

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

INFORMATION TRANSMITTAL 2023.01

DATE: January 25, 2023

TO: All DCFS and POS Permanency Staff and Supervisors; Adoption Staff and Coordinators; ILO/TLP Program Administrators and Staff

FROM: Marc D. Smith, Director

SUBJECT: 2023 Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Scholarship Program

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this informational transmittal is to announce that the Department is currently accepting applications for the 2023 Department of Children and Family Services Scholarship Program.

The last day that scholarship applications will be accepted is **MARCH 31, 2023**.

Scholarship awards will be announced on **MAY 1, 2023**.

Applicants will be notified by mail of the Scholarship Awards Selection Committee's decision by **May 1, 2023**.

II. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Each year the Department shall select a minimum of 53 students, at least 4 of whom shall be children of veterans, to receive scholarships and fee waivers which will enable them to attend and complete their post-secondary education at a community college, university, or college.¹ Scholarships and fee waivers shall be available to students for at least 5 years, provided they are continuing to work toward graduation.² Scholarship recipients are selected based on their scholastic record, community and extracurricular activities, and general interest in higher education.³



¹ 20 ILCS 505/8(a).

² 20 ICLS 505/8(a).

³ 20 ILCS 505/8(a); 89 Ill. Adm. Code 312.60.

III. SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS⁴

All scholarship recipients, regardless of whether they attend an Illinois community college or university or a private out-of-state college or university, ***shall receive***:

- ✦ ***Monthly grant*** in the amount of \$1506 which is effective the first day of attendance and will terminate at the end of the academic year. Scholarship recipients must utilize the monthly grant towards payment for maintenance and school expenses, including but not limited to room/board/dormitory fees, or travel expenses to/from campus. Monthly grant payments will continue through the summer if the recipient is enrolled in summer school for a minimum of 6 college credit hours or is participating in an approved internship program. Scholarship recipients in DCFS care or aged out of DCFS care can continue to receive monthly grants payments if enrolled in summer school for a minimum of 6 college credit hours, participating in an approved internship program, and/or complete spring term at full-time status with a minimum 2.0 GPA and submit spring grade report and proof of full-time enrollment for the fall semester by June 1.
- ✦ ***One-time start-up grant*** in the amount of \$231 to assist with their initial college living expenses.
- ***Medical card***

For all scholarship recipients, regardless of whether they attend an Illinois community college or university or a private or out-of-state college or university, DCFS ***may pay for required textbooks and supplies*** for scholarship recipients who do not have sufficient resources to purchase the required items.

Only scholarship recipients who attend any community college, university or college maintained by the State of Illinois shall also receive a waiver of tuition and mandatory fees directly from the Illinois university or college. Please note that the Illinois university or college will waive the tuition and mandatory fees for the scholarship recipient and the DCFS Scholarship does not pay for the tuition and mandatory fees. For a list of public community colleges, colleges or universities in Illinois please visit www.ibhe.org/institutions.asp#1 and <http://www2.iccb.org/students/your-college-plan/finding-a-college/illinois-community-colleges/>.

Scholarship recipients who attend private Illinois or out-of-state colleges/universities do not receive tuition and fee waivers from those schools.

⁴ 20 ILCS 505/8(a); 89 Ill. Adm. Code 312.90.

IV. SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS⁵

To be eligible for the DCFS Scholarship:

- 1) Applicants must meet one of the following educational requirements:
 - Earned a high school diploma from an accredited institution, **or**
 - Earned a General Education Development (GED) certificate/diploma **or**
 - Met the state criteria for high school graduation before the start of the school year for which they are applying for the scholarship.
- 2) In addition, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:
 - The Department has court-ordered legal responsibility for the applicant, **or**
 - The applicant aged out of the Department's care at age 18 or older, **or**
 - The applicant who was formerly under care has been adopted or placed in private guardianship.

V. APPLICATION PACKET⁶

Applicants must submit the following documents in one email no later than March 31, 2023:

- A completed CFS 438, DCFS Scholarship Program Student Application (revision date 1/2023);
- Transcript of high school grades or copy of GED;
- College transcript (if attending college);
- Three letters of recommendation from persons unrelated to the applicant; and
- Documentation of the applicant's legal relationship with the Department.

The CFS 438, DCFS Scholarship Program Student Application, may be obtained from:

- The Department website at www2.illinois.gov/dcfs;
- The Department Intranet site (Click on Policy & Rules & Forms link, then forms, then CFS 438);
- Telephone 217 557-2689 (Springfield)
- Email DCFS.Scholarship@illinois.gov

Send completed scholarship application packets to: DCFS.Scholarship@illinois.gov
ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL TO THIS EMAIL ADDRESS AND MUST INCLUDE ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS IN ONE EMAIL.

Applications sent via physical mail will be ineligible for consideration.

Applications must be received via email no later than March 31, 2023. Applications received via email after that date will be ineligible for consideration.

Applications submitted by facsimile will not be eligible for consideration.

Incomplete applications will not be considered and will be returned to the applicant. If time permits, the applicant may resubmit the complete application packet.

⁵ 20 ILCS 505/8(a).

⁶ 89 Ill. Adm. Code 312.50

VI. OTHER FINANCIAL AID

Since the DCFS scholarship does not provide any additional funding, aside from the monthly and start up grant, to cover the full cost of room/board/dormitory and other non-academic fees, students are strongly encouraged to apply for all other possible sources of funding, e.g., education scholarships and grants, student loans, tuition waivers, veterans' educational benefits, and social security. Information concerning any of the above-mentioned sources of educational funding may be obtained from high school counselors, college/university financial aid officers, or via the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC). Students can text their first and last name to 312-761-4611 to request assistance from ISAC.

VII. SERVICE PLANNING AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS⁷

Youth under the care of the Department selected to receive a DCFS scholarship shall have a living arrangement plan established by their caseworker prior to beginning school. Scholarship recipients may not live in a Department funded placement while attending post-secondary school. However, Department funded placements may be available to these youth during extended college breaks. See Procedures 312.70 for further guidance.

Youth who are offered and accept a scholarship board payment are not eligible to also receive a subsidy payment pursuant to an adoption or sub-guardianship subsidy Agreement. A scholarship recipient, "who has an active subsidy Agreement, and their parent or guardian must elect only one payment, either the subsidy payment or scholarship payment." If the scholarship payment is chosen, any payment pursuant to the adoption/sub-guardianship agreement will be suspended while the youth is receiving the scholarship board payment.

VIII. QUESTIONS

Questions concerning the Department of Children and Family Services Scholarship Program may be directed to either of the following OETS offices or to DCFS.Scholarship@illinois.gov.

Springfield 217-557-2689

Please share the attached scholarship program information sheet with all potential scholarship applicants.

⁷ 89 Ill. Adm. Code 312.70.