

2018-19 Program Guidelines Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program (TASSP)



Student Financial Aid Programs
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

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TEXAS ARMED SERVICES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Program Guidelines are intended to support institutions by highlighting requirements that appear in the Texas Education Code (TEC) and Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). When administering this program, institutions should always refer to the applicable statutes and rules. The information provided in this document is to be used solely as a resource and does not supersede the statute and/or rules for this program.

PROGRAM AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.163](#))

The Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program (TASSP) is authorized by [TEC, Chapter 61, Subchapter A, Section 61.9771](#). Rules establishing procedures to administer the subchapter can be found in [Title 19 of the TAC, Chapter 22, Subchapter I](#). The purpose of the TASSP is to encourage students to become members of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, United States Coast Guard or United States Merchant Marine, or to become commissioned officers in any branch of the armed services of the United States.

ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.164](#))

Public institutions of higher education, as defined in [TEC, Section 61.003](#), and private or independent institutions of higher education, as defined in [TEC, Section 61.003\(15\)](#), can participate.

ELIGIBILITY

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPOINTMENTS ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.166](#))

Each year, the governor and the lieutenant governor may each appoint two students, and each state senator and state representative may appoint one student to receive an initial TASSP award. A student must meet **two** of the following **four** criteria, by the deadline established by the THECB, to be appointed:

- Be on track to graduate or graduated high school with the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP), or the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program
- Have a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- Achieved a college readiness score on the SAT (1070) or ACT (23)
- Be ranked in the top one-third of the prospective high school graduating class

! ALERT NEW: If a student fails to meet the requirements to initially receive a TASSP award, the THECB will notify the legislative office of their nominee's change in eligibility so the legislator can submit an **alternate**. The governor, lieutenant governor, state senator, and state representative may select an alternate for each initial student nominee that becomes ineligible. The THECB will notify the alternate of his or her nomination (See [TAC, Section 22.166\(a\)](#)).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.167](#) AND [22.169](#))

TO RECEIVE AN INITIAL AWARD, A STUDENT MUST:

- ✓ Be appointed by the governor, lieutenant governor, state senator or state representative before the **August 31, 2018** deadline
- ✓ Be enrolled and in good standing in a Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), or another undergraduate officer commissioning program, as certified by the institution
- ✓ Enter into a written agreement with the THECB to:
 - Complete four years of ROTC training, or its equivalent if the institution awards ROTC credit for prior service in any branch of the US Armed Services or the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, US Coast Guard, or US Merchant Marine, or another undergraduate officer commissioning program
 - Graduate no later than six years after the date first enrolled after receiving a high school diploma or General Educational Diploma (GED) or its equivalent
- ✓ No later than six months after graduation, enter into and provide the THECB with verification of:
 - A four-year commitment to be a member of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, United States Coast Guard, or United States Merchant Marine; **OR**
 - Contract to serve as a commissioned officer in any branch of the armed services of the United States
- ✓ Meet the physical examination and all prescreening requirements of the entity with which the student enters into a contract
- ✓ Be registered with Selective Service, or be exempt (see [19 TAC, Section 22.3](#))

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

STUDENT APPLICATION DEADLINE

Students must complete their TASSP online applications by October 15, 2018.

HOW CAN A STUDENT APPLY?

1. The student will need to be selected by the governor, lieutenant governor, a senator, or a state representative.

- Students can identify a legislator by visiting, [Who Represents Me](#).
- To contact the governor's office, a student can call (512) 463-1828 or visit, [Governor's Appointment Responsibility](#).
- To contact the lieutenant governor's office, a student can call (512) 463-0001.

2. Once selected, the student will receive a Notice of Selection letter.


3. Once the student is enrolled in an eligible institution and ROTC program, the Notice of Selection must be provided to the financial aid office.

4. The financial aid office will certify the student's program eligibility to the THECB.


5. Once the THECB receives the institution's eligibility certification, the student will receive an email notifying them to complete the TASSP application at [Loans Online](#).

TO RECEIVE A CONTINUATION AWARD, A STUDENT MUST:

- ✓ Maintain **program** satisfactory academic progress (SAP), as defined by the THECB (New section provided on page 4)
- ✓ Continue to be a member of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) or another undergraduate officer commissioning program
- ✓ Not have earned a baccalaureate degree or a cumulative total of 150 hours (includes transfer hours) as verified by the institution

 **STOP:** Effective **May 2018** (See [TAC, SECTION 22.170\(b\)](#)), if the student fails to meet any of the conditions for continued eligibility, the student:

- Cannot regain award eligibility in a subsequent academic year
- Loses eligibility to receive any future awards
- Loses eligibility to have his or her existing loans forgiven

 **ALERT NEW:** Effective **September 1, 2018**, if a recipient fails to maintain eligibility for a continuing award, beginning with the academic year following the determination, the appointing official may appoint a **replacement** student to receive any remaining eligibility for the student who no longer meets the requirements for the award (See [TAC, section 22.166\(f\)](#)).

SELECTIVE SERVICE STATEMENT ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.3](#))

 **ALERT NEW: STUDENT COMPLIANCE WITH SELECTIVE SERVICE**

A male student cannot receive a grant, scholarship, loan or other financial assistance funded by state revenue, unless a statement of the individual's selective service status is completed with the institution or other entity granting or guaranteeing the financial assistance. This requirement also includes federal funds or gifts and grants accepted by this state and any loans guaranteed by the state of Texas (See [TEC, 51.9095](#)).

Typically, a student's selective service status is confirmed through the online Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) process which validates registration directly with the Selective Service Administration. If a student's selective service status is confirmed on the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR), no statement needs to be collected by the institution.

The statement below **must** be collected for all male applicants, each academic year, in the following situations:

- A FAFSA that that is flagged "not registered" must be reviewed by the institution to determine if the student is exempt and may be eligible for federal or state financial aid programs. If the student is **exempt**, additional documentation should be collected by the institution to verify the circumstances. The institution can determine what additional documentation to collect for this verification.
- For a student that does not complete a FAFSA, the required statement and back-up documentation must be collected by the institution to verify the current selective service status if the individual is applying for any state financial aid.

NOTE: The institution has discretion to determine how to collect this required statement, which can be done electronically or on paper (e.g. online form, signed award letter, etc.). The statement and all documentation must be retained in the student's record and be made available if requested during a program review or audit. Each statement collected must be retained with the student's records for 7 years after the date of completion for the applicable award period (See [TAC, Section 22.4\(a\)\(2\)\(A\)](#)).

Required Statement of Selective Service Status

Are you currently registered for Selective Service, as required by federal law?

Registered (Proof of registration required)
 Not Registered
 Exempt (Documentation required)

I, _____, hereby certify that the selective service status provided is true and correct. I understand that I must provide documentation if requested by my institution that I may be required to complete a new statement for each academic year for continued eligibility.

Student Signature _____
Date

CONVERSION OF THE SCHOLARSHIP TO A LOAN ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.170](#))

A TASSP award will be converted to a loan if the student **fails to**:

- Maintain satisfactory academic progress as required by the program, or by the institution’s ROTC or another undergraduate officer commissioning program;
- Fulfill the terms in the TASSP agreement, that include:
 - Complete four years of ROTC training, or its equivalent if the institution awards ROTC credit for prior service in any branch of the US Armed Services or the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, US Coast Guard, or US Merchant Marine, or another undergraduate officer commissioning program
 - Graduate no later than six years after the date first enrolled after receiving a high school diploma or General Educational Diploma (GED) or its equivalent; **OR**
- Fulfill one of the following:
 - Complete a four year commitment to be a member of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, United States Coast Guard, or United States Merchant Marine; **OR**
 - Contract to serve as a commissioned officer in any branch of the armed services of the United States.

If a student requires a temporary leave of absence from the institution and/or the ROTC or another undergraduate officer commissioning program for personal reasons or to provide service for the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, United States Coast Guard, or United States Merchant Marine for fewer than twelve months, the THECB may agree to **not convert** the scholarship award to a loan during that time.

If a student is required to provide more than twelve months of service in the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, United States Coast Guard, or United States Merchant Marine as a result of a national emergency, the THECB can grant that student additional time to meet the graduation and service requirements specified in the TASSP agreement (See [19 TAC, Section 22.170](#)).

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.169](#))

⚠ ALERT NEW: At the end of every academic year, a student must have completed 24 semester credit hours (SCH) and have a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point average (GPA).

The chart below reflects the program SAP requirements which must be monitored to ensure compliance:

ACADEMIC YEAR	SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) REQUIREMENTS	
END OF EVERY ACADEMIC YEAR	24 SCH in the most recent academic year	2.5 cumulative GPA on a 4-point scale for all coursework attempted

NOTE: Maximum for the semester credit hours earned includes transfer hours, as verified by the institution.

AWARDING

The TASSP award maximum is determined and announced annually by the THECB and cannot exceed \$15,000 in an academic year. The award must be reduced by the amount of the combined total to be paid to the student for being under contract with one of the branches of the armed services and the full amount of the scholarship, if it exceeds the student’s total cost of attendance (COA) for that academic year. (See [19 TAC, Section 22.165](#)).

🛑 STOP: A student cannot receive a TASSP award for more than four of the six years that are allowed for a student to graduate.

TASSP 2018-19 AWARD AMOUNTS		
INSTITUTION TYPE	AWARD TYPE	AWARD MAX/YEAR
PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	INITIAL/RENEWAL	\$4,000
PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	INITIAL/RENEWAL	\$4,000

PROCESSING FUNDS

REQUESTING PROGRAM FUNDS

Funds will not be disbursed until the promissory note is signed by the borrower and the Financial Aid Administrator certifies the loan using one of the following two methods:

- Certify the loan through the [HelmNet](#) loan portal; **OR**
- Submit a **Commonline Loan Certification File** using the [MOVEit DMZ](#) secure file transfer portal.

RETURNING PROGRAM FUNDS

A [Return of Funds Form \(RFF\)](#) must be submitted and approved before any funds are returned to the THECB. This form is available on the Student Financial Aid Programs Information Webpage under **Online Resources**.



STOP: TIMELY DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.2](#))

- Institutions have 3 business days after receiving the funds to apply the funds to a student's account
- Institutions have 6 business days after receiving the funds to return undisbursed funds
- Institutions have 45 calendar days from the date a student becomes ineligible to return disbursed funds
- Institutions have 120 calendar days to return funds after a student has notified the institution of a decision to cancel the award

REPAYMENT

If the scholarship is converted to a loan, the student will have a 6-month grace period beginning on the date the student ceases to be enrolled at least half-time at an eligible institution. Repayment is scheduled to begin after the expiration of the 6-month grace period, although interest begins to accrue on the date the scholarship is converted to a loan. The TASSP loan has a 15-year repayment period and a minimum monthly payment of \$100, or an amount required to repay the loan within 15 years, whichever is greater. The interest rate charged on TASSP loans will be the same rate charged for a College Access Loan at the time the funds were disbursed. A charge of five percent of the scheduled monthly payment or five dollars, whichever is less, will be charged if a past due payment amount is not received within 20 days of the scheduled due date. (See [19 TAC, Section 22.171](#)).



STOP: Students experiencing a medical disability, or any type of financial hardship can apply for postponed or reduced payments and cancellation (medical disability only) of their TASSP loan.

To apply, a student must:

- Navigate to [HHloans.com](#) and select [Forms](#)
- Complete the appropriate form (ex: General Postponement Request Form, Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program Loan Discharge Form)
- Submit completed forms to:
 - Hinson-Hazlewood College Student Loan Program
P.O. Box 12788
Austin, TX 78711-2788
 - OR**
 - Fax: (512) 427-6423

APPENDIX 1: QUICK REFERENCES

CONTACT FINANCIAL AID SERVICES	
By phone: (844) 792-2640	
Contact us by completing an online inquiry form and select "Financial Aid Question" as the Contact Reason.	
OTHER RESOURCES FOR INSTITUTIONS	
General program information for institutions	Student Financial Aid Programs Information Webpage
General loan information	HHloans
Higher Education Loan Management System (HelmNet)	HelmNet Student Loan Portal
Texas Program Statutes	Texas Education Code
Texas Program Rules	Texas Administrative Code
Information concerning programs, procedures, allocations, and other topics will be communicated to institutions through the GovDelivery system. To receive these communications, interested individuals must subscribe.	GovDelivery
Federal Selective Service Requirement Guide	Who Must Register Chart
AVAILABLE FORMS	
A form is required when returning funds for all state grant, scholarship, Educational Aide Exemption, and loan program funds.	Grants and Special Programs Online Return of Funds Form Loan Programs Online Return of Funds Form
CALENDAR	
Institutional Calendar	