-01-19-.07 TENNESSEE EDUCATION LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP AWARD PROCESS.

- (1) On or before June 30 of each year, all eligible high schools shall submit the name, social security number, grade point averages, and highest composite ACT/SAT score on any single test date, for academically eligible students, cumulative through the final semester. Students who graduate from summer school shall have their information reported to TSAC on or before August 15 of each year.
- (2) Eligible postsecondary institutions that enroll students receiving scholarships or grants shall be responsible for certifying to TSAC that students have met all eligibility requirements and shall assist in providing student information necessary for administering, receiving, and evaluating such programs.
- (3) During the certification process, all eligible postsecondary institutions shall certify the number of credit hours attempted and the cumulative grade point average of all students receiving a TELS award at the end of each semester.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-911, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.08 AWARD MADE IN ERROR.

- (1) If a student receives a TELS award and it is later determined that the award or some portion of the award was made in error, the student or the postsecondary institution may be required to repay the amount awarded in error.
- (2) If TSAC determines that the error was through no fault of the student, the student will not be required to repay the amount of the payment made in error.
- (3) Repayment from the student will be required if TSAC determines that fraud was committed by, or the error was the fault of, the student. When repayment is required, the student may

not receive additional student aid from TSAC until repayment is made.

- (4) Repayment from the eligible postsecondary institution will be required if TSAC determines that the error was the fault of the institution.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.09 REFUND POLICY.

- (1) If a recipient of a TELS award fails to complete a semester for any reason, the eligible postsecondary institution shall apply its refund policy to determine whether a refund may be required and whether funds must be returned to TSAC. The eligible postsecondary institution shall provide the student with a notice indicating the amount to be returned to the student and the amount to be refunded to TSAC. Additionally, the eligible postsecondary institution shall notify TSAC of the refund, which shall be noted on the student's record. The eligible postsecondary institution shall also be responsible for obtaining repayment from the student. The student shall be ineligible for student aid from TSAC until the refund is paid.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201 49-4-204, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.10 CONVERTING FROM FULL-TIME TO PART-TIME ENROLLMENT.

- (1) Students enrolled in a full-time or part-time status, as of the institutionally defined census date, may not convert to part-time or less than part-time status within the same semester and receive a scholarship award for the succeeding semesters unless the student requests and the institution approves the change to part-time or less than part-time status.
- (2) An institution may allow a change from full-time to part-time or from part-time to less than part-time status within the same semester only when there are documented medical or personal grounds, in accordance with Rule 1640-01-19-.11.
- (3) Each eligible postsecondary institution shall adopt procedures for considering student requests for change from full-time to part-time or from part-time to less than part-time status within the semester. In the event an institution denies a student's request to change enrollment status within a semester, the student may appeal the decision pursuant to Rule 1640-01-19-.16.
- (4) If the decision to deny the change of status is upheld through the appeals process, the student shall be ineligible to regain the TELS award.
- (5) If the change to part-time or less than part-time status is approved, the eligible postsecondary institution shall apply its refund policy to determine whether a refund may be required and/or funds returned to TSAC. The eligible postsecondary institution shall provide the student with a notice indicating the amount to be returned to TSAC. Additionally, the eligible postsecondary institution shall notify TSAC of the refund, which shall be noted on the student's record.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-911, 49-4-912, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.11 PERSONAL OR MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

- (1) A student may be granted a medical or personal leave of absence from attendance at an eligible postsecondary institution, which may include failure to enroll within 16 months of graduation, a break in continuous enrollment, or unapproved changes of enrollment from full-time to part-time or part-time to less than part-time, and receive or resume receiving an award upon resumption of the student's attendance at an eligible postsecondary institution if all other applicable eligibility criteria are met. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall adopt procedures for considering student requests for leaves of absence. Allowable medical

or personal reasons include, but are not limited to, illness of the student, illness or death of an immediate family member, pregnancy, extreme financial hardship of the student or student's immediate family, fulfillment of a religious commitment encouraged of members of that faith, fulfillment of required military service, a student's participation in an internship or co-op program that is required or encouraged as part of the academic program in which the student is enrolled, or other extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control where attendance by the student creates a substantial hardship. In the event an institution denies a student's request for a medical or personal leave of absence, the student may appeal the decision in accordance with these rules.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-913, 49-4-919, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.12 MILITARY MOBILIZATION OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS.

- (1) Members of the United States Armed Services, National Guard, or Armed Forces Reserves receiving a TELS award who are mobilized for active duty during a semester that is already in progress shall be granted a personal leave of absence by the eligible postsecondary institution the student is attending and shall not have their TELS award eligibility negatively impacted.
- (2) If, as a result of being mobilized, a student elects to completely withdraw from an eligible postsecondary institution, then the hours attempted during the semester will not be taken into consideration for purposes of determining future TELS award eligibility.
- (3) Upon re-enrollment within one year following mobilization, the student's TELS award eligibility will resume as if no break in enrollment had occurred and shall retain TELS award eligibility until a terminating event as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-913 occurs.
- (4) An eligible postsecondary institution shall be authorized to consider a request for a leave of absence from a student whose spouse, child, father, or mother is mobilized for active duty as a valid basis for a personal leave of absence. This request shall be made in accordance with the provisions of this rule. If the request is granted the student shall receive the same accommodations described above.
- (5) A Tennessee resident attending an out-of-state institution who is otherwise eligible shall not have their TELS award eligibility negatively impacted by military mobilization upon their return to the state as a transfer student attending an eligible postsecondary institution.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-913, 49-4-919, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.13 CALCULATION OF POSTSECONDARY CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE.

- (1) The postsecondary cumulative grade point average used to determine eligibility for a renewal of a TELS award, must be calculated by the eligible postsecondary institution the student is attending, utilizing its institutional grading policy, based on all credit hours attempted after high school graduation, and calculated on an A through F grading scale, except as otherwise provided in this rule and as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-911. Unique grades associated with the failure of a class due to an unofficial withdrawal must also be included in calculations of attempted credits and grade point average.
 - (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1) above to the contrary, when determining whether a non-traditional student who is receiving the HOPE scholarship will continue to be eligible, only grades earned and credit hours attempted as a non-traditional student, in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-4-931, shall count toward the benchmark requirements.
- (2) All credit hours attempted at all postsecondary institutions the student has attended after graduating from high school and their corresponding grades must be included in the

calculation of the postsecondary cumulative grade point average, regardless of whether the receiving institution will apply the credit hours toward the student's degree requirements. Except as provided in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph, credit hours that were repeated shall be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average calculation.

- (a) A student shall have a one-time option to repeat one course and utilize only the higher of the two grades in the calculation of their postsecondary grade point average for purposes of determining continued eligibility for a TELS award. The credit hours for both attempted courses, however, will be included in the overall number of credit hours attempted for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
 - (b) It shall be the responsibility of the student to advise the appropriate official of the eligible postsecondary institution when this option is being exercised.
- (3) Grades received for courses attempted prior to high school graduation, completion of a home school program in Tennessee or GED or HiSET attainment do not count in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average or in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (4) Credit hours earned by examination are not eligible for payment with TELS awards and shall not be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average or in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (5) Credit hours attempted as part of a diploma or certificate program of study are not considered to be college credit hours and therefore shall not be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average or in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility unless those hours are accepted toward a degree.
- (6) Remedial and developmental studies and independent studies courses are eligible for payment with TELS awards and shall be included in the calculation of the postsecondary cumulative grade point average and in the attempted hours in an eligible program of study for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (7) Courses in which a student enrolls as an audit student for which no college credit will be received cannot be paid with a TELS award or included in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (8) Continuing education courses are not eligible for payment with TELS awards and shall not be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average or in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (9) A student who obtains a grade change shall notify the financial aid office within thirty (30) calendar days of the grade change and request reinstatement of his or her award on a form developed by the institution for this purpose. If the grade change makes the student eligible for a TELS award, the student can be awarded a TELS award retroactively in the current award year. If the grade change affects the student's eligibility from the previous award year, the TELS award may be adjusted in the current award year. The eligible postsecondary institution shall make necessary reductions in the student's financial aid package if the reinstatement of a TELS award results in either an over-award of need-based aid or exceeds the institution's cost of attendance for any semester. If the student's application for reinstatement is denied, the student may appeal the decision in accordance with Rule 1640- 01-19-.16.
- (10) A student enrolled in a matriculating status at an eligible postsecondary institution shall qualify for TELS award payment for distance education courses in an eligible program of study if all other eligibility requirements are met. Students may take courses through more than one eligible postsecondary institution during the same semester. Payment for the distance education courses shall be made in the same manner as transient students as

provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.14

- (11) A student enrolled in a matriculating status at an eligible postsecondary institution may qualify for TELS award payment while participating in an internship or co-op program as part of an eligible program of study if the student receives college credit from the internship or co-op experience and is charged tuition and fees for the credit. The credit hours shall be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average.
- (12) A student enrolled in a matriculating status at an eligible postsecondary institution may qualify for TELS award payment while participating in an alternative study or study abroad program if all other eligibility requirements are met. The eligible postsecondary institution which is the student's home institution must approve the alternative study or study abroad program for credit toward the student's degree and the number of hours in an eligible program of study that will be applied toward the degree prior to the student's departure.
- (13) Courses that appear on a student's transcript as an "incomplete" shall be considered credit hours attempted, except as noted in Rules 1640-01-19-.12(2) and 1640-01-19-.12(4). The student's TELS award eligibility, however, shall be determined by excluding the credit hours attributable to the course for which an "incomplete" has been assigned from the cumulative grade point average calculation.
 - (a) If the student fails to retain eligibility for a TELS award as a result of the calculation of an "incomplete," but later becomes eligible when the grade for the "incomplete" course is reported, the student is eligible to receive a TELS award retroactively within the award year and shall retain eligibility. Retroactive TELS awards for previous award years shall be added to the current award year. The eligible postsecondary institution shall, however, make necessary reductions in the student's financial aid package if the reinstatement of a TELS award results in either an over-award of need-based aid or exceeds the institution's cost of attendance for any semester. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the financial aid office at the eligible postsecondary institution that a grade has been awarded and request that the TELS award be reinstated. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall develop a standard form for use by students to comply with this provision. If the student's application for reinstatement is denied, the student may appeal the decision in accordance with Rule 1640-01-19-.16.
 - (b) If the student retains eligibility for a TELS award as a result of the calculation, but later becomes ineligible when the grade for the "incomplete" course is reported, then the student shall be ineligible for all TELS awards. Additionally, the student shall reimburse the institution for TELS awards received in the interim.
- (14) Courses from which a student withdraws shall not be used in calculating the cumulative grade point average. The hours shall be included in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (15) Courses in which a student takes a pass/fail course shall not be used in calculating the cumulative grade point average. The hours shall be included in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (16) Students who reach a benchmark during the summer semester shall have their continuing eligibility determined based upon the cumulative grade point average and semester grade point average, if required, as of the end of the summer semester.
- (17) When determining the provisional eligibility of a student for the HOPE scholarship under T.C.A. § 49-4-911(a)(2), the student may earn the qualifying semester grade point average as either a part-time or full-time student in the semester in which continuing eligibility was reviewed.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-911, 49-4-913, 49-4-919, 49-4-924, and 49-4-931.

1640-01-19-.14 TRANSIENT STUDENTS.

- (1) A transient student is eligible to receive a TELS award if all other eligibility requirements are met and if both the home and host institutions are eligible postsecondary institutions.
- (2) Each eligible postsecondary institution shall develop a process to effectuate each provision of this rule and shall notify its students of the process and the availability of the necessary forms to comply with the requirements. At the end of the semester, the host institution shall provide the student's home institution with all information necessary for the home institution to determine continued TELS award eligibility.
- (3) If the home institution chooses to certify the transient student to TSAC for payment of the HOPE Scholarship, the home institution shall certify the student at the award amount designated to the eligible postsecondary institution the student is attending.
- (4) If, through collaboration with the home institution, the host institution chooses to certify the transient student to TSAC for payment of the HOPE Scholarship, the host institution shall certify the student at the award amount designated to the eligible postsecondary institution the student is attending.
- (5) If the host institution chooses not to certify the transient student to TSAC for payment of the HOPE Scholarship, the home institution shall certify the student at the award amount designated to the eligible postsecondary institution the student is attending.
- (6) If the eligible student is concurrently enrolled at the home institution and a host institution, then the home institution shall certify the student at the award amount of the home institution.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.15 EXTENSION OF FIVE-YEAR TERMINATING EVENT DUE TO MEDICAL DISABILITY.

- (1) As outlined in T.C.A. § 49-4-913, a HOPE recipient who has a documented medical disability, as verified by a licensed physician, which requires the student to attend part-time, may petition TSAC to receive an extension to the five (5) year period. Such extension may not exceed ten (10) years from the student's date of initial enrollment at any postsecondary institution.
- (2) Documentation from the licensed physician must include a statement that affirms the student's medical disability and reason(s) the student must attend part-time. The extension will be granted one (1) year at a time and documentation must be provided to TSAC prior to the beginning of the academic term in which the part-time status is being applied for. The extension will be reviewed on an annual basis and a determination made of the student's eligibility for the extension.
- (3) A student with a medical disability whose five (5) year period has expired may appeal to TSAC to have the award reinstated, provided the student has maintained eligibility for the HOPE Scholarship. A student whose eligibility has expired may receive up to an additional five (5) years, or the number of years remaining that will equal ten (10) years from initial enrollment, whichever is less.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-708, 49-4-904, 49-4-905, and 49-4-913.

1640-01-19-.16 APPEAL AND EXCEPTION PROCESS.

- (1) Each eligible postsecondary institution shall establish an Institutional Review Panel (IRP) which shall review student appeals for the loss of TELS eligibility, as set forth in T.C.A. § 49-4-924 and these rules. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall establish written procedures for the submission of an appeal to the IRP following the denial or revocation of a TELS award. These procedures shall include, but not be limited to, the establishment and composition of the IRP and the process and timelines for appeals to the IRP. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall also ensure students are notified of the procedures for submitting an appeal to the TSAC Appeals Panel (Appeals Panel) following a decision made by the IRP. No eligible postsecondary institution official rendering a decision to deny or revoke a TELS award shall participate as a voting member in the appeal process for the same award. If the IRP determines that an appeal shall be reviewed, a hearing shall be held no later than ten (10) business days after the appeal is properly filed, exclusive of holidays and school closures. The IRP shall notify the appellant in writing of its decision no later than five (5) business days after ruling on the appeal. The notification shall include the date of the decision and pertinent facts and issues of the IRP's decision.
- (2) The TSAC Appeals Panel shall be appointed by TSAC's Executive Director for the purpose of meeting to consider appeals from decisions rendered by the IRPs and appeals submitted directly to the TSAC Appeals Panel without first being submitted to an IRP.
- (3) A student may appeal the loss of a TELS award to TSAC under the following circumstances:
 - (a) Appealing the decision rendered by an IRP. Such appeals shall be properly submitted to the Appeals Panel within forty-five (45) calendar days from the date of the IRP decision letter and shall include the following information:
 1. TSAC Appeal Form;
 2. Written statement outlining the basis for the appeal;
 3. Denial letter from the IRP;
 4. Official college transcripts;
 5. Proof of current enrollment; and
 6. Any other documentation that supports the student's appeal; or
 - (b) Appealing directly to the TSAC Appeals Panel without first appealing to the IRP. Such appeals shall be properly submitted to the TSAC Appeals Panel within forty-five (45) calendar days from the date of notification from TSAC to the student regarding the requirements of the appeal. Appeals directly to the TSAC Appeals Panel shall include the same documentation outlined in subdivision (3)(a), with the exclusion of the requirements in (3)(a)3., and may be reviewed by the TSAC Appeals Panel under the following circumstances:
 1. Where the circumstances leading to the loss of eligibility occurred at a regionally- accredited out-of-state postsecondary institution prior to the student being enrolled, or attempting to enroll, in an eligible postsecondary institution;
 2. Where the circumstances leading to the loss of eligibility occurred at one (1) eligible postsecondary institution prior to the student transferring to another eligible postsecondary institution;
 3. Where a student first enrolled beyond sixteen (16) months after high school graduation;

4. Where a student withdraws from an eligible postsecondary institution while seeking eligibility as a non-traditional student;
 5. Where a student is enrolled part-time and is seeking an extension to the five-year terminating event due to a documented medical disability as certified by a licensed physician, including the relied upon certification;
 6. Where a student does not file the FAFSA or submit an application required for program eligibility by the published deadline; or
 7. At TSAC's discretion where the loss of eligibility was due to extraordinary circumstances.
- (4) A student who is unable to properly submit an appeal to the TSAC Appeals Panel prior to the forty-five (45) day deadline due to circumstances beyond his or her control, may request an extension of the forty-five (45) day deadline. Such a request shall be made in writing to the TSAC Appeals Panel prior to the expiration of the forty-five (45) day deadline and shall include an explanation of the circumstances requiring the extension. The appeal of a student who does not meet the forty-five (45) day deadline and does not timely request an extension shall be denied. A denial of an untimely appeal may be set aside by the Executive Director of TSAC only in extraordinary circumstances in the interest of fairness. In such cases, the TSAC Appeals Panel will consider the appeal on its merits.
- (5) The TSAC Appeals Panel shall consider each appeal no later than forty-five (45) calendar days after the appeal is properly submitted unless an extension to the forty-five (45) day deadline is approved by the TSAC Appeals Panel. The TSAC Appeals Panel shall notify the appellant in writing of a decision no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after ruling on an appeal. The notification shall include a summary of the pertinent facts and issues leading to the decision and a copy of the notification shall be sent to the appellant's home institution. A decision of the TSAC Appeals Panel made on the merits of the appeal is the final administrative remedy available to the student.
- (6) The authority of an IRP shall be strictly limited to consideration of appeals based on determinations of eligibility arising from its respective postsecondary institution. The authority of the TSAC Appeals Panel shall be strictly limited to consideration of appeals arising from an IRP or those made directly to TSAC, as authorized by these rules. Neither the IRP nor the TSAC Appeals Panel shall have the authority to rule on the validity of, or make exceptions to, high school grade point average, postsecondary grade point average, ACT or SAT scores, or any other academic eligibility requirements.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, and 49-4-924.

**RULES OF
THE TENNESSEE STUDENT ASSISTANCE CORPORATION
(TSAC)**

**CHAPTER 1640-01-19
TENNESSEE EDUCATION LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP**

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1640-01-19-.01 DEFINITIONS.

- ~~(1)~~ ~~Academic Requirement: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.~~
- ~~(1)~~⁽²⁾ Academic ~~y~~^Year: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- ~~(2)~~⁽³⁾ ACT: The ACT Assessment offered by ACT, Inc., exclusive of the essay and optional subject area battery tests.
- ~~(3)~~⁽⁴⁾ Adjusted ~~g~~^Gross ~~i~~^Income ~~a~~^Atttributable to the ~~s~~^Student: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- ~~(4)~~⁽⁵⁾ Alternative ~~s~~^Study ~~p~~^Program: A ~~P~~^Program of study including, but not limited to study abroad, student exchange programs, practicums, co-op programs, and internships, that may include ~~s~~ travel outside the State of Tennessee that is sponsored or offered by:
- (a) An eligible postsecondary institution; or
 - (b) An eligible postsecondary institution in conjunction with either another eligible postsecondary or a postsecondary institution that is accredited by a regional accrediting association.
- ~~(5)~~⁽⁶⁾ ASPIRE ~~a~~^Award: An award ~~to a student~~ for study in pursuit of an associate or baccalaureate degree at an eligible postsecondary institution to a student who meets the requirements of ~~qualifies for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship and whose adjusted gross income attributable to the student does not exceed the amount as described in~~ T.C.A. § 49-4-915~~(a)(2)~~.
- ~~(6)~~⁽⁷⁾ Award ~~y~~^Year: A period of time, typically nine (9) months, in which a full-time student is expected to complete the equivalent of a minimum of two (2) semesters of academic study.

~~(8) Board of Regents: The board of regents of the state university and community college system of Tennessee.~~

~~(7)(9)~~ Certificate or dDiploma: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(8)(10)~~ Continuing eEducation: Courses and programs that do not lead to a certificate, diploma, or degree that are designed for personal development and are an extension of the traditional on-campus learning process.

~~(9)(11)~~ Continuous eEnrollment: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(10)(12)~~ Cost of aAttendance: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(11)(13)~~ Credit hHours aAttempted: The number of semester hours for which a degree-seeking or diploma/certificate-seeking student attending a postsecondary institution is enrolled as of the institutionally defined census date shall be considered credit hours attempted, regardless of whether a grade has been assigned. This standard shall apply to any change to a non-credit status, notwithstanding anything in Rule 1640-01-19-~~1322~~.

~~(12)(14)~~ Degree: A two-year associate degree or four-year baccalaureate degree conferred on students by an eligible postsecondary institution.

~~(15) Dependent Child of a Military Parent: This term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-926.~~

~~(16) Dependent Child of a Full-Time Religious Worker: This term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-934.~~

~~(13)(17)~~ Distance eEducation: An educational process that is characterized by the separation, in time or place, between instructor and student. It may include credit hours offered principally ~~by through the use of~~ television, audio, or computer transmissions, such as open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, or satellite transmission; audio or computer conferencing; video cassettes or discs, or correspondence.

~~(18) Dual Enrollment Grant: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.~~

~~(14)(19)~~ Eligible hHigh sSchool: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(20) Eligible Independent Postsecondary Institution: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.~~

~~(15)(21)~~ Eligible pPostsecondary iInstitution: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(16)(22)~~ Eligible pProgram of sStudy: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(23) Eligible Public Postsecondary Institution: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.~~

~~(24) Entering Freshman: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.~~

~~(17)(25)~~ FAFSA: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(18)(26)~~ Foster cChild: A child who was in the custody of the Tennessee Department of Children's Services as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-933~~(b)~~.

~~(19)(27)~~ Full-tTime sStudent: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(20)(28)~~ GED: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(21)(29)~~ General Assembly Merit Scholarship: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(22)(30)~~ Gift aAid: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

~~(23)~~(34) Grade point average (GPA): The numbered grade average calculated using a 4.0 scale, calculated to the hundredth decimal.

~~(32)~~ — ~~High-Need Course or Program: Courses or programs annually selected by the TSAC Board using the criteria outlined in T.C.A. § 49-4-930, for which the Dual Enrollment Grant may be used.~~

~~(24)~~(33) High school grade point average: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.

~~(25)~~(34) HiSET: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.

~~(26)~~(35) Home School; ~~Student~~: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-~~6-3050~~, ~~4-902~~.

~~(27)~~(36) Home institution: The eligible postsecondary institution in which the student is enrolled and is in a matriculating status working toward a degree, diploma, or certificate.

~~(28)~~(37) Host institution: The eligible postsecondary institution the student is temporarily attending as a transient student.

~~(29)~~(38) Immediate family member: Spouse, parents, grandparents, legal guardians, children, or siblings.

~~(30)~~(39) Incarcerated: Currently confined to a local, state, or federal correctional institution, as well as work release or educational release facilities.

~~(40)~~ — ~~Joint Enrollment: An arrangement between a high school and a postsecondary institution wherein a student enrolls in postsecondary classes while attending high school, but for which the student will receive credit from only one of the two institutions.~~

~~(31)~~(41) Matriculating ed status: The student is a recognized candidate for an appropriate degree, diploma, or certificate at an eligible postsecondary educational institution.

~~(32)~~(42) Medical disability: A documented condition, as certified by a licensed physician, which requires a HOPE Scholarship recipient to attend part-time at an eligible postsecondary institution.

~~(43)~~ — ~~Military Parent: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-926(b)(2).~~

~~(44)~~ — ~~Nonacademic Requirement: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.~~

~~(33)~~(45) Non-traditional student: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.

~~(34)~~(46) Parent: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.

~~(35)~~(47) Part-time student: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.

~~(36)~~(48) Regional accrediting association: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-902.

~~(49)~~ — ~~Religious Worker: The term is defined in T.C.A. §49-4-934(b)(2).~~

~~(37)~~(50) SAT: The SAT administered by the College Board, exclusive of the essay and optional subject area battery tests.

~~(38)~~(51) Satisfactory academic progress: Progress in a course of study in accordance with the standards and practices used for Title IV programs by the eligible postsecondary institution at which the student is currently enrolled.

- (39)(52) Semester: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (40)(53) Semester gGrade pPoint aAverage: The grade point average for the semester as calculated by the postsecondary institution utilizing its institutional grading policy.
- (41)(54) Semester hHour: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- ~~(55) Study Abroad Program: Programs of study for which college credit is earned that include travel outside the United States.~~
- (42)(56) TCAT: Tennessee College of Applied Technology.
- (43)(57) TELS (Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship) aAward: Any scholarship and/or grant provided for by these rules that a student is eligible to receive, ~~excluding the Dual Enrollment Grant.~~
- (44)(58) Tennessee HOPE Access Grant: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (45)(59) Tennessee HOPE Foster Child Tuition Grant: A grant in addition to the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship to a foster child to only be used towards the costs of tuition, maintenance fees, student activity fees, and required registration or matriculation fees at the eligible postsecondary institution the student attends.
- (46)(60) Tennessee HOPE Scholarship: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (47)(64) Tennessee National Guard: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-926(b)(3).
- (48)(62) Tennessee rResident: A student classified as a resident of Tennessee pursuant to the provisions of § 49-8-104.
- (49)(63) Test dDate: The date designated for the ACT test administered by ACT, Inc., or the date designated for the SAT test administered by the College Board at national and state test centers. This shall also include the administration of either test on other dates as approved by the respective testing entities to accommodate an individual student's documented disability or other hardship, as well as a statewide test date established by the State Department of Education that is sanctioned by the respective test entities.
- (50)(64) Title IV: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.
- (51)(65) Transient sStudent: A visiting student enrolled in another institution who is granted temporary admission for the purpose of completing work to transfer back to the home institution and who expects to return to the institution in which the student was previously enrolled.
- (52)(66) TSAC: Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation.
- (52)(67) Unofficial wWithdrawal: The determination by an institution that a student has ceased to be academically engaged and otherwise failed to officially withdraw from a course prior to the institution's established deadline or other applicable institutional guidelines.
- ~~(68) Unweighted Grade Point Average: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.~~
- (54) Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Grant: A grant program, as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-923, for students seeking a diploma or certificate at a TCAT.
- (55)(69) Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant: The term is defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-912, 49-4-913, 49-4-914, 49-4-915,

49-4-916, 49-4-919, 49-4-920, 49-4-921, 49-4-922, 49-4-924, 49-4-926, 49-4-930, 49-4-931, 49-4-933, 49-4-934, and 49-4-935.

1640-01-19-.02 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD AMOUNTS AND CLASSIFICATIONS.

- (1) The ~~Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship~~ TELS program is intended to provide financial awards to offset costs associated with pursuing postsecondary education. The TELS awards governed by these rules include the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, Tennessee HOPE Scholarship for Non-traditional Students, Tennessee HOPE Access Grant, Tennessee ASPIRE Award, Tennessee HOPE Foster Child Grant, General Assembly Merit Scholarship, Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant, and Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Grant.
- (2) The amount of a TELS award shall be based on the number of credit hours attempted in a semester that are applicable to the student's eligible program of study. Award amounts for full-time students are~~shall be determined in accordance with T.C.A. § 4-51-111 and shall be~~ set in Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 9, and the General Appropriations Act.
- ~~(3) The Dual Enrollment Grant award amounts shall be determined by TSAC, in accordance with guidelines in T.C.A. § 49-4-930 and the general appropriations act.~~
 - ~~(a) Students who receive the award amount of maintenance fees as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-930 during their junior year of high school shall continue to receive the award amount of maintenance fees in their senior year even if the course or program is no longer determined to be a high-need course or program by the TSAC Board.~~
- ~~(4) Recipients of any TELS award as provided by these rules, except for the Dual Enrollment Grant and the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant, may enroll as a full-time or part-time student at any eligible postsecondary institution. The amount of the award for full-time and part-time students shall be based on the credit hours attempted in an eligible program of study. Students enrolled in six (6), seven (7), or eight (8) credit hours will receive half (1/2) of the award of full-time students. Students enrolled in nine (9), ten (10), or eleven (11) credit hours will receive three quarters (3/4) of the award of a full-time student.~~
- (3) A student enrolled in nine (9), ten (10), or eleven (11) credit hours in the student's eligible program of study will receive three-fourths (3/4) of the award of a full-time student. A student enrolled in six (6), seven (7), or eight (8) credit hours in the student's eligible program of study will receive one-half (1/2) of the award of a full-time student.
- (4) A student enrolled in less than six (6) credit hours in the student's eligible program of study will receive one-fourth (1/4) of the award of a full-time student, but only in the following circumstances:
 - (a) In the semester of graduation, if less than six (6) credit hours are required to complete the student's eligible program of study;
 - (b) In any semester in which the eligible postsecondary institution does not offer at least six (6) credit hours of coursework applicable to the student's eligible program of study; or
 - (c) The student's eligible program of study requires enrollment in less than six (6) credit hours for a semester.
- ~~(5) Except for approved medical or personal leaves of absence as provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.20 or emergency military duty as provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.21, award recipients must be continuously enrolled and maintain satisfactory academic progress at an eligible postsecondary institution.~~

~~(5)~~(6) Receipt of student financial aid from sources other than TELS that are applied to educational expenses will not operate to reduce the student's TELS award as long as if the student's total aid does not exceed the total cost of attendance. ~~In the event that~~if a student's total aid exceeds the cost of attendance, the eligible postsecondary institution shall, to the extent it does not violate applicable federal regulations, use its institutional policy in reducing the student's total aid package.

(6) All tuition waivers and discounts for which a student or parent qualifies shall first be deducted from the student's tuition and mandatory fees before gift aid is credited.

~~(7) The receipt of a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, Tennessee HOPE Access Grant, Tennessee ASPIRE Award, Tennessee HOPE Foster Child Grant, General Assembly Merit Scholarship, Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant, Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect, or Dual Enrollment Grant is contingent upon admission and enrollment at an eligible postsecondary institution. Academically qualifying for any of these award programs does not guarantee admission to an eligible postsecondary institution.~~

(7) Fractional award amounts for a semester may be rounded up or down to the nearest dollar, but in no event shall such rounding result in a student receiving a total annual award higher than the maximum yearly award amount authorized by the applicable statute or these rules.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-912, 49-4-914, 49-4-915, 49-4-916, 49-4-919, 49-4-920, 49-4-921, 49-4-922, 49-4-924, 49-4-930, and 49-4-933.

1640-01-19-.03 APPLICATION PROCESS.

(1) The FAFSA shall be the application for all first-year TELS awards and the FAFSA, or Renewal FAFSA, shall be the means by which eligible students reapply for TELS awards after their initial year of eligibility. The FAFSA must be submitted by mail or electronically as directed in the FAFSA instructions. Regardless of the adjusted gross income attributable to the student, the student is required to complete the FAFSA for each academic year ~~in order~~ to apply for and receive a TELS award.

(2) Application deadlines shall be determined by the TSAC Executive Director and published on TSAC's website. It is the responsibility of the student to submit the FAFSA in a timely manner to ensure it is received by the published deadlines. ~~Students applying for a TELS award to be used at an eligible postsecondary institution other than a TCAT must have a FAFSA received by the U.S. Department of Education on or before September 1 for fall enrollment and February 1 for spring and summer enrollment. Students enrolling in a TCAT shall have a FAFSA received by the U.S. Department of Education on or before July 1 for the summer trimester, November 1 for the fall trimester and March 1 for the spring trimester. It shall be the responsibility of the student to ensure that the FAFSA is timely submitted to ensure it is received by the above deadlines.~~

~~(3) Students shall apply for the Dual Enrollment Grant during their junior and senior high school years by completing the Dual Enrollment Grant Application online. The student must renew the Dual Enrollment Grant application each postsecondary academic year. The application deadline shall be determined by TSAC.~~

(34) The TSAC Executive Director is authorized to ~~suspend, waive, or modify~~ published application deadlines ~~in these rules upon~~for well-documented extraordinary causes, where necessary to protect the public interest.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-924, and 49-4-930.

1640-01-19-.04 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY.

(1) To be eligible for a TELS award a student shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. §§ 49-4-

904 and 49-4-905.

- (2) The receipt of a TELS award is contingent upon admission and enrollment at an eligible postsecondary institution. Academically qualifying for any of these award programs does not guarantee admission to an eligible postsecondary institution.
- (3) Except for approved medical or personal leaves of absence as provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.11 or emergency military duty as provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.12, award recipients must be continuously enrolled and maintain satisfactory academic progress at an eligible postsecondary institution.
- (4) A student reaches the terminating event of earning a baccalaureate degree under T.C.A. § 49-4-913 when the student completes all academic course requirements of the student's declared eligible program of study. Failure of the student to complete institutional requirements related to the process of conferring the credential, but unrelated to the completion of the required courses such as an exit interview, application to graduate, or others, will not allow the student to continue to be eligible for the scholarship in subsequent semesters.
- (5) Notwithstanding paragraph (4) above, a student who meets all requirements for a fourth or fifth year of eligibility except that the student is classified at the professional level rather than as an undergraduate and has not met a terminating event in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-4-913, is eligible if the student was accepted into a professional-level program of study that is an extension of the student's bachelor's degree program.

~~(1) To be eligible for a TELS award a student shall:~~

- ~~(a) Be a Tennessee citizen; and~~
- ~~(b) Be classified as a Tennessee resident pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-8-104; and~~
- ~~(c) Make application for a TELS award by submitting the FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA as required by Rule 1640-01-19-.03; and~~
- ~~(d) Be admitted to and enrolled in an eligible postsecondary institution; and~~
- ~~(e) Comply with United States Selective Service System requirements for registration, if such requirements are applicable to the student; and~~
- ~~(f) Be in compliance with federal drug-free rules and laws for receiving financial assistance; and~~
- ~~(g) Meet each qualification relating to the relevant TELS award and applicable to the student; and~~
- ~~(h) Not be in default on a federal Title IV educational loan or Tennessee educational loan; and~~
- ~~(i) Not owe a refund on a federal Title IV student financial aid program or a Tennessee student financial aid program; and~~
- ~~(j) Not be incarcerated.~~

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-904, 49-4-905, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.05 ELIGIBILITY – TENNESSEE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP FOR NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS.

- (1) In addition to the requirements of T.C.A. §§ 49-4-902 and 49-4-931, to be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, a non-traditional student shall enroll in the semester immediately succeeding the semester in which eligibility is established.
- (2) Credit hours attempted and the cumulative grade point average earned by a student while receiving another TELS award, or prior to the student being determined to be an independent student by the FAFSA, shall not be considered when determining eligibility to receive the HOPE Scholarship as a non-traditional student.
- ~~(1) To be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship as an entering freshman, a student, who graduated from an eligible high school, upon having completed curriculum requirements of the high school for graduation, shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-907.~~
- ~~(2) To be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship as an entering freshman, a student who completes high school in a Tennessee home school program, who obtains a GED or HiSET, or who graduates from a high school located in Tennessee that is not an eligible high school, shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-908.~~
- ~~(3) To be eligible for a TELS award, students entering active duty in the United States Armed Services within two (2) years after graduating from an eligible high school, graduating from a high school located in Tennessee that is not an eligible high school, completing high school in a Tennessee home school program or obtaining a GED or HiSET, shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-918.~~
- ~~(4) A student who is a Tennessee citizen and a dependent child of a full-time military parent may be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship as an entering freshman as provided in this paragraph.~~
- ~~(a) Such students may be eligible if they meet all eligibility requirements for a HOPE Scholarship except that:~~
- ~~1. While the parent is a military parent, the student does not reside in Tennessee immediately preceding the date of application for financial assistance; and~~
 - ~~2. The student did not graduate from an eligible high school as defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902, an ineligible high school, a Tennessee home school or obtain a GED or HiSET.~~
- ~~(b) Students who graduated from a high school outside of Tennessee may nevertheless be eligible if the high school was:~~
- ~~1. Operated by the United States; or~~
 - ~~2. Accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting association for the state in which the school is located; or~~
 - ~~3. Accredited by an accrediting association recognized by the foreign nation in which the school is located.~~
- ~~(c) Students graduating from high schools outside Tennessee who do not meet the requirements of part 2. of subparagraph (b) may still be eligible for the HOPE Scholarship if they completed high school in a home school program or obtained a GED or HiSET.~~
- ~~(d) Paragraph (4) shall only apply to:~~
- ~~1. Dependent children of members of the armed forces or Tennessee National~~

~~Guard whose home of record, at the time of entry into military service, is Tennessee or who are classified as residents of this state at the time of application pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-8-104; and~~

- ~~2. Dependent children of full-time civilian employees of the U.S. Department of Defense, who are Tennessee residents as classified pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-8-104.~~
- ~~(5) A student who is a Tennessee citizen and a dependent child of a full-time religious worker may be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship as an entering freshman as provided in this paragraph.
 - ~~(a) Such student must meet all Tennessee HOPE Scholarship eligibility requirements except that:
 - ~~1. While the student's parent is serving in another nation as a religious worker, the student does not reside in Tennessee immediately preceding the date of application for financial assistance; and~~
 - ~~2. The student did not graduate from an eligible high school as defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902, an ineligible high school, a Tennessee home school or obtain a GED or HiSET.~~~~
 - ~~(b) To be eligible for the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship under this paragraph (5), the student must:
 - ~~1. Graduate from a high school in the foreign nation where the student's parent is a religious worker that is accredited by a regional accrediting association as defined in T.C.A. § 49-4-902 and meet the academic eligibility requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-907(3); or~~
 - ~~2. Complete high school in a home school in the foreign nation where the student's parent is a religious worker and meet the academic requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-908(2)(A).~~~~
 - ~~(c) Paragraph (5) only applies to dependent children of religious workers who are engaged in full-time religious work in another nation for more than one (1) year and who were Tennessee residents before leaving the U.S. to do religious work and intend to return to Tennessee upon completion of their assignment as a religious worker.~~~~
- ~~(6) In addition to the requirements of T.C.A. §§ 49-4-902 and 49-4-931, to be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, a non-traditional student shall meet the general eligibility requirements of Rule 1640-01-19-.04 and:
 - ~~(a) Enroll in the semester immediately succeeding the semester in which eligibility is established; and~~
 - ~~(b) If the student fails to maintain continuous enrollment, wait two (2) consecutive calendar years from the end of the semester of attending any postsecondary institution, before attempting to establish eligibility.~~~~
- ~~(7) To be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, students graduating from a high school located in a neighboring state in a county contiguous to Tennessee shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-935.~~
- ~~(8) To be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship, dependent children of a headquarters staff employee, who is a Tennessee citizen before leaving the state and working full-time in a foreign nation for more than one (1) year, shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-~~

~~942 and enroll at an eligible postsecondary institution.~~

- ~~(9) Any student who was initially eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship or HOPE Access Grant but who instead of enrolling at either an eligible 2-year or 4-year postsecondary institution enrolled at a TCAT and obtained the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant and completed a diploma program is eligible for a HOPE Scholarship at either an eligible 2-year or 4-year postsecondary institution. The student must apply for a HOPE Scholarship within three (3) years of completing the diploma program.~~

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, ~~49-4-905, 49-4-907, 49-4-908, 49-4-910, 49-4-918, 49-4-924, 49-4-926, 49-4-930, and 49-4-931, 49-4-934, and 49-4-935.~~

1640-01-19-.06 ELIGIBILITY – TENNESSEE ASPIRE AWARD AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY MERIT SCHOLARSHIP.

- (1) Any student eligible for the ASPIRE award under T.C.A. § 49-4-915 or the General Assembly Merit Scholarship under T.C.A. § 49-4-916 may receive the applicable award in addition to the base Tennessee HOPE Scholarship award.
- (2) The adjusted gross income attributable to a student shall be reviewed each academic year to determine eligibility for the ASPIRE award.
- (3) A student eligible for both the ASPIRE award and the General Assembly Merit Scholarship shall be awarded whichever award amount is higher but shall not simultaneously receive both awards. If a student becomes ineligible for one of these awards in subsequent years but is eligible for the other award, the student shall receive the other award regardless of whether they received it in prior years.
- ~~(1) Except as provided in T.C.A. § 49-4-931, any student eligible for the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship with an adjusted gross income attributable to the student that does not exceed the amount as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-915(a)(2) will receive the ASPIRE award in addition to the base award.~~
- ~~(2) The adjusted gross income attributable to the student shall be reviewed each academic year to determine continuing eligibility for the ASPIRE award. Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 1640-01-19-.12 to the contrary, a student otherwise eligible for the Tennessee HOPE Scholarship and meeting the requirements of this rule shall receive the ASPIRE award regardless of the student's eligibility for this grant in any prior year.~~
- ~~(3) A student eligible for both the ASPIRE award and the General Assembly Merit Scholarship shall be awarded the ASPIRE award but shall not simultaneously receive both awards.~~

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-915, 49-4-916, 49-4-917, 49-4-924, 49-4-930, and 49-4-931.

~~1640-01-19-.07 ELIGIBILITY – GENERAL ASSEMBLY MERIT SCHOLARSHIP.~~

- ~~(1) To be eligible for the General Assembly Merit Scholarship the student shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. §49-4-916.~~
- ~~(2) Students eligible for both the ASPIRE award and the General Assembly Merit Scholarship shall be awarded the ASPIRE award or the General Assembly Merit Scholarship but shall not simultaneously be awarded both.~~
- ~~(3) A student eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship under Rule 1640-01-19-.05(7) shall not be eligible for a General Assembly Merit Scholarship supplemental award under T.C.A. § 49-4-916.~~

~~**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-916, 49-4-917, 49-4-924, and 49-4-935.~~

~~**1640-01-19-.08 ELIGIBILITY – TENNESSEE HOPE ACCESS GRANT.**~~

- ~~(1) To be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Access Grant, a student must:
 - ~~(a) Submit an initial application no later than September 1, 2021, or a renewal application for each year thereafter;~~
 - ~~(b) Meet the general eligibility requirements in Rule 1640-01-19-.04; and~~
 - ~~(c) Meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-920.~~~~

~~**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-920, and 49-4-924.~~

~~**1640-01-19-.09 ELIGIBILITY – TENNESSEE HOPE FOSTER CHILD GRANT.**~~

- ~~(1) In addition to the general eligibility requirements in Rule 1640-01-19-.04, to be eligible for the Tennessee HOPE Foster Child Grant a student shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-933.~~

~~**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-924, and 49-4-933.~~

~~**1640-01-19-.10 ELIGIBILITY – WILDER-NAIFEH TECHNICAL SKILLS GRANT.**~~

- ~~(1) In addition to the general eligibility requirements in Rule 1640-01-19-.04, to be eligible for a Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant a student shall meet the requirement of T.C.A. § 49-4-921.~~

~~**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-921, and 49-4-924.~~

~~**1640-01-19-.11 ELIGIBILITY – DUAL ENROLLMENT GRANT.**~~

- ~~(1) To be eligible for a Dual Enrollment Grant a student shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-930.~~
- ~~(2) The student must have completed all of the academic requirements of the 10th-grade (high school sophomore) and be classified as an 11th-grader (high school junior) or 12th-grader (high school senior) by the student's high school or home school program.~~
- ~~(3) The student must not have already received a high school diploma or GED or HiSET diploma.~~
- ~~(4) A student's participation in the Dual Enrollment Grant program is limited to the remaining amount of time normally required to complete the high school diploma, from the time of initial participation in the program. The grant is available for the regular fall and spring semester, and for summer semesters prior to graduation from high school.~~
- ~~(5) Related to the dual enrollment grant award for high-need courses outlined in the GIVE Act as codified in T.C.A. § 49-4-930:
 - ~~(a) The TSAC Board of Directors shall annually determine the high-need courses within associate of applied science, certificate, or diploma programs for the subsequent academic year based on a recommendation by TSAC staff using available information as outlined in T.C.A. § 49-4-930;~~
 - ~~(b) TSAC staff shall disseminate the list of high-need courses within associate of applied~~~~

science, certificate, or diploma programs to eligible postsecondary institutions as soon as practicable upon approval by the TSAC Board; and

~~(c) An eligible postsecondary institution shall be paid the maintenance fee on behalf of a student for high-need courses taken using the Dual Enrollment Grant. A general education course is not considered a high-need course for the purposes of the GIVE Act Dual Enrollment Grant even if the course is required for completion of an associate of applied science, certificate, or diploma program.~~

~~(6) Any deduction to a student's HOPE Scholarship as a result of taking additional Dual Enrollment Grant courses provided for under T.C.A. § 49-4-930 shall be applied in full against the amount of the student's HOPE Scholarship in the first semester of enrollment at an eligible postsecondary institution.~~

~~If the student's HOPE award in the first semester is less than the amount of the total deduction, then the remaining deduction amount will be applied against the second semester, and subsequent semesters if necessary, until the deduction is eliminated.~~

~~**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-924, and 49-4-930.~~

~~1640-01-19-.12 RETENTION OF AWARDS – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.~~

~~(1) To retain a TELS award authorized by this chapter, a student, including a non-traditional student, at an eligible postsecondary institution shall continue to meet all applicable requirements for the scholarship and shall reapply by completing the FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA pursuant to Rule 1640-01-19-.03 for the applicable award for each academic year.~~

~~(2) Eligibility for the HOPE Scholarship shall be reviewed in accordance with T.C.A. §49-4-911.~~

~~(3) The attempted credit hour includes remedial and developmental studies and all regular college credit courses attempted after high school graduation.~~

~~(4) A student who meets all other requirements for fourth or fifth year eligibility except that the student is classified at the professional level rather than as an undergraduate, and has not met a terminating event in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-4-913, is eligible if the student was accepted into the professional level program of study that is an extension of the student's bachelor's degree program.~~

~~(5) If a student ceases to be eligible for any TELS award, except the General Assembly Merit Scholarship, due to failure to achieve the required cumulative grade point average, the student may regain the applicable award or awards by:~~

~~(a) Continuing to meet all applicable non-academic requirements for the applicable award or awards;~~

~~(b) Maintaining continuous enrollment at an eligible postsecondary institution without the applicable award or awards;~~

~~(c) Attaining grade point average requirements as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-911 at the end of any semester in which eligibility would have been reviewed, had the student not lost the award or awards; and~~

~~(d) Reapplying for the scholarship as provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.03.~~

~~(6) No retroactive awards shall be made for credit hours attempted in order to regain the scholarship.~~

~~(7) A student can utilize the option outlined in paragraph (25) of this rule only one (1) time. A~~

student who, after regaining the award or awards pursuant to paragraph (25) of this rule, subsequently fails to retain any TELS award due to failure to achieve the cumulative grade point average at a regular credit hour checkpoint shall not be eligible to regain the TELS award.

- (8) ~~Except as provided by Rule 1640-01-19-.20 or 1640-01-19-.21, a student receiving a TELS award provided by this chapter shall maintain continuous enrollment at an eligible postsecondary institution and maintain satisfactory academic progress in a course of study in accordance with the standards and practices used for Title IV programs by the postsecondary institution in which the student is currently enrolled.~~

Authority: ~~T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-911, 49-4-912, 49-4-913, 49-4-920, 49-4-921, 49-4-924, and 49-4-931.~~

1640-01-19-.13 RETENTION OF AWARDS – TENNESSEE HOPE ACCESS GRANT.

- (1) ~~In addition to the general requirements for retention of award in Rule 1640-01-19-.12:~~
- (a) ~~A Tennessee HOPE Access Grant shall be awarded to an eligible student only until the end of the semester in which the student has attempted a total of twenty-four (24) credit hours. A student who is eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship shall be ineligible for a Tennessee HOPE Access Grant.~~
 - (b) ~~If a student receiving a Tennessee HOPE Access Grant has achieved a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.75 at the end of the semester in which the student has attempted twenty-four (24) credit hours, the student shall be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship. The student will also receive the ASPIRE award referenced in Rule 1640-01-19-.06, if the adjusted gross income attributable to the student at the time of review does not exceed the amount described in T.C.A. § 49-4-915(a)(2).~~
 - (c) ~~If a student ceases to be eligible due to failure to achieve the cumulative grade point average required at the end of the semester in which the student has attempted twenty-four (24) credit hours, the student may be eligible to regain the HOPE Scholarship by following the procedure outlined in Rule 1640-01-19-.12(25).~~
 - (d) ~~A student may receive a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship after having received a Tennessee HOPE Access Grant until a terminating event as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-913 occurs.~~

Authority: ~~T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-913, 49-4-915, 49-4-920, and 49-4-924.~~

1640-01-19-.14 RETENTION OF AWARDS – DUAL ENROLLMENT GRANT.

- (1) ~~To be eligible for a Dual Enrollment Grant the student must meet the minimum requirements pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-4-930.~~
- (2) ~~The Dual Enrollment cumulative grade point average used to determine eligibility for a renewal of a Dual Enrollment Grant must be calculated by the institution the student is attending, utilizing its institutional grading policy and must be based on all dual enrollment credit hours attempted under this rule.~~
- (3) ~~Distance education courses and independent studies courses are eligible for payment with a Dual Enrollment Grant and shall be included in the calculation of the postsecondary cumulative grade point average for continued eligibility of the Dual Enrollment Grant.~~
- (4) ~~Courses in which a student enrolls as an audit student for which no college credit will be received cannot be paid with a Dual Enrollment Grant.~~

- ~~(5) Students who obtain a grade change shall notify the financial aid office within thirty (30) calendar days of the grade change and request reinstatement of his/her award on a form developed by the institution for this purpose. If the grade change makes the student eligible for a Dual Enrollment Grant, the student can be awarded retroactively in the current award year. If the grade change affects the student's eligibility from the previous award year, the award may be adjusted in the current award year.~~
- ~~(6) The grant will pay only for lower division (courses numbered 100-200 or 1000-2000) postsecondary credit for general education courses and courses in the disciplines. The grant will not pay for upper division courses (numbered 300-400 or 3000-4000).~~

~~Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-924, and 49-4-930.~~

1640-01-19-.0715 TENNESSEE EDUCATION LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP AWARD PROCESS.

- (1) On or before June 30 of each year, all eligible high schools shall submit the name, social security number, grade point averages, and highest composite ACT/SAT score on any single test date, for academically eligible students, cumulative through the [finaleighth](#) semester. Students who graduate from summer school shall have their information reported to TSAC on or before August 15 of each year.
- (2) Eligible postsecondary institutions that enroll students receiving scholarships or grants shall [be responsible for certifying to TSAC that students have met all eligibility requirements and shall](#) assist in providing ~~and certifying~~ student information necessary for administering, receiving, and evaluating such programs.
- [\(3\) During the certification process, all eligible postsecondary institutions shall certify the number of credit hours attempted and the cumulative grade point average of all students receiving a TELS award at the end of each semester.](#)

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, [49-4-911](#), and 49-4-924.

~~**1640-01-19-.16 CONTINUATION OF TENNESSEE EDUCATION LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP AWARD.**~~

- ~~(1) All students receiving a TELS award shall reapply for the award by filing a FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA as provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.03 for each subsequent year.
 - ~~(a) During the certification process, all eligible postsecondary institutions shall certify the number of credit hours attempted and the cumulative grade point average of all students receiving a TELS award at the end of the semester, as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-911(a).~~
 - ~~(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (1)(a) above to the contrary, only those grades earned and credit hours attempted by a non-traditional student, while receiving the TELS award, shall count toward the benchmark requirements.~~~~
- ~~(2) To remain eligible for the HOPE Scholarship, the student must meet the minimum requirements pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-4-911.~~
- ~~(3) Students who reach a benchmark during the summer semester shall have their continuing eligibility determined based upon the cumulative grade point average and semester grade point average, if required, as of the end of the summer semester.~~
- ~~(4) Students entering into the provisions of T.C.A. § 49-4-911(a)(2) may enter into these provisions as a part-time student. However, upon receiving the award based on the~~

~~provisions of T.C.A. § 49-4-911(a)(2), the student must maintain continuous enrollment each semester.~~

~~Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-911, 49-4-924, and 49-4-931.~~

1640-01-19-.0817 AWARD MADE IN ERROR.

- (1) If a student receives a TELS award and it is later determined that the award or some portion of the award was made in error, the student or the postsecondary institution may be required to repay the amount awarded in error.
- (2) If TSAC determines that the error was through no fault of the student, the student will not be required to repay the amount of the payment made in error.
- (3) Repayment from the student will be required if TSAC determines that fraud was committed by, or the error was ~~through~~the fault of, the student. When repayment is required, the student may not receive additional student aid from TSAC until repayment is made.
- (4) Repayment from the eligible postsecondary institution will be required if TSAC determines that the error was ~~through~~ the fault of the ~~postsecondary~~ institution.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.0918 REFUND POLICY.

- (1) If a recipient of a TELS award ~~or a Dual Enrollment Grant~~ fails to complete a semester for any reason, the eligible postsecondary institution shall apply its refund policy to determine whether a refund may be required and ~~or~~ whether funds must be returned to TSAC. The eligible postsecondary institution shall provide the student with a notice indicating the amount to be returned to the student ~~and~~ or the amount to be refunded to TSAC. Additionally, the eligible postsecondary institution shall notify TSAC of the ~~refund~~charge back, which shall be noted on the student's record. The eligible postsecondary institution shall also be responsible for obtaining repayment from the student. The student shall be ineligible for student aid from TSAC until the refund is paid.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201 49-4-204, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.1019 CONVERTING FROM FULL-TIME TO PART-TIME ENROLLMENT.

- (1) Students enrolled in a full-time or part-time status, as of the institutionally defined census date, may not convert to part-time or less than part-time status within the same semester and receive a scholarship award for the succeeding semesters unless the student requests and the institution approves the change to part-time or less than part-time status.
- (2) An institution may allow a change from full-time to part-time or from part-time to less than part-time status within the same semester only when there are documented medical or personal grounds, in accordance with Rule 1640-01-19-.1120.
- (3) Each eligible postsecondary institution shall adopt procedures for considering student requests for change from full-time to part-time or from part-time to less than part-time status within the semester. In the event an institution denies a student's request to change enrollment status within a semester, the student may appeal the decision pursuant to Rule 1640-01-19-.1628.
- (4) ~~If in the event that~~ the decision to deny the change of status is upheld through the appeals process, the student shall be ineligible to regain the TELS award.
- (5) ~~If in the event~~ the change to part-time or less than part-time status is approved, the eligible

postsecondary institution shall apply its refund policy to determine whether a refund may be required and/or funds returned to TSAC. The eligible postsecondary institution shall provide the student with a notice indicating the amount to be returned to TSAC. Additionally, the eligible postsecondary institution shall notify TSAC of the ~~refund~~charge-back, which shall be noted on the student's record.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-911, 49-4-912, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-~~1120~~ PERSONAL OR MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

- (1) A student may be granted a medical or personal leaves of absence from attendance at an eligible postsecondary institution, which may include failure to enroll within 16 months of graduation, a break in continuous enrollment, or unapproved changes of enrollment from full-time to part-time or part-time to less than part-time. and receive or resume receiving an award~~(s)~~ upon resumption of the student's attendance at an eligible postsecondary institution ~~so long as~~if all other applicable eligibility criteria are met. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall adopt procedures for considering student requests for leaves of absence. ~~An eligible postsecondary institution may grant leaves of absence only for documented medical or personal reasons.~~ Allowable medical or personal reasons shall include, but are not ~~be~~ limited to, illness of the student, illness or death of an immediate family member, pregnancy, extreme financial hardship of the student or student's immediate family, ~~to fulfillment of~~ fulfillment of a religious commitment encouraged of ~~members~~students of that faith, fulfillment of required military service, a student's participation in an internship or co-op program that is required or encouraged as part of the academic program in which the student is enrolled, or other extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control where ~~continued~~ attendance by the student creates a substantial hardship. ~~Acceptable reasons shall also include a student's participation in an internship or co-op program that is required or encouraged as part of the academic program in which the student is enrolled.~~ In the event an institution denies a student's request for a medical or personal leave of absence, the student may appeal the decision in accordance with these rules. ~~Rule 1640-01-19-28.~~
- ~~(2) Students granted a medical or personal leave of absence who resume their education at an eligible postsecondary institution shall retain TELS award eligibility until a terminating event as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-913 occurs.~~

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-913, 49-4-919, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-~~1224~~ MILITARY MOBILIZATION OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS.

- (1) Members of the United States Armed Services, National Guard, or Armed Forces Reserves receiving a TELS award who are mobilized for active duty during a semester that is already in progress shall be granted a personal leave of absence by the eligible postsecondary institution the student is attending and shall not have their TELS award eligibility negatively impacted.
- (2) If, as a result of being mobilized, a student elects to completely withdraw from an eligible postsecondary institution, then the hours attempted during the semester will not be taken into consideration for purposes of determining future TELS award eligibility.
- (3) Upon re-enrollment within one year following mobilization, the student's TELS award eligibility will resume as if no break in enrollment had occurred and shall retain TELS award eligibility until a terminating event as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-913 occurs.
- (4) An eligible postsecondary institution shall be authorized to consider a request for a leave of absence from a student whose spouse, child, father, or mother is mobilized for active duty as a valid basis for a personal leave of absence. This request shall be made in accordance with the provisions of this rule. If the request is granted the student shall receive the same accommodations described above.

- (5) A Tennessee residents attending an out-of-state institution, who is otherwise eligible, shall not have their TELS award eligibility negatively impacted by military mobilization upon their return to the state as a transfer student attending an eligible postsecondary institution.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, 49-4-913, 49-4-919, and 49-4-924.

1640-01-19-.1322 CALCULATION OF POSTSECONDARY CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE.

- (1) The postsecondary cumulative grade point average used to determine eligibility for a renewal of a TELS award, must be calculated by the eligible postsecondary institution the student is attending, utilizing its institutional grading policy, ~~and must be~~ based on all credit hours attempted after high school graduation, and calculated on an A through F grading scale, except as otherwise provided in this rule and as described in T.C.A. § 49-4-911. Unique grades associated with the failure of a class due to an unofficial withdrawal must also be included in calculations of attempted credits and grade point average.
- (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1) above to the contrary, when determining whether a non-traditional student who is receiving the HOPE scholarship will continue to be eligible, only grades earned and credit hours attempted ~~as~~by a non-traditional student, in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-4-931, shall count toward the benchmark requirements.
- (2) All credit hours attempted at all postsecondary institutions the student has attended after graduating from high school and their corresponding grades must be included in the calculation of the postsecondary cumulative grade point average, regardless of whether the receiving institution will apply the credit hours toward the student's degree requirements. Except as provided in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph, credit hours that were repeated shall be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average calculation.
- (a) A student shall have a one-time option to repeat one course and utilize only the higher of the two grades in the calculation of their postsecondary grade point average for purposes of determining continued eligibility for a TELS award. The credit hours for both attempted courses, however, will be included in the overall number of credit hours attempted for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (b) It shall be the responsibility of the student to advise the appropriate official of the eligible postsecondary institution when this option is being exercised.
- (3) Grades received for courses attempted prior to high school graduation, completion of a home school program in Tennessee or GED or HiSET attainment, ~~including those attempted with the Dual Enrollment Grant~~, do not count in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average or in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (4) Credit hours earned by examination are not eligible for payment with TELS awards and shall not be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average or in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (5) Credit hours attempted as part of a diploma or certificate program of study are not considered to be college credit hours and therefore shall not be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average or in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility unless those hours are accepted toward a degree.
- (6) Remedial and developmental studies and independent studies courses are eligible for payment with TELS awards and shall be included in the calculation of the postsecondary cumulative grade point average and in the attempted hours in an eligible program of study for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.

- (7) Courses in which a student enrolls as an audit student for which no college credit will be received cannot be paid with a TELS award or included in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (8) Continuing education courses are not eligible for payment with TELS awards and shall not be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average or in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (9) A student who obtains a grade change shall notify the financial aid office within thirty (30) calendar days of the grade change and request reinstatement of his or her award on a form developed by the institution for this purpose. If the grade change makes the student eligible for a TELS award, the student can be awarded a TELS award retroactively in the current award year. If the grade change affects the student's eligibility from the previous award year, the TELS award may be adjusted in the current award year. The eligible postsecondary institution shall make necessary reductions in the student's financial aid package if the reinstatement of a TELS award results in either an over-award of need-based aid or exceeds the institution's cost of attendance for any semester. If the student's application for reinstatement is denied, the student may appeal the decision in accordance with Rule 1640- 01-19-.[1628](#).
- (10) A student enrolled in a matriculating status at an eligible postsecondary institution shall qualify for TELS award payment for distance education courses in an eligible program of study if all other eligibility requirements are met. Students may take courses through more than one eligible postsecondary institution during the same semester. Payment for the distance education courses shall be made in the same manner as transient students as provided in Rule 1640-01-19-.[1424](#)
- (11) A student enrolled in a matriculating status at an eligible postsecondary institution may qualify for TELS award payment while participating in an internship or co-op program as part of an eligible program of study if the student receives college credit from the internship or co-op experience and [is charged](#)~~pays~~ tuition and fees for the credit. The credit hours shall be included in the postsecondary cumulative grade point average.
- (12) A student enrolled in a matriculating status at an eligible postsecondary institution may qualify for TELS award payment while participating in an alternative study or study abroad program if all other eligibility requirements are met. The eligible postsecondary institution which is the student's home institution must approve the alternative study or study abroad program for credit toward the student's degree and the number of hours in an eligible program of study that will be applied toward the degree prior to the student's departure.
- (13) Courses that appear on a student's transcript as an "incomplete" shall be considered credit hours attempted, except as noted in Rules 1640-01-19-.[1221](#)(2) and 1640-01-19-.[1221](#)(4). The student's TELS award eligibility, however, shall be determined by excluding the credit hours attributable to the course for which an "incomplete" has been assigned from the cumulative grade point average calculation.
 - (a) If the student fails to retain eligibility for a TELS award as a result of the calculation of an ["incomplete,"](#) but later becomes eligible when the grade for the "incomplete" course is reported, the student is eligible to receive a TELS award retroactively within the award year and shall retain eligibility. Retroactive TELS awards for previous award years shall be added to the current award year. The eligible postsecondary institution shall, however, make necessary reductions in the student's financial aid package if the reinstatement of a TELS award results in either an over-award of need-based aid or exceeds the institution's cost of attendance for any semester. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the financial aid office at the eligible postsecondary institution that a grade has been awarded and request that the TELS award be reinstated. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall develop a standard form for use by students to

comply with this provision. If the student's application for reinstatement is denied, the student may appeal the decision in accordance with Rule 1640-01-19-~~1628~~.

- (b) If the student retains eligibility for a TELS award as a result of the calculation, but later becomes ineligible when the grade for the "incomplete" course is reported, then the student shall be ineligible for all TELS awards. Additionally, the student shall reimburse the institution for TELS awards received in the interim.
- (14) Courses ~~from~~ which a student withdraws shall not be used in calculating the cumulative grade point average. The hours shall be included in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (15) Courses in which a student takes a pass/fail course shall not be used in calculating the cumulative grade point average. The hours shall be included in the attempted hours for determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility.
- (16) Students who reach a benchmark during the summer semester shall have their continuing eligibility determined based upon the cumulative grade point average and semester grade point average, if required, as of the end of the summer semester.
- (17) When determining the provisional eligibility of a student for the HOPE scholarship under T.C.A. § 49-4-911(a)(2), the student may earn the qualifying semester grade point average as either a part-time or full-time student in the semester in which continuing eligibility was reviewed.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-911, 49-4-913, 49-4-919, 49-4-924, and 49-4-931.

~~1640-01-19-.23~~ **TRANSFER STUDENTS.**

- ~~(1) To be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship as a transfer student from a regionally accredited postsecondary institution located outside of Tennessee, a student shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-929.~~
- ~~(2) To be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE Scholarship as a transfer student between eligible postsecondary institutions, a student shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-910.~~

~~**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-902, 49-4-903, 49-4-910, 49-4-911, 49-4-924, 49-4-929, and 49-4-937.~~

1640-01-19-~~1424~~ **TRANSIENT STUDENTS.**

- (1) A transient student is eligible to receive a TELS award if all other eligibility requirements are met and if both the home and host institutions are eligible postsecondary institutions.
- (2) Each eligible postsecondary institution shall develop a process to effectuate each provision of this rule and shall notify its students of the process and the availability of the necessary forms to comply with the requirements. At the end of the semester, the host institution shall provide the student's home institution with all information necessary for the home institution to determine continued TELS award eligibility.
- (3) If the home institution chooses to certify the transient student to TSAC for payment of the HOPE Scholarship, the home institution shall certify the student at the award amount designated to the eligible postsecondary institution the student is attending.
- (4) If, through collaboration with the home institution, the host institution chooses to certify the transient student to TSAC for payment of the HOPE Scholarship, the host institution shall certify the student at the award amount designated to the eligible postsecondary institution

the student is attending.

- (5) If the host institution chooses not to certify the transient student to TSAC for payment of the HOPE Scholarship, the home institution shall certify the student at the award amount designated to the eligible postsecondary institution the student is attending.
- (6) If the eligible student is concurrently enrolled at the home institution and a host institution, then the home institution shall certify the student at the award amount of the home institution.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, and 49-4-924.

~~1640-01-19-.25 DENIAL OF INITIAL ELIGIBILITY – FAILURE TO TIMELY ENROLL.~~

- ~~(1) — A student who fails to timely enroll in an eligible postsecondary institution as required by Rule 1640-01-19-.05 may be granted an exception if the student failed to meet the requirement for any reason provided for in this rule. An exception shall be granted only for documented medical or personal reasons, in accordance with Rule 1640-01-19-.20. In the event a student's request for an exemption for failing to timely enroll is denied, the student may appeal the decision pursuant to Rule 1640-01-19-.28.~~

~~**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-903, and 49-4-924.~~

1640-01-19-.1526 EXTENSION OF FIVE-YEAR TERMINATING EVENT DUE TO MEDICAL DISABILITY.

- (1) As outlined in T.C.A. § 49-4-913, a HOPE recipient who has a documented medical disability, as verified by a licensed physician, which requires the student to attend part-time, may petition TSAC to receive an extension to the five (5) year period. Such extension may not exceed ten (10) years from the student's date of initial enrollment at any postsecondary institution.
- (2) Documentation from the licensed physician must include a statement that affirms the student's medical disability and reason(s) the student must attend part-time. The extension will be granted one (1) year at a time and documentation must be provided to TSAC prior to the beginning of the academic term in which the part-time status is being applied for. The extension will be reviewed on an annual basis and a determination made of the student's eligibility for the extension.
- (3) A student with a medical disability whose five (5) year period has expired may appeal to TSAC to have the award reinstated, provided the student has maintained eligibility for the HOPE Scholarship. A student whose eligibility has expired may receive up to an additional five (5) years, or the number of years remaining that will equal ten (10) years from initial enrollment, whichever is less.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, 49-4-708, 49-4-904, 49-4-905, and 49-4-913.

~~1640-01-19-.27 WILDER-NAIFEH RECONNECT.~~

- ~~(1) — To be eligible for a Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Grant, a student shall meet the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-923.~~
- ~~(2) — All tuition waivers and discounts for which a student or parent qualifies shall first be deducted from the student's tuition and mandatory fees before gift aid is credited.~~
- ~~(3) — Each TCAT shall be responsible for certifying to TSAC that the student has met all eligibility requirements of T.C.A. § 49-4-923. The TCAT will certify each student's eligibility for a financial award for the Wilder-Naifeh Reconnect Grant after gift aid has first been credited to~~

~~the student's tuition and mandatory fees.~~

~~Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, and 49-4-923.~~

1640-01-19-1628 APPEAL AND EXCEPTION PROCESS.

- (1) Each eligible postsecondary institution shall establish an Institutional Review Panel (IRP) which shall review student appeals for the loss of TELS eligibility, as set forth in T.C.A. § 49-4-924 and these rules. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall establish written procedures for the submission of an appeal to the IRP following the denial or revocation of a TELS award. These procedures shall include, but not be limited to, the establishment and composition of the IRP and the process and timelines for appeals to the IRP. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall also ensure students are notified of the procedures for submitting an appeal to the TSAC Appeals Panel (Appeals Panel) following a decision made by the IRP. No eligible postsecondary institution official rendering a decision to deny or revoke a TELS award shall participate as a voting member in the appeal process for the same award. If the IRP determines that an appeal shall be reviewed, a hearing shall be held no later than ten (10) business days after the appeal is properly filed, exclusive of holidays and school closures. The IRP shall notify the appellant in writing of its decision no later than five (5) business days after ruling on the appeal. The notification shall include the date of the decision and pertinent facts and issues of the IRP's decision.
- (2) The TSAC Appeals Panel shall be appointed by TSAC's Executive Director for the purpose of meeting to consider appeals from decisions rendered by the IRPs and appeals submitted directly to the TSAC Appeals Panel without first being submitted to an IRP.
- (3) A student may appeal the loss of a TELS award to TSAC under the following circumstances:
 - (a) Appealing the decision rendered by an IRP. Such appeals shall be properly submitted to the Appeals Panel within forty-five (45) calendar days from the date of the IRP decision letter and shall include the following information:
 1. TSAC Appeal Form;
 2. Written statement outlining the basis for the appeal;
 3. Denial letter from the IRP;
 4. Official college transcripts;
 5. Proof of current enrollment; and
 6. Any other documentation that supports the student's appeal; or
 - (b) Appealing directly to the TSAC Appeals Panel without first appealing to the IRP. Such appeals shall be properly submitted to the TSAC Appeals Panel within forty-five (45) calendar days from the date of notification from TSAC to the student regarding the requirements of the appeal. Appeals directly to the TSAC Appeals Panel shall include the same documentation outlined in subdivision (3)(a), with the exclusion of the requirements in (3)(a)3., and may be reviewed by the TSAC Appeals Panel under the following circumstances:
 1. Where the circumstances leading to the loss of eligibility occurred at a regionally- accredited out-of-state postsecondary institution prior to the student being enrolled, or attempting to enroll, in an eligible postsecondary institution;
 2. Where the circumstances leading to the loss of eligibility occurred at one (1)

eligible postsecondary institution prior to the student transferring to another eligible postsecondary institution;

3. Where a student first enrolled beyond sixteen (16) months after high school graduation;
4. Where a student withdraws from an eligible postsecondary institution while seeking eligibility as a non-traditional student;
5. Where a student is enrolled part-time and is seeking an extension to the five-year terminating event due to a documented medical disability as certified by a licensed physician, including the relied upon certification; ~~or~~

6. Where a student does not file the FAFSA or submit an application required for program eligibility by the published deadline; or

~~7.6.~~ At TSAC's discretion where the loss of eligibility was due to extraordinary circumstances.

- (4) A student who is unable to properly submit an appeal to the TSAC Appeals Panel prior to the forty-five (45) day deadline due to circumstances beyond his or her control, may request an extension of the forty-five (45) day deadline. Such a request shall be made in writing to the TSAC Appeals Panel prior to the expiration of the forty-five (45) day deadline and shall include an explanation of the circumstances requiring the extension. The appeal of a student who does not meet the forty-five (45) day deadline and does not timely request an extension shall be denied. A denial of an untimely appeal may be set aside by the Executive Director of TSAC only in extraordinary circumstances in the interest of fairness. In such cases, the TSAC Appeals Panel will consider the appeal on its merits.
- (5) The TSAC Appeals Panel shall consider each appeal no later than forty-five (45) calendar days after the appeal is properly submitted, unless an extension to the forty-five (45) day deadline is approved by the TSAC Appeals Panel. The TSAC Appeals Panel shall notify the appellant in writing of a decision no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after ruling on an appeal. The notification shall include a summary of the pertinent facts and issues leading to the decision and a copy of the notification shall be sent to the appellant's home institution. A decision of the TSAC Appeals Panel made on the merits of the appeal is the final administrative remedy available to the student.
- (6) The authority of an IRP shall be strictly limited to consideration of appeals based on determinations of eligibility arising from its respective postsecondary institution. The authority of the TSAC Appeals Panel shall be strictly limited to consideration of appeals arising from an IRP or those made directly to TSAC, as authorized by these rules. Neither the IRP nor the TSAC Appeals Panel shall have the authority to rule on the validity of, or make exceptions to, high school grade point average, postsecondary grade point average, ACT or SAT scores, or any other academic eligibility requirements.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-4-201, 49-4-204, and 49-4-924.