

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD STATE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Introduction:

- a. Public Act 259 of 2014 established the State Tuition Assistance Program to provide tuition assistance to members of the Michigan National Guard.
- b. I understand the State of Michigan sponsors the State Tuition Assistance Program. The state legislature appropriates funds for this program annually. If, in the future, the State does not fund the State Tuition Assistance Program, or funds are depleted, neither the State of Michigan nor the Michigan National Guard is obligated to continue such a program or pay out existing obligations.
- c. I understand that if I do not meet all the criteria outlined in Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Policy-0100, dated 1 Jul 2014, I will jeopardize my eligibility to receive State Tuition Assistance.
- d. I understand that if I am a Service Member of the Michigan National Guard, I **MUST** apply for Federal Tuition Assistance in order to be eligible to use State Tuition Assistance, if eligible. The combination of federal benefits and State Tuition Assistance cannot exceed 100% tuition costs.
 - i. Those who have not completed 1 year after AIT/BOLC can apply directly to MINGSTAP because they do not qualify for FTA.
 - ii. Air National Guard members can apply directly to MINGSTAP because they do not have FTA available to them. However, AIR AGR must go through Wright Patterson and submit their request for FTA with the MINGSTAP application.
- e. I understand that State Tuition Assistance will cover fees directly related to courses. These types of fees include lab fees or other course specific fees. Covered fees must be refundable to the same extent as tuition, in accordance with the institution's tuition refund policy.
- f. I understand that State Tuition Assistance is not authorized to reimburse activity fees, technology fees, computer user fees, registration fees, books, room and board expenses, and other school-related fees.

Criteria for Participation:

- a. I understand that in order to be eligible for State Tuition Assistance payment I must meet the following membership criteria:
 - i. I am a member of the Michigan National Guard; or am a Trainee - Awaiting

Basic or Technical Training. I am not a contracted Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadet.

- ii. I must maintain active status in the Michigan National Guard throughout the entire course/term for which reimbursement is tendered. Courses which end after my Expiration Term of Service (ETS) date are not eligible for payment.
 - iii. I understand that if I am a Trainee – Awaiting Basic or Technical Training, I must accept the first available training dates afforded, or I will lose program eligibility.
- b. I understand that to receive payment under this program I must follow the rules regarding satisfactory participation and be in good standing at the time of application:
- i. No more than four (4) periods of Unexcused Absence during the last 12 months.
 - ii. I am not under suspension of favorable actions (Army) or adverse administrative actions (Air) IAW applicable regulation and policy.
 - iii. I am in compliance with APFT (Army) or Physical Fitness Standards (Air) and the height/weight standards.
- c. I understand the following additional requirements:
- i. I must attend an eligible educational institution, such as a public or private college, university, vocational school, technical school, or trade school located in this state. Courses that earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are not eligible for State Tuition Assistance.
 - ii. The maximum lifetime benefit that I may receive under this program is funding equivalent to 144 semester/208 quarter of undergraduate credit or a baccalaureate degree, whichever comes first. Soldiers and Airmen may use up to 42 semester hours of graduate credit of a master's or professional degree, whichever comes first. Post-Bachelor's credit toward a certificate program will count against the graduate credit limit.
- d. I understand that I must complete coursework in accordance with the following guidelines:
- i. Undergraduate Coursework. I must achieve a grade of "C" or better, "Pass" or "Satisfactory" and maintain a cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.0 or better on a 4.0 scale. I understand that the State of Michigan will not reimburse me for any course(s) from which I "withdraw" or receive a failing grade.
 - ii. Vocational, technical or trade school must submit the pass/fail documentation or a certificate of completion provided at the end of the course.
- e. I understand that I will be eligible for reimbursement for the course(s) upon completion and meet the grade requirements outlined above.

Reimbursement Procedures:

- a. Application. State Tuition Assistance must be requested prior to the class start date or the end of the school's late registration window, but no later than 14 calendar days after the course start date.
- b. State Tuition Assistance Payment Request Processing. I understand that I must submit the following forms and supporting documents to my unit in sufficient time for them to arrive at the **Department of Military & Veterans Affairs-State Operations Budget Office** no later than 45 calendar days after the last official day of the course/term. Soldiers and Airmen enrolled in accelerated programs, where several terms are completed during the course of a normal semester/quarter schedule, should submit requests in groups that correspond with a normal semester/quarter. Request payment no more than once for each semester:
 - i. Grades. I will provide the State Operations Budget Office with proof of successful completion of approved courses within 45 calendar days of completion of the class for which I am requesting Michigan National Guard State Tuition Assistance reimbursement. Grades from the internet are acceptable.
 - ii. Final fee statement. Must be dated after course completion and provided by the institution that clearly shows the amount of tuition charged. The final fee statement must include all other benefits paid, or pending payment, directly to the institution on the Service Member's behalf (e.g. FTA/ACES TA, CH 33/Post 9-11 GI BILL, ROTC tuition scholarship). If the fee statement does not clearly show the amount of tuition charged or other federal payments, I will obtain a letter from the institution that includes this information and lists a point of contact at the institution.
- c. I understand that my signature on the State Tuition Assistance application and this SOU is my certification that all information is true and correct. My signature also authorizes the State Operations Budget Office to contact the school to request and verify information.
- d. I understand that I must apply for State Tuition Assistance no more than 60 calendar days before and no more than 14 calendar days after courses start. I must submit my request for tuition reimbursement **NO LATER THAN 45** calendar days after the last official day of the course/term. I understand that if I fail to meet this suspense, I am not eligible for reimbursement for that course/term.
- e. Late requests for State Tuition Assistance Payment Processing. I understand that if I miss the 45 calendar day suspense, the obligation will be terminated. No reimbursement request will be approved for that course/term. For extenuating circumstances I will submit my request according to the Exception to Policy guidelines.

Incomplete Coursework:

- a. I understand that, if I have an incomplete course, I should still request payment for all completed classes for that course/term by submitting documents to **Department of Military & Veterans Affairs-State Operations Budget Office** within the 45 calendar day suspense. Retain a copy of all paperwork to submit upon completion of incomplete coursework.
- b. I understand that I must submit the fee statement and grades to the State Operations Budget Office within 45 calendar days of course completion date.
- c. I understand that within 45 calendar days of the course completion date I must provide a grade report showing satisfactory completion to the **Department of Military & Veterans Affairs-State Operations Budget Office**.

Termination:

- a. I understand that the submission of a falsified grade report, transcript, final fee statement, fraudulent application form or an attempt to receive funds for which I'm not eligible, results in termination from the State Tuition Assistance Program for a minimum of one year. I further understand that I may be subject to prosecution under the Michigan Code of Military Justice (MCMJ) or Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) for utilizing a falsified grade report, transcript, final fee statement or fraudulent application.

Statement of Understanding and Compliance Agreement:

- a. I fully understand the directives outlined herein and in Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Policy-0100 and my responsibilities for participation in the Michigan National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program.

Printed Name, Rank

Service Member Signature

Date

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