

2023 - 2024

Program Guidelines

# Educational Aide Exemption (EAE)



**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 relevant statutes and rules. The information in this document is to be used solely as a resource and does not override the statute or rules for this program.

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](#).

## Program Authority and Purpose ([TAC, Title 19, Section 21.1080](#))

The Educational Aide Exemption (EAE) Program is authorized by [TEC, Title 3, Chapter 54, Section 54.363](#). Rules for administering the program can be found in [TAC, Title 19, 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.

## Eligible Institutions ([TAC, Title 19, Section 21.1082](#))

All public institutions, as defined by [TEC, Title 3, Section 61.003\(8\)](#), are invited annually to participate in the EAE program.

# Program Eligibility

## Initial Eligibility ([TAC, Title 19, Section 21.1083](#))

## Additional Information

### Graduate Student Eligibility

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

### Financial Need

The EAE Program does not have an expected family contribution limitation or a maximum adjusted gross income-requirement. To qualify, applicants must have financial need as defined in [TAC, Title 19, 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 [2023-24 EAE Application](#) to the financial aid office before the end of the semester in which they are enrolled to be considered for an award.

### Child Support Arrearages

Per Texas Family Code, Title 5, Section 231.006, a student who is obligated to pay child support and is more than 30 days delinquent is not eligible to receive a state-funded grant or loan.

Institutions determine how to best comply with this state requirement and should work with their legal counsel on questions related to this statutory mandate.

### To receive an initial year 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, or
  - 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 [TAC, Title 19, 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; and
- ✓ 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 [2023-24 critical shortage areas](#) include the following:

- Bilingual/English as a Second Language
- Career and Technical Education – Secondary Level
- Computer Science/Technology Applications

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

### To receive a renewal year 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; and
- ✓ if classified as an undergraduate, have not completed an excessive number of semester credit hours as defined in [TEC, Title 3, Section 54.014](#).

### If the student received an EAE award before fall 2012, the student must:

- ✓ meet all initial award requirements (**excluding** the critical shortage area obligation); and
- ✓ 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.

## **Discontinuation of Eligibility** ([TAC, Title 19, 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\(a\)\(2\)](#).

The excessive hours calculation **excludes** hours:

- earned exclusively by examination;
- earned for a course credit received toward the person's high school academic requirements;
- earned for developmental courses that the institution required the person to take under TEC, Title 3, Section 51.331; or
- described in TEC, Title 3, Section 61.0595(d).

**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.

## **Hardship Provisions** ([TAC, Title 19, 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 SAP;
- 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 SAP;
- 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.

**NOTE:** A student who fails to earn a GPA that satisfies 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.

## **Exemption from Student Teaching** ([TAC, Title 19, 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 before receiving a first EAE award is not eligible for a student teaching exemption.

## Selective Service Statement ([TAC, Title 19, Section 22.3](#))

Under [TEC, Title 3, Section 51.9095](#), an individual must file a statement of their Selective Service status with the institution confirming registration or exemption.

This statute applies to all state-funded financial aid, as well as “federal funds or gifts and grants accepted by this state.” The statement is required from students receiving federal aid or private donations that pass through the state Treasury or governor’s office (i.e., Governor’s Emergency Education Relief, or GEER), state-appropriated funds, or institutional funding, which includes programs funded by tuition set-asides, exemptions, and waivers.

**Any of the following can be used to meet the statutory statement requirement:**

- THECB Selective Service Statement of Registration Status ([English Statement](#) or [Spanish Statement](#))
- Printout from [SSS.gov](#) website
- Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) if status is available\*
- THECB Selective Service Statement of Registration Status imbedded in the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA)

\*As of FY 2023-24, registration status is no longer reported on the ISIR. Institutions can use any prior year ISIR that confirms registration to meet the statutory requirement for a student's status.

Institutions are **not** required to collect “proof” of registration or exemption from students or to verify the accuracy of the statement against external databases or other resources if conflicting information does not exist. See [Updated Guidance on Statutory Requirements that Impact Financial Aid Memo](#)).

### SELECTIVE SERVICE STATEMENT OF REGISTRATION STATUS

In accordance with [Texas Education Code, Section 51.9095](#), male students must file a Selective Service Statement of Registration Status with their institution or other entity granting financial assistance. For more information about the Selective Service System, visit [sss.gov](#).

Please mark **one** option below:

<input type="checkbox"/> I was born female and not required to register.	<input type="checkbox"/> I was born male and am <b>EXEMPT</b> from registration because: (please briefly explain why you are exempt in the box below.)
<input type="checkbox"/> I was born male and am under the age of 18 and not currently required to register.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>
<input type="checkbox"/> I was born male and am <b>REGISTERED</b> with the Selective Service.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I was born male and am over the age of 18. I am not registered with Selective Service and I am not exempt from registration with Selective Service.	

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

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

*Complete and return to the Financial Aid Office at your institution of higher education.*

Selective Service Statement of Registration Status As of 09/28/2021

## Additional Information

### Collection Method

The institution has flexibility to create an online, paper, or alternate method to collect the statement as long as it uses the content developed and required by the THECB.

### Frequency Collecting the Statement

If the student’s status will NOT change, the statement collected can be used for subsequent semesters at the same institution.

If the student is NOT registered for Selective Service, a statement must be collected each time they apply for financial aid or a student loan until the statement indicates registered or exempt.

### Males Age 26 And Older

Individuals older than the maximum age at which an individual is required to be registered with the Selective Service System under federal law are not required to complete this status statement.

### Retention Schedule

The status statement must be retained in the student’s record based on the retention schedule outlined in the institution’s Program Participation Agreement (PPA).

## Awarding

All public institutions are invited annually to participate in the EAE Program by opting in or out of the allocation process. Those choosing not to participate will not be considered in the allocation calculation for the applicable award year. Those opting into the program will receive an even distribution of appropriated funds through the allocation process for the fiscal year.

Students enrolled in courses required for teacher certification in a critical shortage area and who meet all other eligibility requirements are eligible for an EAE award. 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.

**NOTE:** 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 institution's 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

Institutions can begin submitting requests for funding on **August 15, 2023**. The THECB will begin processing funds *after September 1, 2023*. Institutions have *until* the close of business on **August 1, 2024**, to request program funds. An official notification will be sent to institutions in the summer to provide instructions on how to request funds for FY 2024.

## Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions

- 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.

- 2. Is a volunteer in 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.

- 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).

- 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.

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

No. An application that includes the verification of employment must be completed for each term awarded.

- 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

<b>CONTACT FINANCIAL AID SERVICES</b>	
By phone: (844) 792-2640	
Contact us by completing an <a href="#">online inquiry form</a> and select “Financial Aid Question” as the Contact Reason.	
<b>PROGRAM RULES AND STATUTES</b>	
Texas Program Statutes	<a href="#">Texas Education Code TEC, Chapter 54, Subchapter D [PDF]</a>
Texas Program Rules	<a href="#">Texas Administrative Code TAC, Title 19, Chapter 21, Subchapter A [PDF]</a> <a href="#">TAC, Title 19, Chapter 21, Subchapter II [PDF]</a>
<b>WEBSITES, PORTALS, AND GUIDES</b>	
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>
Texas Education Agency Critical Shortage Areas and Education Aide definition	<a href="#">2023-24 Critical Shortage Areas Educational Aide I, II, III</a>
<b>FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS</b>	
Form for adding, updating, or removing a user's access for state financial aid web portals	<a href="#">User Access Form [PDF]</a>
Instructions for returning funds electronically	<a href="#">Electronic Funds Transfer Information [PDF]</a>
EAE 2023-24 Application	<a href="#">EAE 2023-24 Application [PDF]</a>