



FINANCIAL AID GUIDANCE MEMO

REFERENCE: FA 26-012
TOPIC: OHIO WAR ORPHAN AND SEVERELY DISABLED VETERANS' CHILDREN SCHOLARSHIP (WOS)
AUTHOR: CLEONE BRANDY, PROGRAM MANAGER
DATE: 31 JULY 2025
RELEVANT STATUTE: OHIO REVISED CODE, SECTION 5910

Ohio Revised Code

The Ohio War Orphan and Severely Disabled Veterans' Children Scholarship (WOS) program provides undergraduate tuition assistance to the children of deceased or severely disabled Ohio veterans, who served in the armed forces during a period of declared war or conflict. WOS Ohio Revised Code can be found at: <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/5910>.

Residency

Recipients are required to be current Ohio residents as described in the Ohio Student Residency Administrative Rule, found at: <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/3333-1-10/>.

New Academic Calendar and Extension Requests

A specific submission window is available to each institution during each term. At the beginning of each term, HEI financial aid data reporters and financial aid contacts are sent an e-mail reminding them of the dates of the submission window. The submission window is based on the individual academic calendar submitted by each campus. **Effective for the 2025-2026 academic year and beyond, the submission window will open 15 days after the first day of any given term and close 45 days after the submission window opens.**

ODHE will honor extensions beyond term window submission deadlines in the current academic year for circumstances that are generally beyond the control of the institutions. For a list of these exceptions and the full guidance, please see the HEI Submission and Extension Requests guidance memo found here: <https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/highered.ohio.gov/sgs/guidance-memos/FA26-002.pdf>.

The Academic Calendar and Extension Request is available in HEI at: <https://hei.ohiohighered.org/> under the Institution Management tab.

Update Award Amount

The Ohio War Orphans Scholarship Board met on July 31, 2025, to approve new applicants and funding levels for the 2025-2026 academic year. After reviewing the program budget as well as projected program utilization rates, scholarship coverage for the 2025-2026 academic year will be **77% of tuition/general fees for students attending a public institution and an annual award of \$6,330 for students attending a private (non-profit or for-profit) institution.**

General Fees and Influence of other Tuition Specific Aid

WOS funds are available to be used toward instructional and general fees only. General fees are defined as those uniformly charged to all students and those that *do not allow* for a waiver to be offered to any student(s).

Any student receiving aid that can *only* be used towards tuition and general fees and therefore covers 100% of their tuition and general fees, is *not* eligible for WOS. This aid can be in the form of a waiver or institutional, athletic, third party, federal, or state aid (Ohio National Guard, Ohio Safety Officers Memorial Fund).

For students receiving any tuition/general fees-specific aid not equal to 100% of their tuition/general fees, may be eligible for a partial WOS award. This other tuition/general fees-specific aid must be applied prior to the WOS award. Tuition/general fees minus tuition/general fees-specific aid equals WOS eligibility (up to the respective maximum award).

***New* Dual Undergraduate and Graduate/Professional Programs**

For students dually enrolled in a bachelor and master's or professional program, or an undergraduate taking graduate level or professional level courses, WOS funds can only be utilized for credit hours being applied to their undergraduate degree and being charged at the undergraduate rate. Students must be enrolled full-time (12 credit hours or more) in undergraduate courses to remain eligible.

Further clarification on overlapping hours can be found here: <https://highered.ohio.gov/educators/academic-programs-policies/academic-program-approval/program-approval-faq/program-approval-faq>.

Consortiums

The combined number of credits under a financial aid consortium can be counted toward determining a student's enrollment status for WOS if the other institution is an approved Ohio institution. For example, a student enrolled in 6 credits at their 'home' school and 6 credits at their 'visiting' school would be eligible for a full-time enrollment and award. This applies to consortium agreements with community colleges or regional campuses as well.

Study Abroad

Home schools need to maintain documentation that shows the course(s) being taken, tuition charges at the study abroad institution (if not recorded on transcript and account statement), and that funds were used for tuition and general fees only. The total expense of tuition and fee charges must not be more than the cost of attending the home institution during that term. The home school must keep the above documentation in case of an audit.

Utilization

Students must be Ohio residents and may receive WOS for a maximum of 15 quarters or 10 semesters of full-time undergraduate study. Prior recipients, students who have received two or three semesters of funding, must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA. Exceptions to an institution requesting funds for a student below this cumulative GPA are as follows:

- Freshman
- Transferred from another institution.
- First time recipient of the scholarship- Not Eligible for Summer Term payments.
- Previously approved appeal on file with the institution
- Documented Learning Disability
- Extenuating circumstances, as approved by the institution's Student Services Department
- Enrolled less than full-time – Please see details below.

Enrollment Level

To receive WOS benefits, a student must be enrolled for full-time undergraduate study and pursuing an associate or bachelor's degree at an eligible Ohio college or university. Qualifying students may be eligible for the less than full-time requirement if the student meets one of the following exceptions:

- Students have a previously approved documented learning disability from their institution; or
- Students are in their last term prior to graduating.

If a student meets one of the above exceptions, the institution should notify the WOS Program Manager via e-mail prior to requesting funds at less than full-time enrollment. Institutions should advise the student that receiving payment at less than the full-time enrollment status, a full unit of eligibility will be utilized. The institution must keep supporting documentation in the event of an audit.

Certification

Eligibility rosters for the 2025-2026 academic year are currently available to financial aid personnel. The rosters have been updated to include the new applicants approved by the War Orphans Scholarship Board at their recent meeting. Please keep in mind that schools must wait a *minimum* of 15 days after the start of the term before funds can be requested.

Please note that every payment file submitted is reviewed by the Program Manager. Any records with low payment amounts will require a brief explanation as to why the payment submitted was lower than the full-time rate. In addition, supporting documentation may be required (ex. a transcript), showing that the student is full-time or meets one of the above-mentioned exceptions.

Please also note that the HEI system takes dollars and cents. If the institution's system needs to round, the institution must round down as there are term caps in place.

Financial Aid Audits

The Ohio Revised Code authorizes the Chancellor to conduct financial aid audits of state-supported colleges and universities, proprietary, and non-profit private colleges, and universities. All Ohio institutions with financial aid errors based on their prior year audit results will automatically be audited in an upcoming calendar year. Additional institutions may be audited by random selection to maintain our goal of auditing a set number of institutions yearly. Every institution will be audited *at least* once every three years. *Further guidance from the Financial Aid Auditor will be forthcoming.*

Selective Service

Ohio Revised Code (ORC) section 3345.32 still requires compliance with the selective service law for a student to be eligible for any of Ohio's state grants and scholarships, subsidy, and in-state tuition. ORC 3345.32 Student Noncompliance with Selective Service can be found here: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3345.32>.

As such, ODHE still requires that students comply with selective service registration before funds are requested for the term, and documentation maintained as part of the audit process. If a student falls into one of the exceptions according to ORC for selective service, the documentation for this exception must be provided to ODHE in the case of an audit. For birthdays that fall after the FAFSA filing and before a term start date, an institution is required to check registration prior to requesting any state aid for a term after the 18th birthday.

If Ohio legislation is changed, ODHE will inform the campuses.

Posting of Funds

In alignment with federal policy, the institution should apply the funds requested as soon as administratively feasible but no later than three business days following the date the institution received those funds. WOS funds must be applied towards a student's account for tuition and general fees and cannot be refunded to the student. If WOS exceeds these charges, the institution will need to refund the overage to ODHE.

***Update* Refunds**

If a student becomes ineligible for the WOS scholarship, all funds will need to be returned for that term(s) to ODHE. If a student reduces his or her enrollment below full-time prior to an institution's census or "freeze" date, all funds will need to be returned to ODHE. If student withdrawals or receives other tuition/fee-specific aid, and all or a portion of tuition is refunded, that same percentage will need to be returned to ODHE.

A refund check must be submitted to our office within 30 days. If after 45 days the refund check is not submitted, the amount owed plus interest and any additional fees may be turned over to the Ohio Attorney General's Office for collection. Refunds should be sent by check to the attention of the WOS Program Manager and payable to:

Ohio Department of Higher Education
Office of Financial Aid
25 South Front Street – 7th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4183

WOS File Documentation

The WOS file submission formats and reports can be found at:
https://www.ohiohighered.org/content/wos_hei_documentation.

TO SUMMARIZE, FOR THE 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR, THE AMOUNT OF THE WAR ORPHANS SCHOLARSHIP IS:

PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES: 77% OF TUITION/GENERAL FEES

PRIVATE (NON-PROFIT OR FOR-PROFIT): \$6,330* (ANNUAL AWARD)

****\$3,165 per semester OR *\$2,110 per quarter***

*Financial aid personnel should direct questions to Cleone Brandy, Program Manager, at 614.752.9481
cbrandy@highered.ohio.gov*