

Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (YEHP)

Tuition & Fee Waiver (HB4013)

Frequently Asked Questions - as of July 2023

Eligibility:

1. **What are the required qualifications for determining Waiver eligibility of a student who has experienced/is experiencing homelessness?**

Answer: The student must be under age 25 and experienced homelessness for six months or more between the ages of 14-24 **AND** while experiencing homelessness received services from [an organization contracted by the Department of Human Services](#) (ODHS) to provide Services or Housing supports **AND** was at least 16 the last time services were received.

The student must be, or will be, an undergraduate student enrolled in at least one credit hour at an approved public Oregon University or Community College. If eligible to file a FAFSA, the student must complete and submit the application for that academic year. If the student is ineligible to file a FAFSA, they may submit an ORSAA application if eligible.

2. **How is Homelessness Defined?**

Answer: A student is considered homeless if they lack fixed, regular, and adequate housing. This is broader than just living “on the street.” It includes:

- temporarily living with other people because they had nowhere else to go;
- living in substandard housing (if it doesn’t meet local building codes or the utilities are turned off, it is generally not adequate);
living in emergency or transitional shelters,
- living in motels, camping grounds, cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, or any public or private place not designed for humans to live in.

- It also includes living in a school dormitory if the student would otherwise be homeless;
- A student living in any of these situations and fleeing an abusive parent would be considered homeless even if the parent would provide support and a place to live.

3. How do eligible students apply for the Tuition and Fee Waiver and is there a deadline?

Answer: The Waiver requires a submitted, valid FAFSA or ORSAA. Eligible applicants can find applications at:

- FAFSA (available at <https://studentaid.gov/>) or
- ORSAA (available at <https://oregonstudentaid.gov/fafsa-orsaa/>)

These may be submitted as early as October 1 each year. The deadline to submit a FAFSA / ORSAA is June 30 of the award year, or the student's last day of class for the academic year (whichever is earliest). Students who submit their FAFSA / ORSAA as soon as possible after October 1 each year will maximize their federal, state, and private grants and scholarships.

A student may apply for the Waiver at any time during their school enrollment, and as early as the submission of their initial FAFSA / ORSAA.

For verification purposes, a student may complete the Waiver application with support from [a Community Based Organization contracted by the Department of Human Services](#) and send to yehp.studentwaivers@odhs.oregon.gov to process eligibility. If a student is no longer connected with their Organization, they can complete the application form independently or with a new Organization. ODHS can assist the student with further confirming eligibility if necessary.

4. When is the earliest a student could access or receive the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: This Waiver program began with the 2022-2023 academic year.

5. Who will notify the school of a student's eligibility for the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: After an application is submitted, the Oregon Department of Human Services' (ODHS) Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (YEHP) will submit application information into the Office of Student Access & Completion (OSAC)'s web-portal on a monthly basis. It is recommended that the student and/or their support teams connect with their school's financial aid office to confirm that they are aware of their Waiver application.

6. How long can a student be eligible for the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Eligible students may receive the Waiver for the equivalent of 4 years of undergraduate study. Less than full time enrollment will be prorated accordingly.

Students may take a break from school but must return prior to his/her/their **25th birthday** in order to continue their eligibility and access the Waiver. After age 25, a student must remain enrolled at an eligible post-secondary institution until completion of their undergraduate studies. A student must remain in good standing and may not "stop out" of school after age 25 or they will lose their eligibility for Waiver.

7. What about the student who is eligible for Tuition and Fee Waiver but doesn't need it?

Answer: If a student meets all other criteria for eligibility but does not have a need for a Tuition and Fee Waiver, the student shall remain eligible until the student receives the equivalent of 4 years of undergraduate education.

***It is important to note that the Waiver is taken after all other federal aid scholarships or grants (not including Chafee Education and Training Vouchers), an award from the Oregon Opportunity Grant program, and any other aid received from the institution of higher education.*

8. Is a current college student eligible for Tuition and Fee Waiver if they have not received the Waiver or if they declined the Waiver previously?

Answer: Yes, as long as the student meets the eligibility requirements listed in #1 above, and the student accesses the Waiver prior to age 25.

9. Can a student transfer from a private or other school to an eligible school and receive Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Yes, if the student's transfer occurs and the student receives the Waiver prior to the age 25.

10. Can a student begin at an Oregon community college and then transfer to a 4-year university and be eligible for the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Yes, as long as the university is an Oregon public university or OHSU, and the student begins receiving the Waiver prior to the age of 25.

11. Can an Oregon student who has moved / is residing in another state return to Oregon and be eligible for the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: To be eligible for the Waiver, the student must be deemed a resident of Oregon. See more details in question 12.

12. When an Oregon student who has been residing in another state returns to Oregon and enrolls at an eligible institution, will the student have to pay out-of-state tuition?

Answer: Possibly. For all Oregon public universities and OHSU, student residency is determined first at the campus level, following Oregon Administrative Rules, 580-010-0029 through 580-010-0047. A student should check with their campus to determine if they are considered a resident or not. If not, the student will be required to pay out-of-state tuition.

13. May a student receive a modified diploma and still qualify for the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Yes. However, the student must be taking credits/courses that will count towards an undergraduate certificate or degree.

14. Does the student who has experienced homelessness have to work with their community-based organization they are/were connected with in order to receive the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Not necessarily, though eligibility determination may be simpler if so. If a student has left a community-based organization due to conflict, or personal reasoning, they are currently not required to work with that specific program to determine eligibility. The student may work with a new community-based organization or ODHS YEHP may assist the student with further confirming eligibility in this scenario.

15. If a student is receiving other scholarships and grants, and applies for the Tuition and Fee Waiver with all expenses currently covered, will they be eligible?

Answer: If all the student's expenses for cost of attendance are included in currently receiving grants and scholarships, they would not be allowed to receive more than the school costs of attendance. However, they would still be able to apply and have their Waiver eligible for their undergraduate studies program, until they reach the age of **25**.

16. Is living on campus covered under the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Unfortunately, no, the Waiver is currently only eligible for the cost of tuition and fees and does not cover housing and meals for the student.

Enrollment:

1. What is the definition of “enroll”?

Answer: A student is considered enrolled when they have applied and been admitted as an undergraduate student at an Oregon public university, OHSU, or a community college.

2. What is the definition of “must enroll prior to age 25”?

Answer: A student must enroll for the term in which the student will turn age 25. After age 25, a student must remain enrolled at an eligible institution until completion of their undergraduate studies. A student must remain in good standing and may not “stop out” of school after age 25 or they will lose their eligibility for the Waiver.

3. Must an eligible student pay Advanced Tuition Deposits when requested by the school?

Answer: Yes. However, if the student is determined to be eligible for the Waiver, the school will need to refund the amount of tuition deposit(s) paid. This would be determined at the time the school is finalizing a student’s financial aid.

4. Can a student participate in Summer Term and receive the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Yes. The term will count toward the 4 year maximum.

Award:

1. Who determines the actual Tuition and Fee Waiver amount?

Answer: Each school will be responsible for packaging a student’s financial aid. The Waiver will be a component of the financial aid process.

2. How does the Tuition and Fee Waiver work?

Answer: A student’s Federal aid (Pell, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant), Oregon Opportunity Grant, and any other institutional (school) aid will be used to cover the student’s tuition and fees.

Any amount of tuition and fees remaining after the Pell, FEOG, OOG and other school aid is applied will be waived.

3. Are Students guaranteed to receive an Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG)?

Answer: No. A student must submit their FAFSA / ORSAA as soon as possible once the FAFSA / ORSAA opens and meet the OOG criteria posted on the OSAC website. Students would then be required to attend Fall term to receive OOG for the academic year.

4. Does the Chafee Education & Training Voucher Program (ETV) lower the amount of a student's Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: No. The Chafee ETG is not to be considered when determining the amount of a student's Waiver. In addition, a student's private scholarships, grants and loans are NOT to be applied toward a student's tuition and fees.

5. What is included in the Tuition and Fee waiver?

Answer: A qualified student is entitled to a Waiver of tuition and fees as follows:

- Tuition for academic credit courses (at base or differential rates depending upon program to which student is admitted) but not for noncredit courses;
- Mandatory enrollment fees: building, incidental, health service, recreation center, or other mandatory fees that may be added from time to time;
- One-time fees: matriculation, transcript for life (OIT only);
- Fees required for instruction related services such as lab or course fees that are assessed upon registration for a particular course.

Fees that are not covered under the Waiver include, but are not limited to:

- Books, supplies, parking, personal incidentals, fines, housing, and meal plan.
- Fees considered as "pass through" fees, paid to an outside provider, are exempt from the Tuition and Fee Waiver.

6. How are students notified of the Tuition and Fee Waiver amount?

Answer: The college or university the student has been accepted to attend will inform the student of the amount. The amount may be reflected on the student's financial aid award letter. It is recommended that youth and/or their support teams connect with their school's financial aid office to confirm that they are aware of the Waiver application.

7. How are Community-Based Organization Providers notified of the student's Tuition and Fee Waiver and amount?

Answer: The student will need to inform the community-based organization of the amount.

8. May a student use the Tuition and Fee Waiver for graduate school?

Answer: No. The Waiver may be used for an Associate degree, certificate programs, and a Bachelor degree, but does not continue beyond the level of an initial Bachelor degree.

9. May a student decline the Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Answer: Yes. A student may decline a Waiver. The student must provide the school with a reason for the decision to decline the waiver.

10. If a student declines the Tuition and Fee Waiver, will they be able to receive the Tuition and Fee Waiver the next year?

Answer: Yes, if the student is continuing to work towards an undergraduate degree or certificate.

For additional questions surrounding the Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program's Tuition and Fee Waivers, please contact:
yehp.studentwaivers@odhs.oregon.gov