

# CHAPTER 10

## Education and Training Voucher Program

Established in 2004, the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program is a federally funded program to provide postsecondary education and training opportunities to students who are currently or who have been in foster care. Recipients must make satisfactory academic progress to receive awards. Awards are prorated for students enrolling less than full-time.

### A. ELIGIBILITY

#### 1. College/University

Colleges/universities must meet the definition of ‘institution of higher education’ as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Colleges/universities may be located outside of Iowa.

#### 2. Student

To receive ETV, a student must have met one of the following criteria:

- In a licensed foster care placement under a court order as described in Iowa Code chapter 232 under the care and custody of the Department of Human Services or Juvenile Court Services on the date the youth reached the age of 18 or during the 30 calendar days before or after that date
- Under court order under Iowa Code chapter 232 to live with a relative or other suitable person on the date the youth reached the age of 18 or during the 30 calendar days before or after that date
- In a licensed foster care placement under an order entered under Iowa Code chapter 232 prior to being legally adopted after reaching the age of 16
- In a court-ordered Subsidized Guardianship after the age of 16

In addition, the student must:

- Enroll or plan to enroll at an eligible college/university
- Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with a calculated Student Aid Index (SAI) by December 1, 2024
- Complete the Iowa Financial Aid Application (IFAA) on or before December 1, 2024

## **B. STUDENT APPLICATION PROCESS**

Students must file both the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Iowa Financial Aid Application (IFAA) to be eligible to receive ETV. Students must apply each year to be considered for an award.

## **C. SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS**

Awards will be made to returning students who have been continuously enrolled, followed by returning students who have received ETV in the past. Once those students have been awarded, new students will be awarded. If all eligible students cannot be funded by July 1, priority will be given to undergraduate students in date-received order. If all undergraduate students have been funded by July 1, graduate students will be awarded in date-received order.

Once all funds have been committed for an academic year, any additional applicants will be added to a waiting list based on the priority group and the date and time their application was completed.

Iowa college/university officials can access a designated roster of eligible ETV recipients by logging into the Iowa College Aid Processing System (ICAPS®) and clicking on Rosters. Only students on the ETV 'Designated' roster can receive an ETV payment. College/university officials should use the awarding instructions in this chapter in conjunction with general guidance in Chapters 1-3 to award ETV.

Eligibility for assistance under this program ends when the student reaches the age of 26. If the student reaches age 26 by July 1 prior to the academic year for which they have applied for ETV funding, that student will not be eligible for that academic year.

## **D. AWARDING**

All ETV recipients are eligible to receive awards of up to \$5,000 per year based on his/her enrollment status. Students enrolled less than full-time can receive prorated ETV awards. These awards are not need-based; the award can cover a student's Student Aid Index (SAI).

Students are eligible to receive ETV in the summer term, as long as the maximum award has not been exhausted during the preceding academic year. Summer award amounts will mirror the proration schedule below, but the student cannot receive more than \$5,000 in ETV funds over the course of the preceding academic year and summer.

### ETV Maximum Award

Enrollment Level	Credits	Semester Award	Quarter Award
Full-time (F)	12+	\$2,500	\$1,667
Three-quarter time (P)	11	\$2,300	\$1,533
	10	\$2,075	\$1,383
	9	\$1,875	\$1,250
Half-time (H)	8	\$1,675	\$1,117
	7	\$1,450	\$ 967
	6	\$1,250	\$ 833
Less-than-half-time (L)	5	\$1,050	\$ 700
	4	\$ 825	\$ 550
	3	\$ 625	\$ 417

Payments are disbursed on a per term basis and may be used by college/university officials to pay tuition, fees, books and food and housing charges. If credit balances remain after charges are paid, college/university officials may refund credit balances to students. Students must use the proceeds for other bona fide education expenses such as books, equipment, and transportation.

#### **E. AWARD OFFERS**

Iowa Department of Education's Bureau of Iowa College Aid (Iowa College Aid) will notify ETV recipients of their eligibility. Colleges/Universities will be notified with an initial ETV Designated roster, and will receive additional notifications when students are added to the ETV Designated roster.

#### **F. RENEWAL AND LIFETIME ELIGIBILITY**

Students must complete and file an annual FAFSA and IFAA for ETV by the deadline established by Iowa College Aid. If funds remain available after the application deadline, Iowa College Aid will continue to accept applications. To be eligible for a renewal award, a student must maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the college/university (verified by college/university administrators).

Students can be funded until the age of 26 or until the student meets his or her maximum limit of 5 years, whichever comes first. A year is counted if there is at least \$1 paid in that academic year.

## **G. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS**

Chapter 3 provides a complete description of the payment process. ETV is a non-need-based program and payments may be applied to any expense within the student's cost of attendance.

## **H. CHANGES/CORRECTIONS**

Any changes in awards must be provided to Iowa College Aid electronically via ICAPS by the reporting deadlines established in Chapter 3 of the Iowa Student Financial Aid Guide.

## **I. VERIFICATION/COMPLIANCE**

College/University officials are responsible for completing required federal verification procedures and for coordinating all aid to ensure that all aid awarded, in conjunction with ETV, is within the college/university cost of attendance.

For students selected for federal verification, one disbursement of Iowa College Aid-administered student financial aid may be made prior to completing the verification process as long as college/university officials have no reason to believe application information is inaccurate. If students become ineligible for aid due to verification activities, refunds must be made to Iowa College Aid-administered programs.

## **J. ADDITIONAL OUT-OF-STATE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY COMPLIANCE**

### **1. Responsibilities**

Financial aid administrators overseeing Iowa College Aid-administered student financial aid programs are responsible for:

- Reviewing applicant information for accuracy, completeness, and reasonableness
- Clarifying questionable information and documenting resolutions
- Documenting changes in SAIs

- Resolving discrepancies between application information on need analysis reports and verification documentation
- Updating and correcting applicant information electronically through the CPS or by requesting that students resubmit SARs with corrected information
- Providing award information to students
- Ensuring that enrollment verification forms accurately reflect the student's enrollment in specified terms
- Ensuring scholarship payments from Iowa College Aid accurately reflect the college/university disbursements made throughout the academic year
- Ensuring overpayments are refunded to Iowa College Aid in accordance with the overpayment procedures, as detailed later in this chapter

## 2. Calculating Refunds and Refund Procedures

If a student withdraws before the end of a term after receiving state financial aid payments, the percentage calculated under the college/university's formula for return of funds to the student must be used to calculate the state refund amounts. For example: If, when using the college/university's refund policy, officials determine that a 20 percent refund is required, then 20 percent of ETV must be refunded.

When ETV must be returned, refunds must be made within 30 days of the date that college/university officials learn that funds must be returned. The refund must be accompanied by a list including each student's name, the amount of the individual refund, and the applicable award period (academic year). Refunds should be sent to the following address.

Iowa Department of Education  
Bureau of Iowa College Aid  
400 E 14th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

College/university officials may round down all refunds to the whole dollar amount. Examples: \$625.30 may be rounded down to \$625.00; \$785.97 may be rounded down to \$785.00.

## 3. Overpayment Procedures

Students determined to have been ineligible for ETV due to student error or fraud, such as understating family income, must repay all funds. When college/university officials determine that students owe repayments, they must:

- Immediately cancel future financial aid payments for ETV

- Notify Iowa College Aid of the cancellation
- Consider the students ineligible for ETV until repayment is complete or satisfactory repayment arrangements have been made with, and confirmed by, Iowa College Aid

Iowa College Aid staff will determine and oversee any further action.

#### **4. Maintenance of Individual Student Records**

Individual student records must be maintained by college/university officials for all students who receive ETV. These records, which are generally located in the financial aid office, must include:

- Aid application need analysis reports
- Documentation for any adjustments to students' records
- Award offers (or copies)
- Verification of each student's enrollment and satisfactory academic progress
- Resolved verification requests
- Withdrawal and refund information
- Items listed under the section titled "Recordkeeping and Disclosure" in The Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook

All student financial aid records must reconcile with student accounting records and must include documentation for any changes to the initial award amounts.

Verification of information is required by Iowa College Aid for all students for whom verification is required by the federal Department of Education.

Accounting records and individual students' records are to be retained for three years from the end of the award year in which students last attended the college/university where funds were paid or until any audit questions have been resolved.