



Tuition Assistance Policy

Policy No. 545

Policy

Financial assistance is available to Head Start/Migrant Seasonal Head Start teachers in lead and assistant levels, and to Early Head Start Home Visitors that are enrolled in the Stackable Certificates college program, aligned with the Washington State Career Lattice, or enrolled in an approved AA or BA program for attainment of an education degree that complies with Head Start requirements for teaching staff.

Family Advocates will be eligible for assistance if enrolled in a certified program that meets the Head Start Performance Standards.

Coaches and Managers may be eligible for assistance to meet required Performance Standards.

Procedure 545-P

Financial assistance will be provided as available on a limited basis (according to the ESD 105 Tuition Assistance Rubric) for staff members working on their Professional Development Plans or working toward an approved degree from an accredited College or University. Employees seeking financial assistance from Head Start must first try to get financial assistance through the College or University. See the following expectations:

1. Assistance will be provided for staff to obtain initial stackable certification and required short certificates of specialization. Staff will receive assistance one time only for the stackable certificates.
2. For all other degree's or credentials staff must:
 - a. Apply for Financial Aid through the FAFSA form.
 - b. Meet with a college advisor to determine financial aid and scholarship options and develop a course plan for degree completion.
 - c. Apply for all eligible funding through Early Achievers Scholarships.
 - d. Staff can complete the ESD 105 scholarship application and submit to EPIC Human Resources no later than the deadlines set by ESD 105.
 - i. Scholarships will be awarded based on need and available funds.
 - ii. Scholarships will be reviewed by a panel of at least 3 individuals.
 - iii. Scholarships will be awarded to eligible staff who must agree to conditions.
 - iv. Teachers (Leads and Assistants) and Family Advocates will receive priority status for scholarship awards.

The employee must agree to the following conditions:

1. Three years of continued employment upon the completion of a degree. If this condition is not met, the employee must *repay the total or a prorated amount of financial assistance received based on the length of service completed after receiving the degree or certificate. (See Head Start Act, Section 648A (6)(A)(B))*
 2. Repay (via payroll deduction) all fees lost due to withdrawal from course or voluntarily leaving the Head Start position at the Partner Agency or at ESD 105.
 3. Repay (via payroll deduction) all fees for courses where a grade of a C or above is not attained.
 4. Provide the EPIC Human Resources Director with an official grade report within 30 days of completion of each funded course.
 5. Return all textbooks and course materials (if) purchased by program at the completion of all funded courses.
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ESD 105 Teach Tuition Assistance Rubric:

| Position | Director(s), Content Specialist and Coaches | Lead Teacher/EHS Home Visitor | Classroom Assistant | | Family Advocates | |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| Washington State Stackable Certificates | | | Initial Stackable Certificate and, if required, Short Certificate of Specialization | | | |
| Family Services Staff | | | | | Credential's/certification In social work, human services, family services, counseling or related field. | Staff hired after November 7, 2016 must obtain certificate within 18 months of hire date. |
| Progress toward AA Degree | | 60 + credits completed toward AA/ECE | Quarters 45 + credits completed toward AA/ECE | 0-45 credits completed toward AA-ECE | Credits completed toward AA in other content area | No college courses completed |
| Progress toward BA | | 120+ credits completed toward BA-ECE | 90-135 credits toward BA-ECE | AA-ECE or first two years of BA- ECE completed | Credits completed in other content area; no BA completion or BA in other field | No college courses completed |
| BA/BS Degree | Must have BA/BS degree according to Performance Standards | | | | | |
| Six months employment with ESD 105 or Partner Agency | | Yes | | | | No |
| Employee in Good Standing (no performance plan, correction plan or probationary status) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | |

CJ/HR Dept. 12/1/16

Approved by Policy Council: 4/11/19

Approved by Board of Directors: 5/28/19

Head Start Act:

Head Start Performance Standards: