

# Tribal Scholarship Program



## Policies & Procedures

Revision date: 10/2023

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Tribal Scholarship Program  
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**MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS  
TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM  
REVISED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Table of Contents	Page(s)
Tribal Scholarship/Higher Education Program Staff	2
Deadline Dates	3
A. Purpose	4
B. Objectives	4
C. Eligibility Requirements	4-5
D. Application Procedure	6-8
E. Incomplete files or applications	8
F. Satisfactory Academic Progress	8
G. Probation	9
H. Suspension	9
I. Assistance Provided	10-11
J. Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment	11-12
K. Higher Education Funding	12
L. Graduation Incentive	13
M. Computers	13-14
N. Exceptions and Exclusions	14-16
O. Appeal Process	16-17
P. Student Rights and Responsibilities	17-18
Q. Additional Student Responsibilities	18-20
R. Living Expenses	20-21
S. Student Loans	21-22
T. Refunds	22
U. Definitions	22-24
Appendices	25
Resolution CHO 06-076	26-27
Resolution CHO 13-057	28
Resolution CHO 22-091	29
Resolution CHO 24-038	30
Verification of Receipt of Tribal Scholarship Policies	31

## **Tribal Scholarship/Higher Education Program Staff**

The Tribal Scholarship Program staff makes all efforts possible to keep an effective line of communication open between students and staff members. Students are encouraged to contact the staff members listed below for assistance concerning scholarship matters or other information needed in their college endeavors.

Tribal Scholarship Program Staff		
Name	Job Title	Email
Melinda M. Ben	Director	<a href="mailto:Melinda.Ben@choctaw.org">Melinda.Ben@choctaw.org</a>
Samuel York	Administrative Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Samuel.York@choctaw.org">Samuel.York@choctaw.org</a>
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Eva Frazier	Accounts Payable/Data Entry Clerk	<a href="mailto:Ecsam@choctaw.org">Ecsam@choctaw.org</a>
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### Tribal Scholarship Program Contact Information

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Email: [Scholarship.Program@choctaw.org](mailto:Scholarship.Program@choctaw.org)

## Electronic Application and All Supporting Documents

### Deadline Dates

<u>Term</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Fall Semester/Quarter/Trimester	May 31
Winter/Spring/Quarter/Trimester	October 31
Summer	March 31

*\*In the event that any document cannot be submitted by the deadlines, because of reasons beyond the student's control (grades, schedules, financial aid package form), the student will be allowed to submit the documents as soon as they are available to them.*

## **MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

### **REVISED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

#### **A. Purpose**

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) has consistently placed education as a high priority and emphasized the importance of increasing the number of students entering and completing postsecondary educational programs. To this purpose, the Tribal Scholarship Program (TSP) was established to provide scholarship funds to eligible tribal members who wish to further their education beyond the secondary level.

#### **B. Objectives**

The objectives of the Tribal Scholarship Program are:

- 1.0 To provide supplemental financial assistance to eligible members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians who are committed to furthering their education by pursuing a defined program of study at a postsecondary educational institution.
- 2.0 To provide coordination with other Tribal Programs and Financial Aid Offices of postsecondary institutions to build the best possible financial aid package for each student.
- 3.0 To counsel and assist tribal members in all their collegiate educational endeavors.
- 4.0 To serve, when necessary, as a student's advocate with the postsecondary educational institution.
- 5.0 To provide career counseling as needed.

#### **C. Eligibility Requirements**

- 1.0 Be an enrolled member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.
- 2.0 Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a postsecondary educational institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency approved by the U.S. Department of Education that is not a for profit proprietary school or business.
- 3.0 Have obtained a regular high school diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED).
- 4.0 Have met the following entrance requirements:

- 4.1 **TSP applicants planning to attend a four year university or two year college must meet ONE of the following entrance requirements and submit one of the following:**
- (a) Minimum composite score of 15 on the ACT, or its equivalent SAT score
  - (b) Minimum composite score of 12 on the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE);
  - (c) Minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on at least 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) of college level core academic classes, including English Composition I with a minimum grade of “C”.
- 4.2 First time applicants, students who have not received assistance for five (5) or more years, and students who do not meet the requirements of Section 4.1 may be provided tuition, fees, and books for up to 24 credit hours of academic courses. These hours must include:
- (a) English Composition I with a minimum grade of “C”
  - (b) Intermediate Algebra
  - (c) Study Skills or other developmental courses as approved by the Tribal Scholarship Program Staff
  - (d) the classes must be taken at a two year college approved by the program.
  - (e) Students must obtain a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on all classes taken to be eligible for full scholarship consideration to attend a community college unless the student submits the minimum required ACT/SAT score to attend a four year college/university.
- 4.3 Copy of collegiate entrance exam score (if given by college/university attending).
- (a) Tests to be considered are, but not limited to Work Keys, ASVAB, Accuplacer.

#### **D. Application Procedure**

- 1.0 First time applicants
  - 1.1 All students will be responsible for ensuring and that all required documents are submitted to the college or university's Financial Aid Office by the school's Financial Aid deadline.
  - 1.2 All students must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each academic year and apply for assistance through the financial aid office of the college or university the student plans to attend.
  - 1.3 A TSP file for first-time applicants will require a Tribal Scholarship Program electronic application that will include the following information:
    - (a) Original Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood
    - (b) Official High School Transcript or official GED transcript  
**\*Transcripts must be mailed/delivered in a sealed envelope from the school, or sent email via official transcript delivery system or authorized school administrator directly to the Tribal Scholarship Program email [Scholarship.Program@choctaw.org](mailto:Scholarship.Program@choctaw.org); faxed, or photocopied transcripts will not be accepted.**
    - (c) Official college transcripts from all colleges attended  
**\*Transcripts must be mailed/delivered in a sealed envelope from the school or sent email via official transcript delivery system directly to the Tribal Scholarship Program email; no faxed or photocopied transcripts will not be accepted.**
    - (d) Copy of acceptance letter from the college/university you plan to attend, or documentation of recent or current enrollment
    - (e) 500 word essay requesting assistance and stating collegiate educational goals and progress toward those goals
    - (f) Copy of FAFSA Report (results of FAFSA)
    - (g) Schedule of classes
    - (h) Copy of ACT, SAT, TABE score, or college entrance exam score
    - (i) TSP Financial Aid Package Form completed by the college or university financial aid office
    - (j) Copy of financial aid award letter
    - (k) Degree plan and expected graduation date
    - (l) New Student Orientation
  - 1.4 Additional Requirements for full-time students not working full time:
    - (a) TSP Financial Aid Package Form completed by the college or university financial aid office
    - (b) Employment Verification Form OR notarized Non-Employment Verification Form (once per academic year unless additional form is requested)
    - (c) Mid-Term grade report will be required for all classes a student is enrolled in.

- (d) These will be required to submit to TSP halfway thru each term enrolled.
- (e) **Students receiving living expense money MUST submit mid-term grades in order to remain eligible for living expense money.**

2.0 Continuing Students

- 2.1 All students will be responsible for ensuring that all required documents are submitted to the college or university's Financial Aid Office by the school's Financial Aid deadline.
  - (a) All students must submit the FAFSA each academic year and apply for assistance through the Financial Aid Office of the college or university the student plans to attend.
  - (b) Students who plan to enroll in vocational or technical programs must apply for assistance with the appropriate tribal programs, such as the MBCI Vocational Education Program and MBCI Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
- 2.2 A Tribal Scholarship Program file for continuing students will require a Tribal Scholarship Program electronic application each new term applying and include:
  - (a) Grade reports immediately following each term
  - (b) Official transcripts will only be required when a student stops attending any college or university i.e. when transferring, after graduation, or if the student sits out for at least 1 academic year.  
**\*Transcripts must be mailed/delivered in a sealed envelope from the school, or sent email via official transcript delivery system directly to the Tribal Scholarship Program email; faxed or photocopied transcripts will not be accepted**
  - (c) Copy of acceptance letter, if transferring to another college
  - (d) 250-word essay stating educational goals and progress toward those goals
  - (e) Copy of FAFSA Student Aid Report (result of FAFSA)
  - (f) Class Schedule
  - (g) Copy of Financial Aid Award Letter
  - (i) Updated degree plan and expected graduation date
- 2.3 Additional Requirements for full-time students not working full-time:
  - (a) TSP Financial Aid Package Form completed by the college or university Financial Aid Office
  - (b) Employment Verification Form OR notarized Non-Employment Verification Form (once per academic year unless additional form is requested)
  - (c) Mid-Term grade report will be required for all classes a student is enrolled in.
  - (d) These will be due halfway thru each term enrolled.
  - (e) **Students receiving living expense money MUST submit mid-term grades to remain eligible for and to receive living expense money.**



3.0 Additional Paperwork

3.1 TSP applicants may be required to submit additional documents not listed above to ensure that a student is awarded the proper amount by the TSP. These may include, but may not be limited to the following:

- (a) Proof of Residence
- (b) Court Order showing guardianship
- (c) Marriage License
- (d) Student Athletic Scholarship Agreements

3.2 This information will only be used to ensure that a student is awarded correctly and will not be used for any other purposes.

**E. Incomplete files or applications**

1.0 Incomplete files or applications (i.e. those without all supporting documents or a completed electronic application received by applicable deadlines) will not be provided financial assistance for the term.

2.0 Students who have met all program and school application deadlines but who are waiting for supporting documents from the educational institution may enroll in classes, but no aid will be provided from the TSP until all supporting documents are received.

**F. Satisfactory Academic Progress**

1.0 Students who are provided TSP funds are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to maintain their eligibility for future TSP funding.

2.0 Students who do not maintain adequate SAP will be placed on probation or suspension.

3.0 In order to meet the tribal standard for SAP, TSP recipients must:

3.1 Maintain a minimum overall Tribal Scholarship Program cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, and

3.2 Additional standards for SAP:

(a) Part-time students must successfully complete all attempted courses up to eleven (11) hours per semester.

(b) Full-time students must successfully complete the minimum number of credit hours required by their school's Financial Aid Office to be classified as a full-time student. This is usually 12 semester hours or its equivalent.

**G. Probation**

- 1.0 Students placed on probation for failure to meet SAP must consult with the TSP staff to gain written approval of course schedules prior to the start of their next term enrolled for any classes to be paid for by the TSP.
- 2.0 Students placed on probation for failure to meet SAP must meet the standards by the end of the following term attempted, or they will be suspended from the TSP.
- 3.0 Students who have had two prior probationary periods and who would otherwise be placed on probation for failing to make satisfactory academic progress in their current term will be suspended from the TSP.
- 4.0 Probation statuses will start over for students continuing their education beyond Undergraduate level.

**H. Suspension**

- 1.0 Students who have been suspended for failure to meet SAP (Section F) must meet the following requirements to be reenrolled in the TSP:
  - 1.1 Complete at least six (6) semester credit hours or the equivalent after their suspension, and the student must pay for the six (6) credit hours of classes
  - 1.2 **Obtain an overall Tribal Scholarship Program cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 grading scale**
  - 1.3 Remain off of the TSP for three years
- 2.0 All students who have been suspended from the program must meet the requirements of Section C, Eligibility Requirements, to be reenrolled in the TSP.
- 3.0 Students who are on suspension are encouraged to apply for other scholarships that may be available to offset the cost of paying for tuition, fees, and other college related expenses out of pocket.
- 4.0 The TSP will assist students in applying for other scholarships.

**I. Assistance Provided**

**1.0 Part-Time Students**

- 1.1 The TSP will provide full tuition, fees, required supplies and required textbooks to the extent that those expenses are not covered by other tribal financial aid sources, employers, federal aid or other scholarships.
- 1.2 No assistance from the TSP will be provided for travel, childcare, recommended textbooks, recommended supplies, desktop supplies, or any other charges associated with part-time classes.
- 1.3 The graduation fee will be provided during the semester the student graduates
- 1.4 Graduation fees will only be paid one time per degree level.

**2.0 Full-time Students**

- 2.1 The amount of assistance awarded to full-time students is based on the information provided to the program by the college's Financial Aid Office as documented on the TSP Financial Aid Package Form.
- 2.2 To be considered a full-time student by the Tribal Scholarship Program, the student must be defined as a full-time student by the college's Financial Aid
- 2.3 Awards for full-time students who also work full-time will be limited to tuition, fees, required supplies and required textbooks.
- 2.4 The Tribal Scholarship Program will use the Financial Aid Package Form to document a student's Cost of Attendance (budget) at the college they will be attending.
  - (a) The Cost of Attendance (COA) is documented on the form by the school's financial aid office, which includes estimated expenses for tuition, fees, books, room and board, travel and miscellaneous/personal items.
  - (b) This is used by the Tribal Scholarship Program to determine scholarship awards for full-time students who are not employed full-time.

**3.0 Repeat Courses**

- 3.1 The Tribal Scholarship Program will pay for only one (1) repeat class and fees in the same subject throughout a student's educational time in the program.
- 3.2 Part-time students will have to pay on their own on the third attempt for the same class and thereafter.
- 3.3 As most colleges/universities have a flat rate cost for full-time students who carry

12 hours or above for tuition and fees, full-time students will be placed on probation on their third attempt for the same class.

- 3.4 Otherwise, the student can take the repeat class in any of these sessions on their own and thereafter or
  - (a) pay the cost of the class to the college/university, or
  - (b) have the cost of the class deducted from their living expense money, and not be placed on probation.

## **J. Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment**

- 1.0 High school students wishing to enroll in dual credit/dual enrollment courses must meet the following requirements:
  - 1.1 Must be a high school Junior or Senior, and
  - 1.2 Have a minimum 3.0 GPA, and
  - 1.3 Have the unconditional recommendation of the high school principal or guidance counselor.
- 2.0 Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment students must apply by TSP electronic application and submit the required documents by the scheduled deadlines.
- 3.0 Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment students must submit all of the required documents as a regular part time TSP applicant **except for the following:**
  - 3.1 Student Aid Report
  - 3.2 Financial Aid Package Form
  - 3.3 Employment form or non-employment form
  - 3.4 Financial Aid Award Letter
  - 3.5 New Student Orientation Quiz
- 4.0 Funding for Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment students is limited to tuition, fees, and required book charges only.
- 5.0 Students interested and eligible to take Technical Dual Credit Programs will be funded tuition, fees, books, and required supplies.
  - 5.1 The eligibility requirements for these students will be based on the minimum eligibility requirements set forth at their college.
  - 5.2 The documents these students must submit will be the same as regular Dual Credit students, except no ACT score will be required.

- 6.0 Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) requirements for Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment students will be calculated in the student's TSP CGPA, however, any CGPA below the 2.0 required minimum will not be counted against the student if the course is taken while the student is still in high school.

**K. Higher Education Funding**

- 1.0 The Tribal Scholarship Program manages a grant from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Higher Education Program Grant (HEP). This funding is used to fund students who meet the following criteria:
- 1.1 at least ¼ MBCI blood;
  - 1.2 must not be enrolled in any other tribe
  - 1.3 live within the boundaries of the MBCI reservation communities
  - 1.4 attend an accredited, not for profit, college/university in the state in which the student is a legal, permanent resident**
  - 1.5 Each semester applying, applicant must complete an electronic application and submit all documents as required in Section D of the TSP Policies and Procedures.
- 2.0 **Eligible applicants will be awarded on a first come first serve basis.**
- 3.0 **Students who live in Mississippi, or Tennessee, but do not live within one of the reservation communities will be considered after applicants who live within one of the MBCI communities are awarded first.**
- 4.0 HEP applicants are awarded in the same manner as TSP applicants and can expect most of the same benefits.
- 5.0 Due to limited funding, there are some exceptions. HEP recipients are not eligible for the following:
- 5.1 Computers
  - 5.2 Graduate Incentive
  - 5.3 Cannot be funded for more than one degree at each level
  - 5.4 Cannot be funded beyond a Bachelor's Degree

**L. Graduation Incentives**

- 1.0 TSP Recipients who graduate from their degree program will be eligible for a graduation incentive award.
- 2.0 Students are only eligible to receive one graduation incentive at each degree level.
- 3.0 Eligible students must apply for the graduation incentive before the end of the fiscal year in which they graduate or forever forfeit the incentive for that degree.
- 4.0 However, the student may be eligible for an incentive for a second degree at the same degree level if an incentive has never been received.
- 5.0 The following graduation incentive award will be issued at each degree level as follows:
  - (a) The graduation incentive award for an Associate in Arts (“AA”) degree is \$250.00.
  - (b) The graduation incentive award for a Bachelor Degree with prior receipt of an AA degree incentive is \$250.00.
  - (c) The graduation incentive award for a Bachelor Degree without receipt of an AA degree incentive is \$500.00.
  - (d) The graduation incentive award for a Graduate Degree is \$250.00.
  - (e) The graduation incentive award for a Post-Graduate Degree is \$250.00.

**M. Computers**

- 1.0 The Tribal Scholarship Program will provide a computer to those students who:
  - 1.1 are enrolled on a full-time basis in the TSP and are not on probation or suspension, and
  - 1.2 have submitted a Computer Request Form with a letter of request, verification of enrollment status, classification and cumulative grade point average.
- 2.0 Eligible TSP recipients will have the option to select either a laptop or desktop computer; however the TSP will select and order standard computers for all students.
- 3.0 Computers provided to Tribal Scholarship Program recipients will become the property of the student when received, and the TSP will have no responsibilities for their support, maintenance, or replacement.

- 4.0 Computers provided to TSP students are considered a gift from the tribe when received by the student.
- 5.0 **Only one computer will be provided per individual student while enrolled as an undergraduate.**
- 6.0 All graduate or post-graduate level students may be eligible to receive **one** computer while enrolled on a less than full time basis, even if the student may have received a computer as an undergraduate.
- 7.0 The TSP will assist TSP recipients who do not have a personal computer to identify public or tribal computer laboratories available for their use.

**N. Exceptions and Exclusions**

- 1.0 The Tribal Scholarship Program will not provide any financial assistance for:
  - 1.1 Students classified below the post-secondary level, except for eligible high school students who are qualified for dual credit/dual enrollment, and meet the requirements in Section J.
  - 1.2 Students attending colleges or universities outside the United States of America or students participating in study abroad. (Students who study abroad as a part of their program of study in a domestic college or university may have their tuition and books paid for by the program.)
  - 1.3 Students enrolled in correspondence courses at any level, unless the student is incarcerated or living abroad. In such cases, courses must be taken from an accredited college/university within the United States.
  - 1.4 Students enrolled in classes that lead to Continuing Education Units (CEUs) only.
  - 1.5 Students participating in seminars, conferences, travel, and professional development activities that do not earn college credit and/or lead to a college degree.
  - 1.6 Registration fees, study guides or review courses for:
    - (a) Entrance exams such as the ACT, SAT, TABE, GRE, MAT, GMAT, MCAT, LSAT, or Professional certification exams, such as the CPA or bar exams, that are not taken within one year of graduation or that are not required for completion of a degree.
    - (b) The TSP will only pay for professional certification exams one time.
    - (c) If a student must re-take any exam, it will be the student's responsibility to pay for it out of their own expenses.
  - 1.7 Students attending proprietary (for-profit) schools.

- 1.8 Repayment of Student Loans.
  - 1.9 College charges that are more than 2 semesters/terms in arrears. (Students are responsible for ensuring that accounts are cleared each semester.)
  - 1.10 Payment to the college/university for any damage to dorm rooms, apartments, or other housing, or for payment for lost college property, or any other fines incurred by the student, such as but not limited to parking fines, etc.
- 2.0 Because of the Tribal Scholarship Programs' rapidly growing number and cost of full-time scholarships, the TSP has established some limits to full-time scholarship awards for living expenses. All students will continue to receive assistance for the costs of tuition, fees, and books whether enrolled on a part-time or full-time status.
- 2.1 Full-time scholarships that include living expenses will be limited to one degree at each level:
    - Vocational or technical certification
    - AA, AS, or AAS degree
    - Bachelor degree
    - Master degree
    - Doctorate or professional degree
  - 2.2 Full-time, undergraduate students who receive living expenses will additionally be limited to 5 semesters of funding with living expenses at a 2 year college.
  - 2.3 This will leave the student with 5 semesters living expenses at a senior college/university.
  - 2.4 Students who begin their collegiate career at a senior college/university will still have 10 semesters undergraduate living expenses, the only exceptions to this is as follows:
    - (a) students will be allowed to exceed 5 semesters with living expense money at a 2 year college if they are actively and successfully, pursuing degrees in teaching or the medical field.
    - (b) students will be allowed to exceed 10 semesters with living expense money if they are actively, and successfully, pursuing undergraduate degrees in teaching or the medical field.
    - (c) The number of semesters eligible for additional living expense money, for students in (a) and (b) will be determined by the students degree plan and availability of funding.
    - (d) Should students in (a) and (b) change their major from teaching or the medical field, they will revert to the original policies of 5 semesters at a 2 year college and 10 at a 4 year college or university.



- 2.5 Scholarships with living expenses will not be provided to students who:
  - (a) Have received a full-time scholarship for more than ten semesters while pursuing a degree at or below the bachelor level, or
  - (b) Have received a full-time scholarship for more than three semesters while pursuing a one-year master's degree.
- 2.6 The Tribal Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians has sole authority to provide a waiver for the TSP to fund a student for a second degree with living expense money, at any level, under extenuating circumstances, and on a case-by-case basis.

**O. Appeal Process**

- 1.0 The Tribal Scholarship Program understands that there may be extenuating circumstances that may prevent a student from successfully completing their classes. The following circumstances may be considered for an appeal if the proper documentation is submitted to the TSP for approval:
  - 1.1 Unexpected illness or injury of the student, or their immediate family\* if the student is caring for that family member, or
  - 1.2 Military Deployment, or
  - 1.3 Other Catastrophic Event
- 2.0 The following documents must be submitted to the TSP if seeking an appeal:
  - 2.1 TSP Appeal Form, and
  - 2.2 One-page typed and signed letter requesting the appeal, stating the circumstances that led to the unsuccessful completion of classes plan to successfully complete program of study if appeal is granted, and
  - 2.3 Any documentation that supports the information in the appeal (such as medical notes, doctor's statements, confirmation of military orders, etc.)
- 3.0 Appeals must be submitted to the TSP within 6 months of notice of probation or suspension.
  - 3.1 The student will still be responsible for submitting a completed TSP application by the posted deadlines even if they have not received notice of an appeal approval.
  - 3.2 In cases of military deployment, the student will be allowed to submit an appeal at the end of their deployment.
- 4.0 Appeals will be reviewed and approved or disapproved, by the Tribal Scholarship

Director, Tribal Administration Director, and the Tribal Chief.

4.1 Appeals will not be reviewed if all documentation is not provided.

4.2 The student will be notified in writing of the decision within 2-3 weeks of submission of a completed appeal.

5.0 In addition, students are limited to one appeal per Academic Year.

5.1 Multiple appeals by one student may be considered on a case by case basis.

\*For TSP purposes Immediate Family is defined as parents, siblings, spouse, and children

**P. Student Rights and Responsibilities**

1.0 Student Files

1.1 TSP recipients have the right to inspect and review information contained in their permanent files.

1.2 Students may submit a signed request for copies of documents in their files for themselves, other tribal programs, and/or other agencies.

2.0 Student Awards

2.1 TSP recipients have the right to be fully informed of the procedures used in computing TSP awards.

2.2 TSP recipients have the right to possess a copy of any and all documents used in their award calculation, and may submit a signed request for copies of their award calculation documents if needed for themselves, other tribal programs, and/or other agencies.

3.0 Confidentiality

3.1 In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, TSP recipients have the right to expect confidentiality regarding financial, academic, and personal information, grades, and other information obtained by the TSP staff.

3.2 No information will be released on any student unless the student provides written notice of how any information should be released to a third party.

3.3 The only exceptions to this would be to students under the age of 18, a court order, or information being used for award purposes and only to TSP Staff, college/university staff, MBCI Finance Office, MBCI Director of Education, MBCI Director of Administration, and MBCI Tribal Chief.

- 4.0 Policies
  - 4.1 TSP recipients have the right to possess a copy of the official TSP Policies and Procedures which have been approved by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Tribal Council.
- 5.0 Fairness
  - 5.1 TSP recipients have the right to be treated with fairness and courtesy in all matters by the TSP staff.
- 6.0 Counseling
  - 6.1 TSP recipients have the right to expect TSP staff members to provide pre-college counseling, and counseling while enrolled in college, which includes, but is not limited to, career counseling.

**Q. Additional Student Responsibilities**

- 1.0 Contact Information
  - 1.1 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to make sure their contact information stays current with the TSP office. This includes, but is not limited to,
    - (a) phone numbers
    - (b) mailing address
    - (c) email
- 2.0 Electronic Application and Supporting Documents
  - 2.1 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to submit a TSP electronic application and supporting documents prior to established deadlines.
  - 2.2 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to submit an application and all required documents to the educational institution they plan to attend.
  - 2.3 TSP staff members are available to assist the student in obtaining applications and necessary documents, but they will not complete applications for students.
  - 2.4 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to be familiar with all TSP deadline dates.
- 3.0 Attendance
  - 3.1 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to attend classes regularly.
  - 3.2 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to notify a TSP staff member prior to withdrawing from a class or leaving school completely.
  - 3.3 If necessary, it is the responsibility of TSP recipients to contact the appropriate college official to properly withdraw, and submit a copy of withdrawal documentation to the TSP.

4.0 Miscellaneous

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to notify the TSP immediately of changes in any financial aid, e.g. Pell Grant or loans awarded, after their Financial Aid Package Form has been submitted to the TSP by the college.
- 4.2 All students must understand that TSP funding is supplemental, and only covers what other financial aid does not.
- 4.3 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to thoroughly study, become familiar with, and abide by the official Tribal Scholarship Program Policies and Procedures.

5.0 Student Conduct

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of all TSP recipients to adhere to school policies and regulations, and to conduct themselves in a manner becoming of a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.
- 5.2 TSP recipients are not only representatives of the TSP itself, they are also representatives of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and their peers.
- 5.3 Should a TSP recipient be involved in any type of trouble, on or off campus, the TSP will uphold any disciplinary actions implemented by the college, university, or local policing agency.
- 5.4 It is the students' responsibility to learn and understand the rules and laws of the school they are attending and the area in which they are attending school.
- 5.5 Disciplinary action within the TSP for student conduct will be handled on a case by case basis and in accordance with approved TSP Policies and Procedures.

6.0 Counseling

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to make regular contact with a TSP staff member.
- 6.2 This will ensure that the staff is informed of each student's progress towards his/her degree and enable staff members to better assist students with any problems that may arise during the school year.
- 6.3 TSP staff members can be easily contacted by telephone and/or email, with email being the preferred method of communication.
- 6.4 Students are expected to contact the office on a regular basis so that staff members are updated on their progress.
- 6.5 As time allows, staff members will make campus visits to colleges and universities.

(a) Therefore, students must ensure that their mailing address, email address and phone numbers are always current.

(b) This will enable the TSP to notify them of possible visits.

7.0 State Student Financial Aid

7.1 Every undergraduate TSP applicant is required to apply for at least one of the various grants/scholarships available from the state in which they reside. For example: (a)Mississippi residents can apply for one of the following: the Higher Education Legislative Plan for Needy Students (HELP), Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant (MESG), Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers and Firemen Scholarship Program (LAWIFIRE), and the Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG). Applications can be found online at [www.msfinancialaid.org](http://www.msfinancialaid.org).

7.2 Students who attend college in other states must also apply for similar scholarships in their individual states. Each college/university Financial Aid Office should have the necessary information on how to apply for these.

8.0 Final Transcript

8.1 It is the responsibility of TSP recipients to provide a final transcript to the TSP for each degree received.

8.2 The student MUST request that the college/university forward to the TSP an official transcript documenting the degree received, the student's major and the date the degree was received.

**R. Living Expenses**

1.0 Full-time students who do not work full-time may qualify for living expense money each semester.

2.0 The amount, if any, is determined by the award process described below in this section 11.0-13.0.

3.0 The Cost of Attendance (COA) that every school establishes will include tuition, fees, books, room and board, travel, and miscellaneous expenses.

4.0 The TSP tries to ensure that all students receive the total COA, whether the funds are awarded fully through financial aid, the TSP, or a combination of both.

5.0 The portion of the COA that is not used for direct charges at the school will be given to the student.

6.0 Depending on the school the student attends, and the sources of all funds received, funds may be given to the student by the school instead of the TSP.

- 7.0 Students who receive living expense money are allowed to work part-time.
- 8.0 However, if a student begins work full-time, they must let the TSP know as soon as possible, as they will no longer be eligible for living expense money.
- 9.0 Additionally, to continue to receive living expense money, students must be enrolled full-time throughout the semester. \*TSP may request verification of full-time enrollment at any time during the semester prior to month of disbursement.
- 10.0 If the TSP is notified that a student is a full-time employee, or not enrolled on a full-time basis, yet continues to receive living expense money, the student will be considered over-awarded and made to repay the TSP for any over-awarded living expenses received.
- 11.0 The TSP will never award an amount greater than the student's COA because
  - 11.1 There is a definite process for determining scholarship awards, and
  - 11.2 Regulations that govern federal student financial assistance programs require that the amount of assistance the student receives from all sources does not exceed the COA, as defined by the school's Financial Aid Office.
- 12.0 There may be instances that a college/university may not, or will not submit the entire COA to the TSP.
  - 12.1 In these cases the TSP may increase a student's COA, however, this will only be done on a case by case basis as needed.
- 13.0 Should a student receive money from other sources, (such as loans, grants, or other scholarships) that cause them to have aid in excess of the COA, without notifying the TSP, they will then be considered over-awarded and made to repay the TSP the over-awarded amount.
- 14.0 Students are awarded living expense money on a monthly basis per TSP staff approval and full-time enrollment verification.
- 15.0 The living expenses will be disbursed through a check that will be mailed to the student, or deposited into bank accounts of students.

**S. Student Loans**

- 1.0 All TSP recipients who accept student loans must notify the TSP that they have been awarded federal, subsidized or unsubsidized student loans, especially students who are awarded student loans after the TSP has received a completed Financial Aid Package Form and/or an invoice from the school.

- 2.0 As loans are considered financial aid, the amount of any student loan received will be deducted from a student's TSP award.
- 3.0 Any student who accepts any form of student loan(s) during the term in which they have applied with TSP will not be funded or awarded through TSP during that term.
- 4.0 TSP WILL NOT PAY FOR ANY STUDENT LOANS OR LOAN BALANCES
- 5.0 Private student loans may be excluded.

**T. Refunds**

- 1.0 TSP recipients may or may not receive a refund from the school they are attending.
- 2.0 **TSP recipients should always notify the TSP staff when they receive a refund from the college/university they are attending to make sure they are able to keep the refund.**
- 3.0 **If any student is refunded any financial aid before the TSP pays any charges to the school, the amount refunded will be deducted from the amount on the invoice and the student will be responsible for paying the remaining balance to the school.**

**U. Definitions**

The following terms are used throughout the TSP Policies and Procedures Manual:

Accredited School An educational institution in any state that has been certified as meeting a set of standards by their regional accreditation association.

Attempted Courses For purposes of determining a student's satisfactory academic progress, all courses that appear on the student's transcripts are considered Attempted Courses with the exception of (1) those courses in which the student was enrolled by institutional error and (2) all courses which have been approved for 'Academic Forgiveness' by the college. Courses in which the student receives a grade of W, WP, WF, and I are considered Attempted Courses except in the case of 'Academic Forgiveness' as stated above. Courses that carry Pass/Fail or Credit/No-Credit grades are considered Attempted Courses, but are not used in the Grade Point Average calculation.

Core Academic Courses Core academic courses refer to those courses in the areas of English, mathematics, science, social science, and oral communication that are generally required in the first two years of a university or college program, such as English Composition I & II, literature courses, College Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics.

Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) An average of all course work completed at all postsecondary institutions, which is computed by dividing the total number of quality points, earned at all postsecondary institutions by the total number of hours attempted at all postsecondary institutions. For courses that are repeated, the student's most recent grade will be used in calculating the cumulative grade point average.

Degree Plan A documented sequence of courses, usually listed in the official catalog of any given college that represents the requirements for a major. Some universities allow the student and his/her advisor to tailor a program of study to meet the specific needs and interests of the student.

Dual Credit Eligible high school students taking college courses while in high school, and simultaneously earn college credit and high school credit for the courses.

Dual Enrollment Involves a student being enrolled concurrently in two different academic programs or institutions. Primarily this refers to high school students taking college courses while they are still enrolled in high school. The student may earn credit at one or both institutions in which they are enrolled.

Financial Aid Package Form A needs analysis form which provides documentation of an individual student's college budget, resources and financial aid.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) A form required by the US government for application to any federal education aid program. The FAFSA is used to determine the specific Federal Student Aid programs (Pell, loans, etc.) that a student is eligible for and how much they can be awarded.

Full-time student A student who is enrolled in a minimum number of credit hours defined by an educational institution to be full-time status. Generally this is 12 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) for undergraduate students and 9 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) for graduate students. To be considered a full-time student by the TSP, the student must be a full-time student as defined by the Financial Aid Office at one educational institution. Example: an undergraduate student who is enrolled in 9 hours at one institution and 3 hours at another institution cannot be defined by the Financial Aid Office by either institution as full-time, unless there is a Memorandum of Understanding between the two schools.

Living Expenses Living expenses may include estimates for off-campus housing, meals, travel and other miscellaneous personal items included in the school's Title IV Cost of Attendance.

Part-time student A student who is enrolled in less than the minimum number of credit hours required to be considered fulltime. Generally this is less than 12 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) for undergraduate students and less than 9 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) for graduate students.



Post-Secondary Educational opportunities beyond the high school and GED level.

Probation A one semester trial period following a semester in which a student failed to meet the tribal standard for satisfactory academic progress.

Proprietary School Proprietary Schools are for-profit businesses that provide education and training. They may be privately owned, a partnership or a corporation.

Regional Accrediting Agencies the United States Secretary of Education is required by law to publish a list of recognized accrediting agencies that the Secretary determines to be reliable authorities as to the quality of education or training provided by the institutions of higher education and the higher education programs they accredit. Tribal Scholarship students may choose to attend colleges that are accredited by the following Regional Accrediting Organizations which are recognized by the United States Secretary of Education:

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Middle States Commission on Higher Education  
New England Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Institutions of Higher Education  
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools the Higher Learning Commission  
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities  
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges  
Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities

Satisfactory Academic Progress Maintenance of the equivalent of a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 grading scale, and the required completion of attempted course work each semester as defined by Part F, Section 3.0.

Student Aid Report A report that summarizes the information provided by a student on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Suspension Ineligibility for assistance for a specific period of time.

Title IV Cost of Attendance Established by each individual postsecondary educational institution, the Title IV Cost of Attendance (COA) is the total amount it should cost a student to attend that institution and is usually expressed as an academic year figure (Fall, Winter, Spring). The Cost of Attendance covers tuition, fees, housing, meals, books, supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous expenses. This is the maximum budget that the Financial Aid Office at any particular school uses to award all types of financial aid. Additionally, most schools establish a separate COA for students who reside 'On-Campus', 'Off-Campus' (self-supporting), and 'With Parents' which means that budgets may vary for students at the same institution.

# Appendices

MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

RESOLUTION CHO 06-076

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AND ADOPT THE TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM  
REVISED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

WHEREAS, the Revised Constitution and Bylaws of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Article VIII empowers the Tribal Council to establish procedures for the conduct of all tribal government and business operations; and

WHEREAS, the tribe has operated the tribally funded scholarship program since 1995; and

WHEREAS, over the past ten years, the program has provided scholarships to more than 1,500 enrolled tribal members; and

WHEREAS, the program has provided a good opportunity for tribal members to improve their quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the program has expanded rapidly over the past several years, but has operated under the same basic policies for ten years, and

WHEREAS, several areas have been identified in which the program policies could be improved to both assure a greater rate of success for tribal scholarship participants and to provide for a more efficient use of tribal funds; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Tribal Council does hereby adopt the attached Tribal Scholarship Program Revised Policies and Procedures, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the attached Tribal Scholarship Program Revised Policies and Procedures will be in effect beginning with the Fall 2006 academic term; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Tribal Council does hereby phase in the implementation of new standards as follows:

1. The entrance requirements described in Section C under items 4.0, 4.1, and 4.2 will become effective for student entering or reentering the program after January 1, 2007; and
2. The recording of credit hours attempted and completed for the purposes of measuring

compliance with the new standard for determining Satisfactory Academic Progress as described in Section E.2.2 will begin with classes enrolled in for the Fall 2006 semester; and

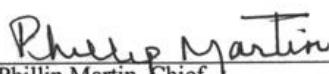
3. All students enrolled in the program for the Fall 2006 academic term will remain eligible for program services unless suspended in accordance with Section G of the Revised Policies and Procedures with the exception of scholarships for full-time living expenses which will be limited for students based upon their classification as follows:
  - a. Freshman      Ten Semesters
  - b. Sophomore    Eight Semesters
  - c. Junior          Six Semesters
  - d. Senior          Four Semesters

#### CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, as Secretary-Treasurer of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, certify that the Tribal Council of said Band is composed of 16 members, 16 of whom, constituting a quorum, were present at a Regular Tribal Council Meeting thereof, duly called, noticed, convened, and held this 11<sup>th</sup> day of April 2006; and that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by a vote of 13 members in favor, 3 opposed, and 0 abstaining.

Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2005.

ATTEST:

  
Phillip Martin, Chief

  
Phyllis J. Anderson, Secretary-Treasurer

MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

RESOLUTION CHO 13-057

A RESOLUTION TO REVISE THE TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP POLICY MANUAL

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council is authorized by Article VIII Section 1(c) of the Revised Constitution and Bylaws of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians "to establish procedures for the conduct of all tribal government and business operations"; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Scholarship Policy Manual has been previously approved through resolutions CHO 06-076 and CHO 11-054; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Education Administration and Tribal Scholarship Program staff have identified areas requiring revision in the current policy manual; and

WHEREAS, the recommended changes are attached to this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Education Committee has reviewed and recommends to the Tribal Council for approval the recommended changes; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Tribal Council does hereby revise the Tribal Scholarship Policy Manual to reflect the recommended changes forwarded from the Education Committee and approves the Tribal Scholarship Policy Manual as attached; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the effective date of these changes to the Tribal Scholarship Policy Manual shall be upon the adoption of this resolution.

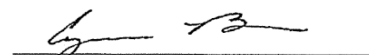
CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, as Secretary-Treasurer of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, certify that the Tribal Council of said Band is composed of 17 members, 16 of whom, constituting a quorum, were present at a Special Call meeting thereof, duly called, noticed, convened and held this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February 2013; and that the foregoing Resolution was duly Adopted by a vote of 16 members in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstaining.

Dated this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February 2013.

ATTEST:

  
Phylliss J. Anderson, Tribal Chief

  
Cyrus Ben, Secretary-Treasurer

MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

RESOLUTION CHO 22-091

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS'  
TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM REVISED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

WHEREAS, Section 1, Subsection (c) of Article VIII of the Revised Constitution and Bylaws of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians ("MBCI" or the "Tribe") empowers the Tribal Council to establish procedures for the conduct of all tribal government and business operations; and

WHEREAS, the Tribe has operated the tribally funded Tribal Scholarship Program since 1995; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Scholarship Program has identified areas requiring revisions to the current Tribal Scholarship Program Policies and Procedures; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Scholarship Program Policies and Procedures were last amended and approved through Resolutions CHO 06-076, CHO 11-054 and CHO 13-057; and

WHEREAS, the revised Tribal Scholarship Program Policies and Procedures are attached hereto as Exhibit "A"; and

WHEREAS, the Chairman of the Education Committee has reviewed this Resolution and is recommended to be forwarded to the Tribal Council for approval; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Tribal Council does hereby approve the revised Tribal Scholarship Program Policies and Procedures attached hereto as Exhibit "A"; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Tribal Scholarship Program Policies and Procedures shall become effective upon adoption of this Resolution.

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned as Secretary-Treasurer of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, certify that the Tribal Council of said Band is composed of 17 members, 15 of whom, constituting a quorum were present at a Special Call meeting duly called, noticed, convened and held this the 29<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022; and that the foregoing Resolution was duly Adopted by a vote of 15 members in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

Dated this 29<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022.

ATTEST:

  
Cyrus Ben, Tribal Chief

  
Christopher Eaves, Secretary-Treasurer



MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

RESOLUTION CHO 24-038

A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM'S POLICIES  
AND PROCEDURES

WHEREAS, Section 1, Subsection (c) of Article VIII of the Revised Constitution and Bylaws of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians ("MBCI" or the "Tribe") empowers the Tribal Council to establish procedures for the conduct of all tribal government and business operations, including the regulation of conflicts of interest and nepotism; and

WHEREAS, on November 22, 1994, the Tribal Council adopted Resolution CHO 38-95, which first set aside gaming revenue to fund scholarships for MBCI tribal member college students; and

WHEREAS, on April 11, 2006, the Tribal Council adopted Resolution 06-076, which first adopted policies and procedures for MBCI's Tribal Scholarship Program; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council has amended the Tribal Scholarship Program's policies and procedures through adoption of Resolutions CHO 11-020, CHO 11-054, CHO 13-057, and CHO 22-091; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Scholarship Program is recommending that its policies and procedures be amended as shown on the document attached hereto as Exhibit "A"; and

WHEREAS, the Education Committee has reviewed this Resolution and is recommended to be forwarded to the Tribal Council for approval; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Tribal Council does hereby amend the Tribal Scholarship Program's policies and procedures as shown on the document attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, as Secretary-Treasurer of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, certify that the Tribal Council of said Band is composed of 17 members, 16 of whom, constituting a quorum were present at a Regular Call meeting duly called, noticed, convened and held this the 9<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2024; and that the foregoing Resolution was duly Adopted by a vote of 16 members in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstaining.

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2024.

ATTEST:

  
Cyrus Ben, Tribal Chief

  
Christopher Eaves, Secretary-Treasurer

## Verification of Receipt of Tribal Scholarship Policies

My signature below verifies that I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received and read the Tribal  
(Please Print Name)

Scholarship Policies and Procedures which were adopted by the Tribal Council on January 9, 2024 and amended on October 2023. I understand that it is my responsibility to adhere to each section of the policies and to contact the Tribal Scholarship Program staff if I need clarification of any portion therein.

The Office of the Tribal Chief may request information from the Tribal Scholarship Program solely for the purpose of identifying individuals for recruitment of employment. I further understand that the Office of the Tribal Chief may request the Tribal Scholarship Program to provide the following information only: (1) Name; (2) Degree; (3) Major; and (4) Contact information. No personally identifiable information will be used or shared unless authorized by the student.

I understand that failure to sign, date and return this form to the Tribal Scholarship Office may result in forfeiture of scholarship funding.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Social Security Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature (if student is under age 18)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date