

TUITION AND FEE WAIVER FOR CURRENT AND FORMER FOSTER YOUTH AT TEXAS SCHOOLS

Many current and former foster youth are eligible to have tuition and fees waived at Texas-funded vocational schools, colleges or universities, including dual credit courses.

Tuition and Fees Will Be Waived If:

- 1) You were in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services until your 18th birthday (up until the day before your birthday is sufficient);
- 2) You were in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services on your 14th birthday or after and you were eligible for adoption;
- 3) You were in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services on the day you graduated from high school or got your GED;
- 4) You were in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services on the day preceding the date you were adopted, if that date is on or after September 1, 2009;
- 5) You were in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services on the day preceding the date permanent managing conservatorship of you was awarded to a person other than your parent, if that date is on or after September 1, 2009; or
- 6) You were in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services during an academic term in which you were enrolled in a dual credit course or other course for which a high school student may earn joint high school and college credit.

Enroll in a Course By Age 25! To qualify for a tuition waiver for the above, you have to enroll in a course at a covered institution **before** you turn 25. Once you have enrolled in a course in a Texas institution before the age of 25, you are entitled to this benefit at any covered school, no matter how old you are, as long as the state law is still in effect. This means it is really important to enroll by your 25th birthday and complete the course.

Some adopted youth also qualify for a tuition waiver under a different law. See Tuition Waiver for Adopted Foster Youth below.

Schools That Are Covered By Tuition Waiver:

The schools that are covered are state-funded “institutions of higher education”. Private schools in Texas are not covered. Click [here](#) for a list of Texas Public Universities, Colleges, Community Colleges, and Technical Colleges covered by College Tuition and Fee Exemption. If there is any question if the school is state funded, inquire at the

financial aid office. To apply for the State Tuition and Fee Waiver, you must fill out a FAFSA or TASFA form and give the college registrar written proof from DFPS of your eligibility for the program, your *tuition waiver letter*.

While all state-funded schools are covered, you will need to meet the requirements of the school you want to attend to actually enroll in the school. State-funded schools are not required to accept you just because you were in foster care.

How Do I Get My Tuition Waiver:

If you have not received your tuition waiver then you should contact the Lead PAL Staff in the region where you were in foster care. You may also contact the Lead PAL Staff in the region you are currently living and that person can connect you with the correct staff member for you to talk with.

To see the contacts for Lead PAL Staff in your region, click on the following link: [Regional Lead Preparation for Adult Living \(PAL\) Staff](#).

See Texas Education Code §54.366 and [DFPS CPS Handbook section 10312](#) for more information about the tuition waiver for foster youth.

Tuition Waiver for Adopted Foster Youth:

If you were adopted from foster care in Texas, there are two different ways you could qualify for a tuition waiver.

One way to qualify is to be adopted from the foster care system after September 1, 2009. If you qualify under this provision, you must enroll in at least one class before you are 25 years old.

The other way to qualify is to have been the subject of an adoption assistance agreement under Subchapter D, Chapter 162, Family Code, that:

- provided monthly payments and medical assistance benefits; and
- was not limited to providing only for the reimbursement of nonrecurring expenses, including reasonable and necessary adoption fees, court costs, attorney's fees, and other expenses directly related to the legal adoption of the child.

Youth who were adopted from the foster care system and qualify for a tuition waiver **because of an adoption assistance agreement** may enroll for the first time in college at any age, even after they turn 25 years old.

To get a tuition waiver if you were adopted, you will need to contact the adoption assistance eligibility specialist in the region you were adopted. You will then be sent a form to fill out and return. Once the form is returned, either the regional director or CPS

program administrator will sign it and send it back to you to take to the registrar's office of the college or institution.

Click [here](#) to find the regional contact for you to get your tuition waiver. You may contact the Texas Foster Youth Project at 877-313-3688 if you have any questions on who you should contact.

See Texas Education Code §54.366-.367 and [DFPS CPS Handbook section 10313](#) for more information about the tuition waiver for adopted youth.

If you are not able to resolve your tuition waiver concerns based on the above information and contacts, you can ask the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project for assistance. Call toll-free (so you can call from a pay phone for free) 1-877-313-3688 or email at info@texasfosteryouth.org.