Texas Public Educational Grant (TPEG)

Q: Now that a GED, high school diploma, or home schooling is required for federal aid eligibility, will this requirement also apply to TPEG? Our institution currently uses some of this funding for students enrolled in continuing education courses.

A: No. The only two statutory requirements for TPEG eligibility are need (via the Federal Methodology) and registration with Selective Service (community colleges are exempt from requiring SSR). Other than these two requirements, your institution has the flexibility to determine any remaining requirements (e.g., SAP, enrollment status, SSR at CC's, etc.) for TPEG eligibility at your institution.

Note: Funding for TPEG is generated from statutory resident and non-resident tuition set-asides. Awards from resident tuition set-asides can only be made to eligible students who are classified as Texas residents. Likewise, awards from non-resident tuition set-asides can only be made to eligible non-resident students.

Undocumented Students

Q: Where does it say that we have to collect an affidavit annually from undocumented students who receive state financial aid?

A: You do not have to collect an affidavit annually from undocumented students who receive state financial aid unless you believe there is a reason to require a student to sign a new affidavit or it is your institution’s policy to collect an affidavit every year. However, you do have to remind all affidavit students at your institution, at least annually, of their responsibility concerning the affidavit they signed.

- As required by rule (adopted January 2012 and effective with the 2011-12 academic year), institutions must: Retain the signed affidavit in the student’s permanent record;
- Remind the student of his/her obligation to apply for legal status upon admission, annually while enrolled, and upon graduation; and
- Refer the student to the appropriate federal agency for instruction on how to achieve permanent residency status.

TEXAS Grant

Q: If a student is being considered for an IY TEXAS Grant award by enrolling at our institution within 12 months of receiving his associate’s degree, does he also need to have graduated from a Texas high school with the RHSP curriculum to be eligible?

A: No. The avenue for IY eligibility after receiving an associate’s degree is separate from the IY eligibility avenue for an incoming freshman. Please note that the associate’s degree must be from a public or private nonprofit institution of higher education in Texas.

Q: Are we allowed to use exemptions to count toward covering tuition and fees for TEXAS Grant students?
A: Yes. If a TEXAS Grant award does not cover the recipient’s tuition and fees, the institution is required to match the award with non-loan aid from federal, state, institutional or outside resources so that the grant plus the additional resources cover the amount of the student’s tuition and fees up to the calculated need — whichever is less. Exemption and waiver programs decrease the amount of tuition and fees the student owes, leaving a smaller balance to be covered by the TEXAS Grant and other non-loan aid programs.

Q: It is not clear to me whether or not the new guidelines will allow a student who receives a TEXAS Grant at a community college and then transfers to a 4-year institution prior to completing his/her associate’s degree the opportunity to continue under the TEXAS Grant program. Would a student in this situation lose eligibility?

A: No. Having no associate’s degree does not make the student ineligible for a renewal year (RY) award. In order to be eligible for an RY award, the student must:

• Be enrolled at least three-quarter time as a undergraduate student who previously received an IY award; □ Be registered with Selective Service, or be exempt;
• Have a calculated financial need;
• Meet and maintain the program satisfactory academic progress requirements;
• Be classified by the institution as a Texas resident; and
• Have not been convicted of a felony or crime involving a controlled substance.

Note: The new transfer option effective with the 2014-15 year is an additional avenue for a student who has never received TEXAS Grant to be eligible to receive an initial year (IY) award. The RY eligibility criteria apply once the student is in the pipeline.

Q: Is the priority deadline only for awarding initial students, or is it also for awarding renewal students?

A: Your institution has the flexibility to set a priority deadline for renewal students — however, it cannot be earlier than the state priority deadline of March 15.

**Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) Program**

Q: Some schools have secured approval via their SACS accreditation to classify doctoral students as fulltime with a lower credit-hour load than master’s-level students. Doctoral students are considered fulltime at 6 SCH’s per semester, or 12 hours per year. Consequently, students taking this lower load will not meet the TEG renewal requirements of 18 completed hours in a year — required for an RY award. It doesn’t make much sense for us to award TEG to our doctoral students if we are setting the students up for failure to be eligible for an RY TEG award in the future. Can consideration be given to changing the RY program requirement of 18 SCH’s for doctoral students?

A: A change to the requirement for 18 SCH’s to be completed in the most recent academic year in which the student received an award would require a change to the TEG statute by the Legislature and cannot be made through rule. The following is in Texas Education Code §61.2251 of the current law that governs the program:

(c) After qualifying for a tuition equalization grant under Subsection (b), a person may receive a tuition equalization grant in a subsequent academic year in which the person is enrolled at an approved institution only if the person:

(1) meets the requirements of Subsection (b), including, as of the end of the full academic year in which the person initially receives a tuition equalization grant, making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate as determined by the institution at which the person is enrolled;

(2) as of the end of each subsequent academic year in which the person receives a tuition equalization grant, has completed at least:

(A) 24 semester credit hours in the person’s most recent full academic year, if the person is enrolled in an undergraduate degree or certificate program; or

(B) 18 semester credit hours in the person’s most recent full academic year, if the person is enrolled in a graduate or professional degree program;
Combat Exemption for Children of Military Service Members

Q: Is the Combat Exemption Program still unfunded for the 2013/14 year?

A: Correct. The program is still unfunded. However, since the program still exists in statute, institutions may choose to honor an exemption for students who meet the eligibility requirements even though the institution’s costs for the program will not be reimbursed by the state.

Texas Educational Opportunity Grant (TEOG)

Q: When IY TEXAS Grants go away at the community college level, and the FY15 TEOG funding is supplemented with TEXAS Grant funding, will the high school curriculum requirement also be eliminated for that funding?

A: Yes. In 14/15, TEOG funding at 2-year institutions will be supplemented with a portion of the TEXAS Grant FY15 appropriation in an effort to compensate 2 year institutions for the loss of IY TEXAS Grant funding. Once the funding is moved from TEXAS Grant to TEOG, awards made with the funding at the 2-year institutions will be subject to the TEOG eligibility criteria (which do not include a high school curriculum requirement) and not the TEXAS Grant criteria.

Teach for Texas Conditional Grant Program(s)

Q: Are the Teach for Texas Conditional Grant and Teach for Texas Alternative Certification Conditional Grant Programs active? If so, can you assist me in determining who the program officers are at our institution?

A: There are no new awards or fund disbursements being made through these programs. THECB is only servicing existing accounts in repayment through our Loan Program Operations (LPO) area. Questions concerning these programs can be directed to 512.427.6340 or 800.242.3062.

Exemption and Waiver Programs

Q: A question came up at the TASFAA conference concerning the upcoming excess hours limitation resulting from SB1210. Has there been a clarification whether or not the excess hours will be a limiting factor at community colleges?

A: Yes. It has been determined that the excess hours limitation will only apply to students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs. Therefore, if your institution has any baccalaureate programs, the excess hours limitation will apply only to students in those degree programs who are receiving an exemption subject to this requirement. Refer to 7/11/2014 Q&A

Q: What are the new SB1210 requirements for continuation awards?

A: SB1210 adds the following two requirements for receiving continuation awards:

- For undergraduate and graduate students, that the student be meeting the institution’s financial aid GPA requirement;
- For undergraduate students only, that at the beginning of the term, they have not completed a number of SCH’s considered to be excessive under TEC 54.014, unless permitted to complete those hours by the institution on a showing of good cause.

The following table shows these requirements and the populations/programs to which they apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Degree Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Financial Aid GPA requirement</td>
<td>Exemptions and Waivers</td>
<td>Residents and Nonresidents</td>
<td>Undergraduate and Graduate Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not beyond excess hour limit</td>
<td>Exemptions only¹</td>
<td>Residents Only²</td>
<td>Undergraduates Only³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Waivers apply to nonresidents, and are therefore not impacted by the TEC 54.014 limit. ²</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>TEC 54.014 only applies to Texas residents. ³</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SB1210 applies the excess hour limit only to undergraduates. ⁴</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>TEC 54.014 speaks in terms of 30 hours beyond a degree of 120 hours — baccalaureate programs only. Refer to 7/11/2014 Q&amp;A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q:** Do these provisions apply to persons who are already in the exemption or waiver pipeline, or only to people entering the applicable programs in fall 2014 or later?

**A:** The provisions apply to all continuation awards in the applicable programs, regardless of how long the person might have previously received the exemption. No one is grandfathered.

**Q:** Do the provisions of the bill apply to all exemption and waiver programs?

**A:** The bill specifically excludes the following programs from its requirements:

- The dual credit exemptions (TEC 54.216 or any other reduction in tuition for high school students enrolled in a dual credit course or other courses for which the student may earn joint high school and college credit);
- The foster care exemption (TEC 54.366);
- The ex-prisoner of war exemption (TEC 54.342);
- The Hazlewood exemption for children and spouses of members of the military who were killed in action, died while in service, are missing in action, whose death is documented to be directly caused by a result of service-related injury or illness (TEC 54.341 (a-2) (1) (A), (B), (C) or (D) or (b) (1) (A), (B), (C) or (D));

Any waiver program that allows a nonresident to pay the resident tuition rate.

**Q:** When do the provisions of SB1210 go into effect?

**A:** The provisions of the bill go into effect with continuation awards for fall 2014.

**Q:** What hours are included in the count towards “excess hours”?

**A:** SB1210 indicates the count is to include semester credit hours for courses taken at any public institution of higher education while classified as a resident student for tuition purposes, including transfer credit hours that count toward the person’s undergraduate degree or certificate program, but excluding:

- Hours earned exclusively by examination;
- Hours earned for which the student received high school and college credit; and
- Hours earned for developmental coursework required under TEC 51.3062 or 51.306.

**Q:** The provisions of SB1210 do not apply to waivers that allow nonresidents to pay the resident rate. Isn’t that all waiver programs?

**A:** No. Not all waivers take the tuition rate down to the resident rate. There are a few waivers that allow institutions to “lower” nonresident rates, the 100 mile waiver only lets schools lower rates to $30 above the resident rate; border county waivers set tuition rates on reciprocity — what Texas students would pay at comparable institutions in the other state.

**Hazlewood Exemption Program**

**Q:** Will the new provisions of SB1210 apply to any Hazlewood recipients?

**A:** Yes. The provisions will apply to veterans, the children and spouses of disabled veterans, and Legacy students. However, the bill specifically excludes the children and spouses of members of the military who were killed in action, died while in service, are missing in action, whose death is documented to be directly caused by a result of service related injury or illness from these new provisions.

**Q:** How was the allocation of the $30 million in Hazlewood reimbursement funds determined?
A: Per HB1025, the allocation is based on each institution's respective share of the aggregate cost of the exemption for students under the Legacy Program (TEC 54.341(k)), subject to input by institutions for their respective share. The allocation was reviewed and approved by the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) prior to disbursement.

Q: When will the Hazlewood Legacy reimbursements funds be disbursed to the institutions?
A: These funds were disbursed mid-October and were coded as appropriation year 2014.

Q: How will the reimbursement funds be received and how should they be treated?
A: The funds are tagged as General Revenue Fund 0001. They were disbursed via RTI within USAS and will be recorded as a pass-thru expenditure by THECB. Institutions should record the receipt of these funds as grant passthru revenue. Institutions will need to enter their respective amount received at fiscal year 2014 year end during the pass thru grant tie out process via the Comptroller’s web portal. Please contact Pedro Salinas, Accountant V, for any questions relating to these funds (pedro.salinas@thecb.state.tx.us).

Q: Do these funds have UB authority allowing the unexpended balance at the end of the first year of the biennium to be carried forward to the second year?
A: Yes. These funds have two year UB authority for both THECB and the institutions. Therefore, institutions can use these funds to reimburse FY14 or FY15 Hazlewood Exemptions at their discretion. Please have your institution's ACO contact THECB’s ACO if they have any questions regarding this authority.

Q: How should these funds be recorded on the AFR?
A: These funds should be recorded as pass-thru revenues on each institution’s AFR as being received from THECB. These funds should also be reported in the Comptroller’s web portal at year end during the pass through tie out process between agencies.