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TSAWWASSEN FIRST NATION

# **Tsawwassen First Nation**

## **Post-Secondary Education Policy (2023)**

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**Date Enacted: November 21, 2023**

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**X**

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Kim Baird  
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

Table of Amendments

<b>Section(s) Amended</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Order number</b>	<b>Come Into Force Date</b>

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# 1. Definitions

In this policy

- a) **“Applicant” or “Student”** means any Tsawwassen member making an application under this policy.
- b) **“Academic Year”** means any 8 consecutive months where a student is enrolled in an education program and generally refers to the period September through to April.
- c) **“Course/Credit”** means a specific academic or training topic that requires a minimum of three hours of class time per week for a semester, or the equivalent in a compressed time-slot.
- d) **“Dependent”** means a legal ward of a funded student, who is living with and financially dependent on the funded student.
- e) **“Dependent spouse”** means a person who is the legal partner of the Applicant and who has resided with the Applicant for at least one year, and who is solely dependent on the student for financial support. A spouse cannot be declared as a dependent spouse if the spouse is working full or part time or is regularly supported by an external source such as the Ministry of Child and Family Development, Service Canada, Worker’s Compensation, and Pension.
- f) **“Eligible Post Secondary Institution”** any post-secondary or training institution that is accredited by a recognized national or international accreditation organization.
- g) **“Eligible Prep Program”** means a program approved by the Education and Skills Development Manager that provides students with the necessary courses to gain the academic level required to enter a degree or diploma program at a university or college.
- h) **“Full-Time Student”** means a student who is enrolled in at least 80% of a full-time course load, as determined by the institution, in each term.
- i) **“Graduate Student”** means a student who is taking a Master’s or PhD (Doctorate) program, or equivalent, at a recognized educational institution.
- j) **“ITA”** means Industry Training Authority – website at [www.itabc.ca](http://www.itabc.ca)
- k) **“Part-Time Student”** means a student who is enrolled less than 80% of a full-time course load, as determined by the institution, in each term.
- l) **“Program of Studies”** means a post secondary institution program, at least one academic year in length, leading to a degree, certificate, or diploma.
- m) **“TFN”** means Tsawwassen First Nation and the Education Department as the authority for administering this program.
- n) **“TFN Member”** means a Tsawwassen individual who is enrolled as a member of the Tsawwassen First Nation in accordance with the Final agreement and the *Membership Act*.

## 2. Am I eligible for funding?

If you wish to qualify for post-secondary funding:

- 2.1. You must be a TFN Member.
- 2.2. You must be at least 18 years of age by December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year.
- 2.3. You must not owe TFN funds for any debt or previous sponsorship. If you owe TFN money, you will be required to pay this debt before being considered for further funding.

## 3. What schools can I apply to?

You can receive funding under this policy for an application to any **Eligible Post Secondary Institution or Eligible Prep Program**.

## 4. What support does TFN provide?

TFN attempts to fund a comprehensive set of costs related to post-secondary education. All amounts set out are in Canadian dollars (CAD). The following outlines the categories and amounts of funding provided.

### 4.1. Annual maximums

It is important to note that TFN funds this program on a fixed annual budget. It is difficult to estimate on an annual basis the number of applications TFN will receive. There may be years when TFN has to choose to fund certain students instead of others, based on criteria. There may be other years when TFN must distribute the support evenly across several students. The Manager of Education and Skills Development (the "Manager") must make that decision based on set criteria and the total amount of funding designated yearly for the purpose of student financial assistance within the annual *Appropriations Act*.

The maximum funding assistance for each student each year is \$45,000. The maximum is set high enough to cover some specialized programs with high tuition rates. TFN's expectation is that the actual funding level calculated in sections 4.2 to 4.7 will be significantly less than \$45,000 for most students. If the funding level calculated in sections 4.2 to 4.7 (covering tuition, books and supplies, special equipment, travel support, commuter travel and living allowance) is less than \$45,000, the student will receive the lesser amount. This will ensure availability of funds to more students.

### 4.2. Tuition

The Education Department will support, subject to available funding, amounts up to the full cost of tuition. Eligible tuition fees include program tuition, extended medical and dental coverage, and student fees. Tuition related to a semester or year abroad is also eligible. For specialty courses such as law school, medical school, or a graduate business

degree, the Manager will assist to the extent possible depending on the availability of funds in the given year.

**4.3. Tuition will be paid directly to the Eligible Post Secondary Institution upon invoicing by the institution. Applicants are responsible for ensuring the institution is aware of sponsorship. Books, Supplies and Personal Computers**

TFN will pay the actual cost of books and supplies that are specifically required at any program, to a maximum of \$3,000 per year. To be eligible, books and supplies must be indicated as required on a course list, syllabus, or hand-out.

Book and supply costs will either be paid directly to the institution upon invoicing or will be reimbursed to the student upon receiving receipts.

TFN will pay up to a maximum of \$2000 for personal computers, inclusive of software, required for a students' studies. TFN will offer this to a student once every four (4) years.

Personal computer costs will be reimbursed to the student upon receiving receipts. In certain circumstances, TFN may coordinate an alternative way to provide a student with a personal computer.

**4.4. Special equipment**

TFN will pay up to \$500.00 per academic year for equipment required by special needs persons or extraordinary equipment for Specialty studies. In all circumstances TFN will make a final determination of eligibility.

Special equipment costs will be paid directly to the institution upon invoicing, or reimbursement to the student upon receiving receipts.

**4.5. Travel support**

Travel support refers to extraordinary costs associated with travel to or from the post secondary institution, including travel costs related to a semester or year abroad. Actual costs of travel will be reimbursed to a maximum of \$1,000 per year. Students are expected to use the most reasonable economic means of transportation. Part-time students are not eligible for travel support.

Travel costs will be reimbursed to the student upon receiving receipts.

**4.6. Commuter Travel**

Commuter funds from TFN to post-secondary institutions will be reimbursed according to the number of TransLink zones traveled. Students with a TransLink U-Pass will receive support as part of their tuition (section 4.2) funding. As TransLink fees are subject to change, TFN will cover the monthly rate as it stands as of that year. Students who drive

to school are eligible to apply for and receive amounts equivalent to the applicable U-Pass.

**4.6.1. Parking permits**

Students who commute to their post-secondary institution by personal vehicle will be reimbursed for the actual cost of a daily, semester, or yearly parking permits up to a maximum of \$1000. The cost of parking will be reimbursed to the student upon submission of the receipt. Students are to choose the most reasonable permit to suit the length of their program.

**4.7. Living allowances**

The following categories outline how TFN will subsidize the living allowances of students. All payments under this section will be made on the last Thursday of the month for the following month.

**4.7.1. Full Time Students**

Students are eligible for living allowances for the months during which they are attending a post-secondary institution full time. These rates are maximums (subject to section 4.7.2).

<b>Category</b>	<b>Amount</b> (monthly maximum, applies if not working)
Single	\$1,762.48
Married (spouse working)	\$1,596.99
Married (dependent spouse)	\$2,445.46
Single parent with one dependent	\$2,555.61
For every dependent in addition to the number outlined above	\$330.46

**4.7.2. Cost of Living Adjustments**

Amounts in section 4.7.1 are calculated for 2022 and are subject to change based on cost-of-living adjustments. Adjustments are calculated in accordance with the annual change in consumer price index from October (previous year) to October (current year). Adjustments to the living allowances will occur each spring and come into effect April 1 of the following fiscal year.

**4.7.3. Dependents**

All students who are claiming dependents must provide relevant documentation. Anyone found to have falsely reported dependents will be



required to immediately repay the relevant amount to TFN and will be ineligible for future education funding.

#### **4.7.4. Students Working Part-time**

Full-time students who are employed more than 15 hours per week are eligible for a living allowance according to the following formula:

Applicable living allowance (see section 4.7.1) minus 30% of gross monthly income, with a minimum monthly incentive of \$100 plus \$330.60 for each dependant.

*Example: Donna is a single student living alone, with no dependants. She works and makes \$1,500 a month. If she decided to go to school, her living allowance would be the applicable living allowance for a single individual (\$1,600) less 30% of her monthly wages ( $\$1,500 \times 30\% = \$450$ ). So she would receive a monthly living allowance of  $\$1,600 - \$450 = \$1,150$ . She still keeps all her work income.*

#### **4.7.5. Part Time Students**

Part-time students are not eligible for a living allowance. However, they will receive a living top-up of \$110 a month.

### **4.8. Entrance Testing**

With the exception of transcript requests, TFN is able to cover any costs concerning tests or other entrance related expenses, provided they are needed to determine entrance requirements or eligibility. It is the responsibility of the student to pay for and procure the required number of transcripts.

### **4.9. Co-operative Education and Internship Fees**

TFN will support expenses up to the full cost related to work experience programs such as co-operative education and internships.

### **4.10. Years of Support**

#### **4.10.1. Comprehensive Support**

TFN strives to support students as they progress along their post secondary education paths. At the same time, TFN works to ensure funding is made available to as many students as possible. Therefore, TFN will provide comprehensive support, as set out in sections 4.2 through 4.7, for:

- up to four years of study in community college or certificate programs;

- up to five years of study in college and university undergraduate degree programs;
- up to two years of study in master's degree programs; and
- up to four years of study in doctorate degree programs.

#### **4.10.2. Tuition Only**

In addition, TFN will continue to pay tuition only for students who undertake post-secondary studies beyond the support provided under section 4.9.1.

### **4.11. Graduation Awards**

#### **4.11.1. Application**

TFN values education and wishes both to encourage Members to pursue education and to celebrate their educational achievements. As a result, TFN provides awards to Members who attain significant educational milestones in post-secondary education. TFN funding for graduation awards are excluded from the annual maximum, outlined in section 4.1.

#### **4.11.2. Multiple Awards**

TFN delivers only one award at each level of accomplishment, post-secondary degree or certificate, even if the student earns a second degree or certificate.

The same coursework cannot be used to get two awards; however, students can earn credits that build towards a higher award. For example, if a student earns the \$250 award for completing a one-year certificate at a college, and then studies for a second year in the same program to earn a two-year college diploma, that student will receive another \$250 award. (That represents \$500 for the two-year diploma, less the \$250 that person already received for their first year of study).

Each student can earn a maximum of \$1000 in awards for completion of all undergraduate programming, including technical, college diplomas, trade certifications, and undergraduate degrees.

No awards are issued for certificate programs of less than one year. However, if a post-secondary program is divided into multiple certificate programs that together form a full-academic year of certificate programs, that student is eligible for the one-year certificate award.

#### **4.11.3. College/Technology Institute/Justice Institute Awards**

Members who graduate from post-secondary institutions, excluding universities, but including colleges, technology institutes, and the Justice Institute, are eligible for the following awards:

- Certificate or equivalent credential recognizing graduation from a one-year post-secondary program: \$250.
- Diploma, Associate Degree or equivalent credential recognizing graduation from a two-year post-secondary program: \$500
- Certificate of Qualification or equivalent in a Trade: \$500.

One and two-year post-secondary programs are programs that are designed to be completed in one or two years of full-time study, as defined by the institution that offers the program, regardless how long a student takes to complete the program.

#### **4.11.4. University Awards**

Members who graduate from an accredited university are eligible for the following awards:

- Undergraduate Degree: \$1000
- Master's Degree: \$1500
- Doctorate: \$2000

#### **4.11.5. Documentation**

Students applying for an award must arrange for a sealed official transcript to be mailed to TFN. Photocopies and electronic copies of transcripts cannot be accepted. Students may optionally provide a photocopy of their certificate/diploma.

## **5. How do I apply?**

### **5.1. Application package**

A completed and signed application for funding should be submitted by the deadlines identified in section 5.2, together with the following documents:

- A copy of the previous year's T4 and Revenue Canada Notice of Assessment, or equivalent, indicating the student's earnings;
- A copy of the previous year's T4 and Notice of Assessment, or equivalent, of the applicant's spouse or partner (if applicable); and
- A letter from the student's employer (if employed) indicating total hours worked per week and monthly gross salary.

The application package is at the back of this booklet.

## **5.2. Timelines for Applying**

### **5.2.1. Main Deadline: April 1st**

Students contemplating beginning school in September must submit their applications by April 1<sup>st</sup> of that year. The Manager must post notice of the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline at least two months prior to the deadline, and repeatedly thereafter. At a minimum, notice must be posted by that date in a public place, on the TFN website, in the TFN Community Newsletter, and by mail to all Tsawwassen Members.

Students who miss the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline may still be considered for funding, but only after all the applications received prior to the deadline have been processed. It takes a minimum of one month to process applications.

### **5.2.2. Supplemental Deadline: October 15th**

Students contemplating beginning school in January must submit their applications by October 15th of the previous year.

The Manager must post notice of the October 15th deadline at least one month prior to the deadline, and repeatedly thereafter. At a minimum, notice must be posted by that date in a public place, on the TFN website, in the TFN Community Newsletter, and by mail to all Tsawwassen Members.

Students who miss the October 15th deadline may still be considered for funding, but only after all the applications received prior to the deadline have been processed. It takes a minimum of one month to process applications.

### **5.2.3. Other Deadlines: one month minimum**

For post-secondary programs that begin at non-traditional times (other than September or January), students must submit their applications a minimum of one month before the program begins. Two month's notice is preferred.

### **5.2.4. Acceptance Letter Deadline**

No later than one month before the program start date, new applicants must submit an acceptance letter from the institution identified on their funding application.

### **5.2.5. Academic Transcripts Deadline**

All applicants must submit unofficial transcripts at the end of each semester, and official transcripts at the end of each academic year, for

funding the following academic year. Applicants just out of high school must submit their official provincial examination transcripts with their funding applications.

**5.2.6. Missed timeline**

Funding is generally not provided retroactively. Students are reminded that it takes a minimum of one month to process applications.

**5.3. Alternative Funding Sources**

In addition to support from TFN, many students will be eligible for financial assistance from other programs either administered by TFN, or by other governments and agencies.

**5.3.1. Scholarships from outside agencies**

The Education and Skills Development department will also assist students to identify and apply for bursaries and scholarships provided by outside agencies. Any scholarships that a student is awarded from outside agencies will be over and above the funding that TFN provides.

**6. How does TFN choose who to fund?**

TFN attempts to fund all students interested in post-secondary education. However, when funds are limited, difficult choices must be made. If there are more people applying in a year than the amount of funding available, the Education and Skills Development department will have to prioritize certain students over other students. The following list identifies the order of priority that the department will take when making that decision.

1 <sup>st</sup> Priority	Returning full-time students - Students must maintain an acceptable grade level (C-, 60% equivalent)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Priority	New full-time secondary school graduates
3 <sup>rd</sup> Priority	New mature students seeking a full time program
4 <sup>th</sup> Priority	Part-time students and Occupational Skills Training students.
5 <sup>th</sup> Priority	Graduate students
6 <sup>th</sup> Priority	Students applying for a new program, who have completed a different program at the same education level within the last two years. There are four 'education levels': 1) vocational, 2) college/university undergraduate, 3) master's, or 4) doctoral.

A returning student includes a student who is continuing in a different semester or a different year, but in the same program of study, regardless of the priority otherwise listed. For example, a graduate student who is moving from the first to second year of study would be considered a returning student and be the first priority for funding.

If there are several returning students, the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> priorities will apply to make priority distinctions between returning students.

The intent of the 6<sup>th</sup> priority is to ensure that opportunities are available first to students who have not already received funding from TFN for training at a specific education level.

## **7. What are my responsibilities as a student?**

TFN expects students it supports to adhere to a set of basic standards. These standards, if met, should generally also ensure success in the course of study. The standards are set out below. Reference to academic standards are set out in section 8. \

### **7.1. Good decision-making**

Students are expected to plan to the best of their ability all aspects of their future education and training. This includes making informed and reasonable decisions with regards to program and class choices, place of residence, employment, and healthy living. When needed, students are expected to seek out assistance and counselling to ensure a successful education process.

### **7.2. Regular Attendance**

All applicants must attend regularly and maintain an acceptable level of performance.

### **7.3. Monthly Check in**

By the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, students must send an email to the Education Program Assistant to update TFN on how school is progressing, and to report on any anticipated changes to the program of study. The email will be submitted before living allowance payments are made for the following month of study.

### **7.4. Suspensions**

Students are expected to maintain good behaviour at school and to avoid being disciplined, particularly suspension. Students who are suspended will have their support terminated. Any support (i.e., tuition, books, living allowances) paid to, or on behalf of the student, that is deemed lost by TFN must be paid back to TFN before any further financial support will be considered.

### **7.5. Completion of study**

Students who do not complete the program of study in the semester as specified in the application, other than for medical release (that has been approved by the post secondary institution), will be responsible for paying back any support specifically for that semester (i.e., tuition, books, living allowances). The amount must be paid back to TFN before any further financial support will be considered. Repayments will be considered on a semester-by-semester basis.

### **7.6. Contacting the Manager**

Students are responsible for contacting the Manager in writing of any significant changes that might affect funding (i.e., dropping courses that result in a full-time student moving to part-time status) prior to the end of the semester.

## **8. What marks do I have to get to keep my funding, and what happens if I don't get those marks?**

### **8.1. Minimum academic standard**

The minimum acceptable level of performance is a "C-" or equivalent (average of 60%).

### **8.2. Annual performance assessment**

Student transcripts will be reviewed on an annual basis (prior to the beginning of each academic year) to assess performance. When necessary, students may be requested to submit written explanations or other documentation to assist in TFN's review.

### **8.3. Probation**

Students who fall below TFN's standard will be placed on probation. Under probation, students will have one semester to increase their GPA to or above TFN's standard. During the probation period, students may be required to submit additional transcripts, program documentation, attendance records, and personal documentation. Additionally, students may be required to seek academic or personal counselling. If a student does not increase their GPA to or above TFN's standard during the probation period, the Manager may withdraw any future funding.

TFN's tolerance will be at a minimum during a probation period. Students on probation who do not follow this policy will have funding support terminated, and the student will be responsible for paying back any support (i.e., tuition, books, living allowances) paid to, or on behalf of the student, that is deemed lost by TFN. The amount must be paid back to TFN before any further financial support will be considered.

## **9. The Appeal Process**

All students have a right to appeal regarding any decision made by TFN regarding their application review, or probation period. The appeal will follow the process set out on the Administrative Review and Judicial Proceedings Act, available at [www.tsawwassenfirstnation.com](http://www.tsawwassenfirstnation.com)

## Schedule A: Post Secondary Funding Application Package

### Directions:

Complete the Post-Secondary Funding Application Form (2022) (the “form”) as completely as possible.

Return the form to the Education Program Assistant or the Manager (address/email/fax is on page 1 of the form).

Be sure to return at least 1 month before the application deadline for the program you wish to enter. The applicable deadline depends on the program of study:

**April 1** for programs beginning in September;

**October 15** for programs beginning in January; and

**At least 1 month** before programs beginning at other times of the year.

*If you have any questions or require further assistance please contact the Education Program Assistant or the Manager at (604) 943-2112.*