

2017-18 Program Guidelines Top Ten Percent Scholarship

(Top 10%)



State Financial Aid Programs
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| TOP TEN PERCENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM | 1 |
| PROGRAM AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE (19 TAC, SECTION 22.196)..... | 1 |
| STATE PRIORITY DEADLINE (TEC, SECTION 56.008 AND 19 TAC, SECTION 21.10) | 1 |
| ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS (19 TAC, SECTION 22.198) | 1 |
| ELIGIBILITY | 2 |
| ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS (19 TAC, SECTION 22.199) | 2 |
| DISCONTINUATION OF ELIGIBILITY (19 TAC, SECTION 22.201) | 2 |
| HARDSHIP PROVISIONS (19 TAC, SECTION 22.201) | 2 |
| SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) (19 TAC, SECTION 22.201) | 2 |
| AWARDING | 3 |
| PROCESSING FUNDS..... | 3 |
| REQUESTING PROGRAM FUNDS (19 TAC, SECTION 22.202) | 3 |
| RETURNING PROGRAM FUNDS..... | 3 |
| APPENDIX 1: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES..... | 4 |



TOP TEN PERCENT 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 22.196](#))

The Top Ten Percent (Top 10%) Scholarship program was originally authorized by the 80th Texas Legislature to encourage outstanding high school students who graduate within the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class to attend a public college or university in Texas. Renewal awards for state Fiscal Year 2018 and 2019 are authorized by the General Appropriations Act of the 85th Texas Legislature (Article III, p. 45 and Rider 27). Rules establishing procedures to administer the program can be found in [Title 19 of the TAC, Chapter 22, Subchapter K](#). The program is funded through state General Revenue appropriations.

STATE PRIORITY DEADLINE ([TEC, SECTION 56.008](#) and [19 TAC, SECTION 21.10](#))

The THECB provides a uniform priority deadline for applications that qualify for financial assistance in an academic year. General Academic Teaching Institutions (GATIs) in Texas **must** publicize and use **March 15** as the state priority deadline for identifying eligible students to be given priority in receiving awards through the state financial aid programs. All other public institutions are *encouraged* to use this state priority deadline. Institutions have the flexibility to define what it means to meet the priority deadline at their institution. Institutions are encouraged to adopt a policy and procedure to ensure consistency in making awards through this program.

ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.198](#))

All public institutions of higher education as defined [TEC, Section 61.003](#) are eligible to make only renewal awards under the Top 10% Scholarship program.

ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.199](#))

⚠️ ALERT: Beginning with the 2015-16 academic year, only renewal awards are authorized for the Top 10% Scholarship Program.

TO RECEIVE A RENEWAL YEAR AWARD, A STUDENT MUST:

- ✓ Be classified by the institution as a Texas resident
- ✓ Be registered with Selective Service or be exempt
- ✓ Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA)
- ✓ Have unmet financial need, as determined by the following formula:
cost of attendance (COA) minus the expected family contribution (EFC), minus Pell grant eligibility (remainder must be greater than zero)
- ✓ Be enrolled full-time (at least 12 semester credit hours) as of the census date
- ✓ Maintain program satisfactory academic progress requirements
- ✓ Be an undergraduate baccalaureate student who previously received an award

DISCONTINUATION OF ELIGIBILITY ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.201](#))

Unless a hardship exception is granted, a student's eligibility ends if any of the following maximums have been met:

| TIME LIMIT | DEGREE OBTAINED | NUMBER OF AWARDS |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 4 Consecutive Years | Baccalaureate (No hardship allowed) | 4 Awards (No hardship allowed) |

HARDSHIP PROVISIONS ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.201](#))

A student who is ineligible based on the requirements for the GPA, completion rate, and number of completed hours for satisfactory academic progress, may be deemed eligible under a hardship provision. Participating institution must adopt a hardship policy and have the policy available for public review upon request. All hardship decisions must be documented in the student's record and be available for submission to the THECB if requested.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.201](#))

A student's SAP eligibility is determined at the end of each academic year. Students must complete 30 semester credit hours (SCH), have a completion rate of 75%, and maintain a 3.25 cumulative GPA on a 4-point scale.

| END OF EACH ACADEMIC YEAR | SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) REQUIREMENTS | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| | 30 SCH in an academic year | 75% completion rate in an academic year | 3.25 cumulative GPA on a 4-point scale |

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CALCULATE AN AWARD

Top 10% Scholarship recipients can receive the maximum award amount even if the amount exceeds the calculated need. An applicant is determined eligible if the following is true:

$$\text{Need} = \text{COA} - \text{EFC} - \text{Pell} > \$0$$

$$\text{Ex: } \$20,000 - \$19,999 - 0 = \$1$$

In this example, although the recipient has only \$1 of need, the student is eligible to receive up to the maximum award amount.

EXTENSION OF ELIGIBILITY

An extension of eligibility can be issued beyond 4 consecutive years if a hardship is granted, as long as the student has not received more than 4 awards.

FOR EXAMPLE:

A student received an initial award in fall 2013, and did not attend college again until fall 2017. Since the student only received one award, the student may be eligible an award with a documented hardship, if all other eligibility requirements are met.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

A student who is below the SAP requirements at the end of the spring semester can appeal to have transfer courses included in the SAP calculation.

AWARDING

In determining eligibility, renewal recipients must be classified as a **Priority 1** or **Priority 2** applicant.

(See [19 TAC, Section 22.200](#))

Recipients are classified as **Priority 1** if the following was completed by the March 15, 2017 state priority deadline:

- FAFSA was submitted in time to generate the Central Processing System (CPS) results in a non-rejected status.
- TASFA was submitted to the financial aid office.

All other eligible recipients are classified as **Priority 2**.

TOP 10% SCHOLARSHIP 2017-18 AWARD MAXIMUMS

| INSTITUTION TYPE | AWARD TYPE | AWARD MAX/YEAR |
|---------------------|------------|----------------|
| PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS | Priority 1 | \$2,000 |
| | Priority 2 | TBD |

Both **Priority 1** and **Priority 2** recipients must be included in the Top 10% Scholarship Funds Requests File. While only **Priority 1** recipients can initially receive funds, **Priority 2** recipients will be reviewed and processed if funding is available.


PROCESSING FUNDS

REQUESTING PROGRAM FUNDS ([19 TAC, SECTION 22.202](#))

Funds for Top 10% Scholarship students will not be disbursed until the institution submits a file through the secure file transfer portal called [MOVEit DMZ](#).

The Top 10% Scholarship Funds Requests File Instructions can be found on the [Student Financial Aid Programs Information Website](#).

Files can be submitted to THECB as early as August 1, 2017, but no later than October 3, 2017. Information included in the file will be used by THECB to confirm and approve funding for eligible students.

 **STOP:** If funds are disbursed for a student who is later determined to be ineligible, the award must be returned to the THECB. Top 10% Scholarship funds are issued on a student-by-student basis and cannot be transferred.



NEW RULE

[19 TAC,
SECTION 22.2](#)

TIMELY DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

- Institutions have **3** business days after receiving the funds to apply the funds to a recipient'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 their decision to cancel the award

RETURNING PROGRAM FUNDS

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

APPENDIX 1: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CONTACT FINANCIAL AID SERVICES

By phone: (844) 792-2640

Contact us by completing an [online inquiry form](#) and use one of the following contact reasons below:

Contact Reason - Exemptions/Waiver Programs

- All state exemption and waiver programs including EAE

Contact Reason - Student Loan- School Info Request

- CAL
- BOT
- TASSP

Contact Reason - State and Federal Grants and Scholarships

- TEXAS Grant
- TEOG
- TEG
- Top 10% Scholarship
- Bilingual Education Scholarship Program

Contact Reason - Work-Study Programs

- TCWS
- TCWS Mentorship

OTHER RESOURCES FOR INSTITUTIONS

General program information for institutions

[Student Financial Aid Programs Information Website](#)

General loan information

[HHloans](#)

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](#)

AVAILABLE FORMS

Top 10% Scholarship

[Funds Request File Instructions](#)

This form must be used for the return of all state grant, scholarship, Educational Aide Exemption, and loan program funds.

[Return of Funds Form](#)

CALENDAR

[Institutional Calendar](#)