

Policy Number/Title:	3.6.2 Free Tuition and Reduction of Fees
Effective Since:	03/01/2015
Last Revision Approved:	07/30/2025
Responsible Office:	Financial Aid; Enrollment Management and Marketing

1. Scope:

This section is intentionally left blank.

2. Definitions:

This section is intentionally left blank.

3. Policy:

South Carolina provides educational benefits for legal residents of South Carolina as defined below. The cost of any fees, charges, and/or textbooks normally associated with a course remains in effect and must be borne by the student. A request for free tuition or reduction of fees must be submitted during the academic year in which the tuition or fees were incurred. The academic year begins with the fall term and ends with the last summer session. Additional application requirements for approval, or to qualify for free tuition or a reduction of fees, is described below.

SECTION 59-111-10: Scholarship for winner of essay contest sponsored by Governor's Committee on Employment of Physically Handicapped.

Each year the first place winner of the essay contest sponsored by the Governor's Committee on the Employment of the Physically Handicapped shall receive a four-year scholarship from the State-supported institution of his choice, provided he is otherwise qualified. The scholarship shall be granted by the governing body of the particular institution upon certification by the Governor's Committee of the first-place winner and that the winner is in financial need. The scholarship shall provide free tuition and fees, and may be cancelled if a recipient does not maintain general scholastic and conduct standards established by the institution.

HISTORY: 1962 Code Section 22-55; 1960 (51) 2084; 1961 (52) 91.



Section 59-111-20: Free Tuition for certain veterans' children:

A) A child of a wartime veteran, upon application to and approval by the South Carolina Department of Veterans Affairs, may be admitted to any state-supported college, university, or post high school technical education institution free of tuition so long as his work and conduct is satisfactory to the governing body of the institution, if the veteran was a resident of this State at the time of entry into service and during service or has been a resident of this State for at least one year and still resides in this State or, if the veteran is deceased, resided in this State for one year before his death, and provided the veteran served honorably in a branch of the military service of the United States during a war period, as those periods are defined by Section 101 of Title 38 of the United States Code and:

- (1) was killed in action;
- (2) died from other causes while in the service;
- (3) died of disease or disability resulting from service;
- (4) was a prisoner of war as defined by Congress or Presidential proclamation during such war period;
- (5) is permanently and totally disabled, as determined by the Veterans Administration from any cause;
- (6) has been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor;
- (7) is missing in action;
- (8) the applicant is the child of a deceased veteran who qualified under items (4) and (5); or
- (9) has been awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received in combat.

(B) The provisions of this section apply to a child of a veteran who meets the residency requirements of Chapter 112 of this title, is twenty-six years of age or younger, and is pursuing any type of undergraduate degree.

SECTION 59-111-15: Tuition assistance for permanent faculty and staff:

Please see additional information regarding the Employee Educational Assistance Program for Winthrop employees.



SECTION 59-111-110: Tuition not charged children of firemen, law-enforcement officers and government employees totally disabled or killed in line of duty:

No tuition may be charged for a period of four school years by any state-supported college or university or any state-supported vocational or technical school for children of:

(1) firemen, both regularly employed and members of volunteer organized units, organized rescue squad members, members of the Civil Air Patrol, law enforcement officers, or corrections officers, as defined herein, including reserve and auxiliary units of counties or municipalities who become totally disabled or are killed in the line of duty on or after 07/01/1964;

(2) government employees who become totally disabled or are killed in the line of duty while working on state time on or after 07/01/1996, as a result of a criminal act committed against them which constitutes a felony under the laws of this State.

The tuition authorized to be paid by this section applies only to undergraduate courses or curriculum and may be paid for a period not exceeding four years, regardless of the number of state-supported colleges, universities, or state-supported vocational or technical schools the child attends.

Article 5: Free Tuition for Residents Sixty Years of Age:

SECTION 59-111-320: Persons age sixty and over may attend classes without payment of tuition:

State-supported colleges and universities, and institutions under the jurisdiction of the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, are authorized to permit legal residents of South Carolina who have attained the age of sixty to attend classes for credit or noncredit purposes on a space available basis without the required payment of tuition, if these persons meet admission and other standards deemed appropriate by the college, university, or institution, and if these persons do not receive compensation as full-time employees.

SECTION 59-111-310: "Tuition" defined:

As used in this article, "tuition" shall mean the amount charged for registering for a credit hour of instruction and shall not be construed to mean any other fees or charges or costs of textbooks.

SECTION 59-111-360: Proof of eligibility:

The officials of such colleges, universities or institutions charged with administration may



require such proof as they deem necessary to insure that the person applying to the college, university or institution is eligible for the benefits provided by this article.

SECTION 59-111-120: "Fireman" defined:

For the purposes of this article, a fireman shall be defined as any person performing general fire-fighting duties who is either employed by an official State, municipal or county fire department in this State, or is a member of any organized volunteer fire department within this State, whose name has been entered on an official roster of such volunteer organization prior to the time such person is totally disabled or killed in line of duty.

SECTION 59-111-130: "Law-enforcement officer" defined:

For the purposes of this article, a law enforcement officer means a:

(1) person performing law enforcement duties at the request of and under the supervision of an official state, municipal, or county law enforcement agency in South Carolina when the person is totally disabled or killed in the line of duty;

(2) person performing law enforcement duties at the request of and under the supervision of a federal agency when the person is totally disabled or killed in the line of duty if he has been a resident of South Carolina for at least eighteen years. This item applies whether or not the law enforcement officer was disabled or killed in South Carolina or another state.

SECTION 59-111-140: "Corrections officer" defined:

For purposes of this article a corrections officer shall be defined as any person who performs duties of security, control, or discipline over inmates at the request of and under the supervision of any official State, municipal, or county correctional institution and who was performing such duties at the time of his death or total disability.

SECTION 59-111-145: "Government employee" defined:

For the purposes of this article, a government employee means a person who is required to participate in the state retirement system.

SECTION 59-111-150: "State-supported college or university" defined:

For the purposes of this article, a State-supported college or university shall be defined as any two-year or four-year college or university supported by the State of South Carolina, including colleges or universities offering postgraduate or professional courses of study.

SECTION 59-111-160: "Total disability" defined:



For the purposes of this article, total disability shall mean the physical inability to perform work in any gainful occupation, which disability directly results from any injury received in line of duty. In cases of such total disability, the free tuition provided for herein shall be extended only while such fireman or law-enforcement officer continues to be totally disabled.

This article shall not apply to a child or children born after the first year of total disability as herein defined.

SECTION 59-111-180 & SECTION 59-111-370: Penalties for misrepresenting eligibility:

Any applicant who willfully misrepresents his eligibility for the free tuition provided for under this article, or any person who knowingly aids or abets such applicant in misrepresenting his eligibility for such benefits, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars or imprisoned for not less than six months.

Legal resident of South Carolina is defined as those persons who would otherwise be eligible to pay in-state tuition and fees per CHE regulation 62-600, Determination of Rates of Tuition and Fees. At Winthrop University, residency is determined for incoming students by The Office of Admissions. Residency for continuing students is determined by the Office of Records and Registration.

4. Procedures:

Students who believe they qualify for one of the South Carolina educational benefits under Section 59-111-10 should provide a copy of the scholarship notification to the Office of Financial Aid.

Students who believe they qualify for one of the South Carolina educational benefits under Section 59-111-110: Tuition not charged to children of firemen, law-enforcement officers and government employees totally disabled or killed in line of duty, should contact the Office of Financial Aid for a South Carolina Educational Benefit Request Form and then must submit the form and documentation to the Office of Financial Aid before or during the academic year in which the tuition or fees will be incurred. The academic year begins with the fall term and ends with the last summer session. Submission of the South Carolina Educational Benefit Request Form after the academic year has ended and/or incomplete forms will not be considered.

Students who believe they qualify for free tuition under Section 59-111-20: Free Tuition for certain veterans' children must complete and submit an application to the Division of



Veterans’ Affairs. If approved, the Division of Veterans’ Affairs will submit the approval to Winthrop University’s Office of Records & Registration. Approval letters received after the academic year has ended will not be considered. Eligibility for this benefit will continue until the earliest of: the expiration date on the approval letter, the student turns twenty-seven years old, or the student stops pursuing an undergraduate degree.

Permanent staff and faculty who believe they qualify for free tuition under Section 59-111-15 should follow the Employee Educational Assistance Program (EEAP) procedures.

Students who believe they qualify for free tuition under Article 5, Free tuition for Residents Sixty Years of Age, must have reached the age of sixty no later than the first day of class of the term for which free tuition is sought.. Determination for incoming students will be made by the Office of Admissions. Determination for continuing students will be made by Office of Records & Registration.

5. Resources:

South Carolina Code of Laws - Title 59 - Education
<https://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t59c111.php>

Winthrop Human Resources Homepage:
<https://www.winthrop.edu/hr/>

6. History of Revisions:

07/30/2025	Minor Revisions
03/01/2015	Minor Revisions
12/01/2014	Policy first established

7. Approvals:

Responsible Officer Signature/Date:

Vice President/Senior Administrator Signature/Date:

President Signature/Date: