

# 2021-22 Program Guidelines Educational Aide Exemption (EAE)



Student Financial Aid Programs  
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

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## EDUCATIONAL AIDE EXEMPTION 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.

**NEW:** Statutes (TEC) and rules (TAC) periodically change and may affect the links referenced in this document. Copies of statutes and rules used to create these guidelines are available in [Appendix 2](#).

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### PROGRAM AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE ([19 TAC, SECTION 21.1080](#))

The Educational Aide Exemption (EAE) Program is authorized by [TEC, Chapter 54, Section 54.363](#). Rules establishing procedures to administer the subchapter can be found in [Title 19 of the TAC, Chapter 21, Subchapter II](#). The purpose of the EAE Program is to encourage certain Educational Aides to complete full teacher certification by providing need-based exemptions from the payment of tuition and certain mandatory fees at Texas public institutions of higher education.

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### ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS ([19 TAC, SECTION 21.1082](#))

All public institutions, as defined by [TEC, Section 61.003\(8\)](#), are invited annually to participate in the EAE allocation process. Those choosing not to participate will not be considered in the allocation calculation for the applicable award year.

## ELIGIBILITY

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS ([19 TAC, SECTION 21.1083](#))

#### TO RECEIVE AN INITIAL AWARD, A STUDENT MUST:

- ✓ be classified by the institution as a Texas resident
- ✓ be registered with Selective Service, or be exempt (see [Selective Service Statement](#))
- ✓ have financial need
- ✓ meet the institution's satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements
- ✓ have been employed by a public school district in Texas working in the classroom directly with the students on a full-time basis as one of the following:
  - an Educational Aide\* for at least one school year, during the five years preceding the term or semester for which the student received the initial award
  - a substitute teacher for 180 or more full days during the five years preceding the term or semester for which the student received the initial award as defined in [19 TAC, Section 21.1081\(5\)](#)
- ✓ be employed in some capacity by a public school district in Texas during the full term for which the student receives the award
- ✓ be enrolled in courses required for teacher certification in one or more subject areas experiencing a critical shortage of teachers at public schools in Texas, as determined by the Texas Education Agency (TEA)

The [2021-22 critical shortage areas](#) include:

- Bilingual/English as a Second Language – Elementary and Secondary Levels
- Special Education – Elementary and Secondary Levels
- Career and Technical Education – Secondary Levels
- Technology Applications and Computer Science – **NEW** Elementary and Secondary Levels
- Mathematics – Secondary Levels

\*Certified by TEA as an [Educational Aide I,II,III](#)

#### TO RECEIVE A CONTINUATION AWARD, A STUDENT MUST:

- ✓ meet all initial award requirements
- ✓ meet the institution's financial aid grade point average (GPA) requirement for making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) towards a degree or certificate in accordance with the institution's policy
- ✓ if classified as an undergraduate, have not completed an excessive number of semester credit hours (SCH) as defined in [TEC, Section 54.014](#)

**If the student received an EAE award prior to fall 2012:**

- ✓ meet all initial award requirements (**excluding** the critical shortage area obligation)
- ✓ be enrolled in courses required for teacher certification or, if enrolled in lower-level coursework, sign a statement indicating an intention to become certified as a teacher in Texas

**NOTE:** A student who fails to meet the grade point average (GPA) to satisfy the institution's SAP requirement may have the ability to regain eligibility for this exemption if they meet the GPA requirement during a subsequent term or semester in which the exemption was not awarded. The student may also be granted a hardship exception by the institution.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### GRADUATE STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Students enrolled in graduate courses leading to teacher certification in a teacher shortage area are eligible for the EAE.

### FINANCIAL NEED

The EAE Program does not have an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) limitation or a maximum adjusted gross income (AGI) requirement. To qualify, applicants must have financial need as defined in [19 TAC, Section 21.1081\(8\)](#).

An eligible applicant can be awarded the amount required to exempt the student from payment of resident tuition and fees for courses taken during the applicable term, even if the award amount exceeds the student's financial need.

### SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants can be employed in any capacity at a Texas public school district (e.g., bus driver), provided the applicant has the required educational aide work experience. Awarded students must remain employed for the full term.

### APPLICATION DEADLINE

Students must submit the [2021-22 EAE Application](#) to the financial aid office prior to the end of the semester in which they are enrolled to be considered for an award.

## DISCONTINUATION OF ELIGIBILITY ([19 TAC, SECTION 21.1083](#))

A student may **NOT** continue to receive this exemption in a subsequent semester or term if the student:

- has attempted a number of undergraduate hours considered to be excessive under [TEC, Section 54.2001\(a\)\(2\)](#).

**NOTE:** At the start of a semester or term, if an undergraduate student is attempting hours considered to be excessive, the student may continue to receive this exemption if granted a hardship **extension** by the institution.



### **STOP: EXCESSIVE UNDERGRADUATE HOURS**

The excessive hours calculation excludes:

- hours earned exclusively by examination;
- hours earned for a course credit received toward the person's high school academic requirements;
- hours earned for developmental courses that the institution required the person to take under [TEC, Chapter 51, Subchapter F-1](#); or hours described in [TEC, Section 61.0595\(d\)](#).

## HARDSHIP PROVISIONS ([19 TAC, SECTION 21.1088](#))

Institutions must adopt a hardship policy that may grant a student an **exception** from meeting the GPA requirement to satisfy the institution's SAP, or an **extension** of eligibility for excess undergraduate hours, when a student provides proof of a hardship or other good cause, including:

- a severe illness or other debilitating condition that could affect the student's academic performance;
- an indication that the student is responsible for the care of a sick, injured, or needy person and that the provision of care could affect the student's academic performance;
- the student's active duty or other service in the United States armed forces or active duty in the Texas National Guard; **OR**
- any other cause considered acceptable by the institution.

All hardship decisions must be documented in the student's record and be available for submission to the THECB, if requested.

## EXEMPTION FROM STUDENT TEACHING ([19 TAC, SECTION 21.1087](#))

- An individual who receives a bachelor's degree required for a teaching certificate based on higher education coursework completed while receiving an EAE award is not required to participate in any field experience or internship consisting of student teaching to receive a teaching certificate.
- An individual who receives a bachelor's degree prior to receiving a first EAE award is not eligible for a student teaching exemption.

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

Male students must be registered with or exempt from Selective Service (SS) in order to be eligible to receive federal or state financial assistance. In accordance with [TEC, Section 51.9095](#), male students must file the required **Selective Service Statement of Registration Status** (found below) with their institution or other entity granting or guaranteeing financial assistance. This includes grants, scholarships, loans, or other assistance funded by state revenue, including federal funds or gifts and grants accepted by the state.

**When is the statement NOT Required?**

- **When the SS registration is confirmed through the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR):** The ISIR confirmation serves as the student’s official, signed statement because the Department of Education validates registration directly with the Selective Service System (SSS).
- **When the SS registration is confirmed through the [SSS.gov website](#):** The institution can save the confirmation directly from the website to serve as the student’s official, signed statement on record.
- **When the ISIR confirms that a student is under the age of 18:** No statement or documentation is needed for the applicable award year, even if the student turns 18 during that year.

**When is the statement REQUIRED, including all supporting documentation?**

- When the student completes a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) but is flagged “not registered” on the ISIR and SS status **cannot** be confirmed on the [SSS.gov website](#).
- **When the student completes a Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA):** The required statement is embedded in the TASFA and must be completed by the student.
- When the student does not complete a FAFSA or TASFA but applies for state financial aid, such as through exemptions or waivers, and SS status **cannot** be confirmed on the [SSS.gov website](#).

Institutions may collect the required status statement and documentation either electronically or on paper.

([English Statement](#) or [Spanish Statement](#))

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**FREQUENCY COLLECTING THE STATEMENT**

If the student’s status will NOT change, the statement and supporting documentation can be used for subsequent semesters. (Example: The student entered the U.S. after the eligible age to register.)

If the student’s status is temporary, the statement must be collected each academic year until the student is registered or determined exempt. (Example: Student is under age 18 but did not complete a FAFSA or TASFA.)

**RETENTION SCHEDULE**

The status statement and all documentation must be retained in the student’s record for 7 years after the date of completion of the award period ([TEC, Section 441.1855](#)).

**REPROCESSED ISIRS**

If the student’s most recent ISIR transaction has been reprocessed by the Central Processing System (CPS) and the registration with the SSS was confirmed, the institution does not need to collect the status statement or any documentation.

Male students must verify their current Selective Service registration status by marking one of the statements below and providing proof of their registration status to their current institution. Failure to do so may result in the loss of eligibility for state financial aid.  
For more information about Selective Service System, visit [sss.gov](#).

I am under the age of 18 and not currently required to register.

<input type="checkbox"/> I am <b>REGISTERED</b> with the Selective Service and, <i>Check the following box that applies:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> I have already submitted proof of registration to my current institution. <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of registration is included with this statement. <input type="checkbox"/> I will submit proof of my registration. <b>NOTE:</b> Proof is required to be considered eligible for financial aid.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am <b>EXEMPT</b> from registration and, <i>Check the following box that applies:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> I have already submitted proof of my exemption to my current institution. <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of my exemption is included with this statement. <input type="checkbox"/> I will submit proof of my exemption. <b>NOTE:</b> Proof is required to be considered eligible for financial aid.
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I am over the age of 18. I am not registered with Selective Service and I am not exempt from registration with Selective Service.  
**NOTE:** Choosing this option may result in the loss of eligibility for state financial aid.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby certify that the Selective Service status statement provided above is true and accurate.

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## AWARDING

Students enrolled in courses required for teacher certification in a critical shortage area and who meet all other eligibility requirements can be awarded EAE. Students receiving awards through the EAE Program will be exempted from the payment of the total resident tuition and required fees, other than laboratory and class fees, for courses taken during the applicable term. Institutions must determine the applicant’s eligibility to receive the exemption and notify both the applicant and the school district employing the applicant.

 **STOP:** An EAE award can only be applied to courses for which an institution receives formula funding. To determine which courses are formula funded, contact the Registrar or Data Reporting Official.

## REQUIRED MATCHING

Participation in the EAE Program requires that institutions use institutional funds (non-federal or state aid) to cover **at least** 10% of each recipient’s exemption.

**NOTE:** Institutions can contribute beyond the 10% minimum requirement.

Example	Total Tuition & Fees	Institutional Percentage (10% minimum)	Institutional Funds	EAE Award Amount (Tuition/Fees <i>minus</i> Institutional funds)
Institution A	\$5,000	10%	\$500	<i>\$4,500</i>
Institution B	\$5,000	20%	\$1,000	<i>\$4,000</i>
Institution C	\$5,000	30%	\$1,500	<i>\$3,500</i>

## PROCESSING FUNDS

### REQUESTING AND RETURNING PROGRAM FUNDS

Institutions can begin submitting requests for funding on **August 2, 2021**. The THECB will begin processing funds *after* **September 1, 2021**. Institutions have *until* the close of business on **August 1, 2022** to request program funds.

- When requesting funds, eligible institutions must submit a [Funds Request Form \(FRF\)](#).
- A [Return of Funds Form \(RFF\)](#) must be submitted before any funds are returned to the THECB.

# APPENDIX 1: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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**1. If an applicant obtains one school year of full-time Educational Aide experience outside of Texas, does the experience count toward the eligibility requirements?**

No, applicants must obtain their Educational Aide experience at a public school district or eligible charter school in Texas. While private charter school employees do not qualify, some charter schools in public school districts may qualify.

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**2. Is a volunteer at a school district eligible to participate?**

No, the student must be employed by a Texas public school district for the full term in which the exemption is received.

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**3. Are there a certain number of hours in which the applicant must be enrolled?**

No, the EAE award amount is based on the tuition and required fees for formula-funded (tax-supported) hours for which the applicant is enrolled (TEC, Section 54.2002).

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**4. If a student did not meet satisfactory academic progress requirements in the fall, are they eligible for a spring award?**

No, students must meet institutional SAP requirements for each term a student is awarded. Therefore, a student who is not meeting institutional SAP requirements at the end of fall is not eligible for the spring award, unless granted a hardship.

A student may have the ability to regain eligibility for a future award if they meet the GPA requirement during a term in which the exemption was not awarded.

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**5. Can the EAE application be used as employment verification for more than one term?**

No, an application which includes the verification of employment must be completed for each term awarded.

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**6. Can a student receive the exemption if they enrolled in hours that are considered excessive as defined in TEC, Section 54.014?**

No, however at the start of a semester or term, if an undergraduate student is attempting hours considered to be excessive, the student may continue to receive this exemption if granted a hardship extension by the institution.



# APPENDIX 2: 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.

## PROGRAM RULES AND STATUTES

Texas Program Statutes	<a href="#">Texas Education Code TEC, Chapter 54, Subchapter D [PDF]</a>
Texas Program Rules	<a href="#">Texas Administrative Code 19 TAC, Chapter 21, Subchapter A [PDF]</a> <a href="#">19 TAC, Chapter 21, Subchapter II [PDF]</a>

## WEBSITES, PORTALS AND GUIDES

Texas Education Agency Critical Shortage Areas and Education Aide definition	<a href="#">2021-22 Critical Shortage Areas Educational Aide I,II,III</a>
General program information for institutions	<a href="#">Student Financial Aid Programs Information Webpage</a>
General college enrollment and financial aid information for students	<a href="#">College for All Texans</a>

## FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Form for adding, updating, or removing a user's access for state financial aid web portals	<a href="#">User Access Form [PDF]</a>
Form for requesting program funds	<a href="#">Funds Request Form (FRF) [PDF]</a>
Form for returning program funds	<a href="#">Special Programs Online Return of Funds Form</a>
Instructions for returning funds electronically	<a href="#">Electronic Funds Transfer Information [PDF]</a>
EAE 2021-22 Application	<a href="#">EAE 2021-22 Application [PDF]</a>