

**RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE MCGHEE-TULLIS TRIBAL MEMBER  
TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES – EXHIBIT “A”**



Poarch Band of Creek Indians  
McGhee-Tullis  
Tribal Member  
Tuition Assistance Program  
Policy

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## Definitions

1. **Academic Achievement Bonus** means a bonus that may be given to a student who completes a degree with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher. The student must request the award, and this request must be made no later than six (6) months after the date of graduation.
2. **Academic Probation** means the status of a student who has failed to maintain the required minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.
3. **Accredited** means an institution whose standards met the essential requirements for academic excellence according to a recognized governing body for the state in which the educational institution is located, such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).
4. **Certificate Program** means a program that does not culminate in a degree, but allows the holder to practice jobs in certain fields. This does not include continuing education programs, conferences, workshops, or similar types of activities.
5. **Mandatory Fees** mean those costs deemed not optional by the individual school. These will vary among schools and programs.
6. **Non-Traditional Program** means programs that are not eligible for inclusion in the Federal Student Aid Program.
7. **Special Needs Student** means a student who has been diagnosed with a medical, physical, mental, or developmental condition or disability, and whose diagnosis adversely impacts his or her educational progress in a standard school curriculum.
8. **Specialized Tools** means mandatory items which are required according to the course syllabus. Specialized tools are allowed on a reimbursement-only basis. Proper documentation must be submitted to be reimbursed.
9. **Suspension** means the status of a student who has been placed on academic probation, and fails to obtain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 for a second consecutive term. Suspension lasts until the student's cumulative GPA is a minimum of 2.0 without Tribal financial assistance. Students are not eligible to later apply for financial reimbursement to cover this time period.
10. **Traditional Program** means vocational or technical school programs that are eligible for the Federal Student Aid program.
11. **Tribal Member** means an enrolled member of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.
12. **Tribe** means the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

# **Pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Tuition Assistance**

## Pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Tuition Assistance at a glance....

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### Purpose:

To provide assistance with tuition and Mandatory Fees to Tribal Member students attending Pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade private schools, public specialty schools (STEM, Magnet, Arts, etc.), or out-of-district public schools.

### Who is eligible?

Tribal Member students enrolled in Pre-K (4 years old) through 12<sup>th</sup> grade (high school seniors) are eligible.

### What are the limits for this category of the Program?

Eligible Tribal Members may receive up to, but not exceeding, \$20,000 for eligible expenses in this category. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.

### What costs are allowable?

Tuition, books, and Mandatory Fees will be covered by this Program, up to the maximum limits allowed per eligible Tribal Member.

### Can I purchase a computer for a Pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> grade student using tuition assistance funds?

No. Computers for school-aged children are allowed under the Tribe's School Supply Reimbursement Program every four (4) years, and are therefore not permitted under the McGhee-Tullis Tuition Assistance Program.

### What happens when I use all of the allotment?

Once the entire allotment for this category is used by an eligible Tribal Member, the parent or legal guardian will be responsible for paying any remaining costs. Additional Tribal funding cannot be accessed until the student attends college or vocational school.

### How do I participate in this Program?

Parents must submit a completed application for assistance, which may be found on the Tribe's website, <https://www.pci-nsn.gov>, or may be picked up in person at the Tribe's Education Department.

### Who do I contact if I have more questions?

Tribal Member students may contact the Tuition Program Coordinator by calling (251)368-9136, extension 2241.

### Please Note

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The above information is included to give you a general overview of this category within the Program and its limits/benefits. Please read the Policy in its entirety so that you are familiar with all aspects of the Program.

# Pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Tuition Assistance

## **I. Eligibility**

### **A. Student Eligibility**

The following students are eligible for Pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Tuition Assistance:

1. Tribal Members ages 4 and older who are enrolled in an accredited private school;
2. Tribal Members attending a public school in which tuition and/or Mandatory Fees are charged;
3. Tribal Members ages 3-21 who have a special needs diagnosis and are enrolled in an accredited institution, public or private.

### **B. Application**

1. Tribal Members must submit a completed application to the Tribe's Education Department. Applications are available at the Tribe's Education Department and may be printed from the Tribe's website, [www.pci-nsn.gov](http://www.pci-nsn.gov). Upon request, applications may be faxed or mailed.
  - a. Applications will be accepted at any time throughout the year.
  - b. A new application must be filed annually.
  - c. A completed application must be on file to obtain tuition assistance and must be updated annually. A completed application consists of the following:
    - i. Academic progress report;
    - ii. Financial account information from the previous school, if applicable;
    - iii. Behavior and/or disciplinary records.
    - iv. A signed Receipt of Policy Acknowledgment form.

## **II. Eligible Amounts and Distributions**

### **A. Total Eligible Amount**

Each eligible Tribal Member who participates in this Program will have access to up to, but not exceeding, \$20,000 for eligible expenses in this category as identified herein, subject to the limitations of the Program. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.

B. Eligible Expenses

The following expenses are eligible for payment: Tuition, books, and Mandatory Fees. Expenses incurred before an applicant applies and is approved for the Program will not be paid.

C. Distribution

All funds will be paid directly to the school, except reimbursements. Reimbursement requests that meet all requirements of the Tribe's Education Department may be paid directly to the parent/legal guardian.

D. Refunds

If there is a refund of money paid to the parent/legal guardian following the withdrawal of the student, it is the sole responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to ensure that the refunded money is returned to the Tribe's Education Department immediately. Failure to adhere to this Policy will result in the denial of future tuition payments until the account issues are cleared up by the student or parent/legal guardian.

**III. Special Needs Students**

- A. If the parent/legal guardian is applying for assistance based on special needs, written documentation of the student's disability must be provided. This documentation must be obtained from a licensed practitioner in the health care field, or another qualified individual working in private practice or under the direction of the local board of education.
- B. To be approved for assistance with special educational needs, students must be at least three (3) years of age and meet the criteria for special needs to access industry-recognized intervention services. All items needed for assistance with learning will be considered.
- C. The Tribe's Education Director and Community Services Division Director must approve all services under this heading. It is recommended that parents seek pre-approval before purchasing such items.

**IV. Continuing Obligations of Participant**

A. Submission of Grades

The parent/legal guardian of the student in this Program is responsible for submitting a copy of the student's report card at the end of each grading period.

B. Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements

Program participants must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0. Students who are not able to maintain the minimum of 2.0 should seek the help of a tutor.

C. School Attendance

To remain in the Program, a student may have no more than eight (8) unexcused absences. Students who miss more than eight (8) days will be removed from the Program for three (3) months, not to include the summer months. During this time, the Tribe will not pay tuition for the student. Additionally, tuition paid by the parent/legal guardian during this time is not reimbursable through any of the Tribe's Education Department programs. If attendance improves during this time and no further unexcused absences are reported, the student may re-enter the Program. Upon notice or discovery of the student's tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence, he or she will be removed from the Program for one (1) full academic year.

1. Students in the Program will be required to submit and/or authorize the release of attendance records/absences on a quarterly basis.

D. School Withdrawals

If the student is withdrawn from a private school, the parent/legal guardian should notify the Tribe's Education Department immediately. Unpaid balances are the sole responsibility of the parent/legal guardian.



**Short-Term Training,  
Certification Programs  
&  
Vocational School**

## Short-term Training, Certification, and Vocational School at a glance....

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### **Purpose:**

To provide assistance with tuition, Mandatory Fees, and to eligible Tribal Member students attending short-term training, certification programs, or vocational/technical programs which emphasize training for particular job functions or trades, and focus on the practical application of the skills learned.

### **Who is eligible?**

Any Tribal Member who can gain entry into the training, certification, or vocational school.

### **What are the limits for this category of the Program?**

**Traditional** vocational/trade school participants may receive up to, but not exceeding, \$20,000 for eligible expenses in this category, if the school they are attending participates in the Federal Student Aid Program. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.

**Non-traditional** programs are programs that are ineligible for inclusion in the Federal Student Aid Program. Eligible Tribal Members may receive up to, but not exceeding, \$10,000 for eligible expenses in this category, which may include up to two (2) non-traditional trainings/certifications. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000.

### **Am I eligible for a computer under this category of the Program?**

**Traditional program participants** whose course of study is designed to last at least nine (9) months or more in duration may receive reimbursement for one (1) computer, of up to, but not exceeding \$1,000. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.

**Non-traditional program participants** and those whose course of study is designed to last less than nine (9) months in duration are not eligible for computer reimbursement.

### **What costs are allowable?**

Tuition, books, and Mandatory Fees will be covered, as well as specialized equipment *required* by the Program. Students must provide a course syllabus or letter from the school showing that items are required.

### **What happens when I use all of this allotment?**

Once the entire allotment is used, the Tribal Member student is solely responsible for paying any remaining costs. No further assistance will be forthcoming from the Tribe unless the Tribal Member student pursues a higher-level education.

### **How do I participate in this Program?**

Eligible Tribal Member students must submit a completed application for assistance, which may be found on the Tribe's website, <https://www.pci-nsn.gov>, or may be picked up in person at the Tribe's Education Department.

### **Who do I contact if I have more questions?**

Tribal Member students may contact the Tuition Program Coordinator by calling 251-368-9136, extension 2241.

Please Note

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**The above information is included to give you a general overview of this category of the Program and its limits/benefits. Please read the Policy in its entirety so that you are familiar with all aspects of the Program.**

## **I. Eligibility**

### **A. Student Eligibility**

The following students are eligible for this Program:

1. Tribal Members who have received their high school diploma or completed their GED.

### **B. Application**

1. The student must apply with the Tribe's Education Department to take part in this Program. Applications are available at the Education Department and may be printed from the Tribe's website, [www.pci-nsn.gov](http://www.pci-nsn.gov). Upon request, applications may be faxed or mailed.
2. Applications will be accepted at any time during the year.
3. An updated application must be submitted annually to continue receiving tuition assistance. A complete application consists of the following:
  - (a) Academic progress report and most current transcript;
  - (b) A signed Receipt of Policy Acknowledgement form.

## **II. Program Types and Benefit Limits**

### **A. Traditional Vocational Training Programs**

Adult vocational training includes enrollment in a program at a vocational/technical school and/or short-term vocational training such as massage therapy, welding, cosmetology, truck driving, etc. The Tribe will pay for tuition, books, and mandatory fees. Housing fees may be allowable, but only for programs in which housing costs are included in the bill issued by the school. Eligible Tribal Members are allowed up to, but not exceeding, \$20,000 for eligible expenses in this category, and must maintain a 2.0 GPA or equivalent. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.

### **B. Non-Traditional Vocational Training Programs**

Eligible Tribal Members enrolled in non-traditional vocational programs may receive up to, but not exceeding, \$5,000 for eligible expenses in this category. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member. Examples of non-traditional programs include photography, scuba diving, heavy equipment operator, etc. This Program will not reimburse for computers or specialized tools.

### **C. Computer Allotment**

1. Students attending Traditional Vocational programs lasting nine (9) months or more in duration are eligible for up to, but not exceeding, \$1,000 in reimbursement towards a computer, printer, and required software. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.
2. Programs lasting less than nine (9) months, as well as all Non-Traditional Training Programs, do not qualify for the computer allotment through this Program.

### **III. Program Compliance**

#### **A. Submission of Grades**

Students in this Program are required to submit all grades or progress reports received for the duration of their program. Failure to submit grades immediately after receipt may delay future payments.

#### **B. Refunds**

Refunds for any costs that were paid by the Tribe should be returned to the Tribe's Education Department immediately. Failure to adhere to this Policy will result in the denial of future tuition assistance until the Tribe has been repaid.

#### **C. Completion Requirements**

Upon completion of the training, the student must provide the Education Department with an official transcript, if available, and/or copy of the certificate of completion/diploma within thirty (30) calendar days of the end of the program. Future tuition payments will not be made for the student until this requirement is met.

**Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's &  
Professional Degree Programs**

# **Tribal Member College Tuition Assistance at a glance....**

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## **Purpose:**

To provide assistance with tuition and Mandatory Fees to eligible Tribal Member students attending college to obtain an Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's or Professional School Degree.

## **Who is eligible for this category of the Program?**

Enrolled Tribal Members who have graduated from high school or received their GED.

## **What are the financial limits for this category of the Program?**

Associate's Degree Limit = up to, but not exceeding, \$40,000

Bachelor's Degree Limit = up to, but not exceeding, \$80,000

Master's Degree & Higher = up to, but not exceeding, \$100,000

\*Eligible Tribal Members may receive up to, but not exceeding, the limits above for eligible expenses in these categories. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.

## **Am I eligible for a computer?**

**Yes.** Eligible Tribal Members in this category may receive reimbursement of up to, but not exceeding, \$1,000 for one (1) computer, including the computer, printer, and required software. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.

## **What costs are allowable in this category of the Program?**

Tuition, books, and Mandatory Fees will be covered by this Program, as well as specialized equipment **required** by the program of study. Students must provide a course syllabus or letter from the school showing that items are required. See the Policy for more information on requirements for specialized tool reimbursements.

## **What happens when I use all of this allotment?**

Once the entire allotment is used, the Tribal Member student is solely responsible for paying any remaining costs. No additional funds will be provided.

## **How do I participate in this Program?**

Students must submit a completed application for assistance to the Tribe's Education Department, which may be found on the Tribe's website, <https://www.pci-nsn.gov>, or may be picked up in person at the Tribe's Education Department.

## **Who do I contact if I have more questions?**

Tribal Member students may contact the Tuition Program Coordinator by calling 251-368-9136, extension 2241.

Please Note

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**The above information is included to give you a GENERAL OVERVIEW of this category of the Program and its limits/benefits. Please read the Policy in its entirety so that you are familiar with all aspects of the Program.**

## **I. Eligibility**

### **A. Student Eligibility**

The following students are eligible for this assistance:

1. Tribal Members ages 16 and older who are enrolled in an accredited college (including dual enrollment of high school students), working towards an Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or professional degree.
2. Achieve and maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0.

### **B. Application**

1. Eligible Tribal Members must apply with the Tribal Education Department to take part in this Program. Applications are available at the Education Department and may be printed from the Tribe's website, [www.pci-nsn.gov](http://www.pci-nsn.gov). Upon request, applications may be faxed or mailed.
2. Applications will be accepted at any time during the year.
3. An annual, updated application must be on file to continue receiving tuition assistance. A complete application consists of the following:
  - a. Academic progress report & most current official transcript;
  - b. A signed Receipt of Policy Acknowledgement form.

## **II. Eligible Amounts and Distributions**

### **A. Total Eligible Amount**

Each eligible Tribal Member who participates in this Program will have access to a lifetime maximum total of \$100,000 for eligible expenses as identified herein, subject to the limitations contained in the Section for each category.

### **B. Limitations**

#### *1. Allotment Based Upon Educational Level*

There shall be limits to the total funds that may be accessed by the student, based on the educational level and type of degree that the Tribal Member is working towards or has earned. Thus, the following sub-limits shall apply:

- a. up to, but not exceeding, \$40,000 for an Associate's degree.
- b. up to, but not exceeding, \$80,000 for a Bachelor's degree.

c. up to, but not exceeding, \$100,000 for a Master's degree and higher.

**\*Program benefits are cumulative. All funds received through any category within the Program shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.**

2. If an eligible Tribal Member has earned a particular degree, but has not spent all of his/her limit for that degree level (and has not exceeded the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000), the Tribal Member may petition the Education Department to use the remainder of his/her limit for the degree level to pursue an additional degree. For example, if an eligible Tribal Member earns a Master's degree and has spent \$50,000 of his/her allotment, then desires an Associate's degree, another Bachelor's degree, or another Master's degree, available funds may be used to do so. In approving this second degree, the Education Department shall take into consideration the Tribal Member's prior academic performance and the likelihood that the Tribal Member will be able to complete the second degree.

C. Eligible Expenses for Tuition Assistance

The following expenses are eligible for payment:

1. Tuition, books, and mandatory fees.
2. Specialized tools as required by the course syllabus, and on-campus housing (including meal tickets) for students enrolled in an accredited post-secondary institution.
3. A student who is in good academic standing and currently enrolled in school may be reimbursed up to, but not exceeding, \$1000 for a computer, printer, and required word processing software. Students may receive one (1) replacement computer four (4) years after receiving the initial computer, but only if they are still enrolled in school. No student may be reimbursed for more than two (2) computers during their time in the Program. Original receipts are required. Reimbursement is not available for extended warranties, virus protection, or any other peripheral devices not included in the cost of the computer itself, other than those listed above. The Tribe will not reimburse for a computer purchased from a pawn shop or individual.

D. Eligible Expenses for Reimbursement

1. Reimbursements are allowed for eligible expenses paid by the student or parent/guardian through a reputable source, for time periods after acceptance into the Program, as long as appropriate receipts and other necessary documentation can be provided to the Education Department. Students may not be reimbursed for any expenses that were paid before they applied for and were accepted into the Program, or that were purchased from an individual or a business that cannot be verified as legitimate. Receipts for reimbursement may only be submitted when the accumulated total is more than \$150. Receipts for lesser amounts should be held by the student until



the \$150 amount has accrued or until the end of the semester for which the item was purchased.

E. Distribution

All funds are paid directly to the school, except reimbursements. Reimbursements meeting all requirements of the Education Department may be paid directly to the student or parent. Reimbursement recipient will be determined based on who paid the costs being reimbursed.

F. Refunds

If a refund is given to the student following his/her withdrawal from a class or school, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the refunded money is returned to the Education Department immediately. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in the denial of future tuition payments until the account issues are resolved by the student. Questions regarding refunds received from student loans or Pell grants should be addressed with the financial aid office at the school.

**III. Continuing Obligations of Participating Students**

A. Submission of Grades

Students shall submit grades from the previous semester as soon as they are received, before the beginning of the next semester. An OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT IS REQUIRED ANNUALLY for the student to remain in the Program. Tuition will not be paid for the following semester until the official transcript for the previous semester is received. The official annual transcript is due in June of each year.

B. Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements

Students in the Program must also maintain a minimum 2.0 (or it's equivalent) cumulative GPA for each academic year. If the Education Department receives notice that the student has been placed on academic probation, he/she will also be placed on academic probation by the Education Department for one (1) semester. If the student fails to achieve a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA a second consecutive semester, the student will be ineligible for the Program for one (1) year. To be reinstated in the Program, the student must first obtain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0.

C. School Withdrawals

1. Students who withdraw from a Post-Secondary class must notify the Education Department in writing immediately. This notice is not required if the student is only dropping or adding classes. The notification must include the reason(s) why he/she is withdrawing. An email to the Education Department's Tuition Program Coordinator is sufficient notification. Copies of all paperwork submitted to the school, or given to the student by the school must be sent to the Education Department within ten (10) business days of notifying the Education Department.

2. Withdrawing from two (2) classes in which tuition was not refunded shall result in the student being placed on probation by the Education Department. If the student withdraws from a third class in which tuition was not refunded, the student shall be ineligible for this Program for one (1) year, unless the student can demonstrate to the Education Department that the withdrawal was based on exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances shall include, but not be limited to, a serious, debilitating illness; a serious, debilitating illness of an immediate family member; and/or death of an immediate family member. Once ineligible for the Program, the student must petition the Education Department for reinstatement to the Program.

D. Reinstatements

In deciding reinstatements required under this Section, the Education Department shall take into consideration whether the Tribal Member is likely to fail to follow Program requirements in the future, whether the Tribal Member will be able to complete the degree with the allotted amount of financial assistance remaining, and whether the Tribal Member continued to pursue his or her educational and career goals even though ineligible for the Program.

E. Updated Information

The Tribal Member is responsible for keeping the Education Department apprised of changes to his/her information.

**IV. Academic Achievement Bonus**

Eligible full-time post-secondary students may receive an academic achievement bonus upon graduation, if the student maintains a 3.5 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) **cumulative** GPA. Eligible Tribal Members must apply for the McGhee-Tullis Tuition Assistance Program and request the award within six (6) months of graduating. The academic achievement bonus is not deducted from the Tribal Member's maximum lifetime benefit for the Program.

A. Eligible Amounts

1. *Associate's Degree.* An eligible student graduating with an associate's degree and a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher will be awarded an academic achievement bonus of \$2,000.
2. *Bachelor's Degree.* An eligible student graduating with a bachelor's degree and a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher will be awarded an academic achievement bonus of \$4,000, unless the student received an academic achievement bonus for receiving his or her associate's degree. If the student received an academic achievement bonus for receiving his or her associate's degree, the student will be awarded an academic achievement bonus of \$2,000.

3. *Master's Degree.* An eligible student graduating with a master's degree and a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher will be awarded an academic achievement bonus of \$2,000.
  4. *Professional Degree.* Due to the variations in the duration of professional degree programs, the academic achievement bonus will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- B. Upon submitting grades at graduation, eligible students shall also submit a written request for the academic achievement bonus.
  - C. Cash awards shall be paid only upon graduation, and upon request of the student within the allotted timeframe of six (6) months from the date of graduation.

## **V. Academic Probation and Suspension**

### **A. Academic Probation**

Any student receiving tuition assistance from the Tribe must maintain an acceptable academic cumulative grade point average of a minimum of 2.0. Students have one (1) grading period to obtain a 2.0 or higher cumulative GPA or they will be placed on academic probation. If the student fails to obtain a 2.0 or higher cumulative GPA, the student will be suspended from the Program.

### **B. Suspension**

Any Tribal Member who is suspended from the Program must go through the reinstatement process. In order to be reinstated, the Tribal Member must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher on their own, without Tribal financial assistance. The Tribe will not reimburse these expenses, nor will they repay a student loan for any period of suspension.

# Student Loan Repayment

## Tribal Member Student Loan Repayment Assistance Program at a glance....

### **Purpose:**

To provide student loan repayment assistance to Tribal Members who have graduated college.

### **Who is eligible for this Program?**

Enrolled Tribal Members. Further eligibility criteria must be met. Please read the Policy for full details.

### **What are the limits for this category of the Program?**

Amounts vary by degree type.

### **What costs are not allowable under this category of the Program?**

- Loans originating from any source other than a nationally approved scholastic loan provider.
- Loans used for anything other than tuition, books, Mandatory Fees, and on-campus housing. If the Tribe paid 100% of the cost for tuition, books, Mandatory Fees, and on-campus housing, we WILL NOT repay a loan for the same time period.
- Loans that are in default.

### **What happens when I use all of this allotment?**

You are limited to the amounts described within this Policy. No additional funds will be provided.

### **How do I participate in this Program?**

Eligible Tribal Members must submit a completed application for assistance to the Tribe's Education Department, which may be found on the Tribe's website, <https://www.pci-nsn.gov>, or may be picked up in person at the Tribe's Education Department.

### **Who do I contact if I have more questions?**

Tribal Member students may contact the Tuition Program Coordinator by calling (251)368-9136, extension 2241.

## Please Note

**The above information is included to give you a general overview of this category of the Program and its limits/benefits. Please read the Policy in its entirety so that you are familiar with all aspects of the Program.**

## I. Eligibility

### A. Student Eligibility

The following students are eligible for this category of the Program:

1. Tribal Members who have graduated from an accredited school, and have outstanding student loans for tuition, books, and Mandatory Fees. **The Tribe will not repay loans for living expenses or for any period in which the Tribe previously paid 100% of the cost of tuition, books, and fees.**
2. For a loan to be repaid, the eligible Tribal Member must complete the degree that the loan was used to finance. If a Tribal Member did not complete a degree, but completed an equivalent or higher educational level after the date of the loan, then the Tribal Member's loans may be repaid. Student loans must not be in default for one (1) year before the Tribe makes a payment.

### B. Application

A Tribal Member wishing to take part in this Program must submit an application to the Tribal Education Department. Applications are available at the Tribe's Education Department and may be printed from the Tribe's website, <https://www.pci-nsn.gov>. Upon request, applications may be faxed or mailed.

## II. Eligible Amounts and Distributions

### A. Total Eligible Amount

Each eligible Tribal Member participating in this Program is subject to the following limits, which are imposed according to the type of degree earned:

1. Associate's degree – up to, but not exceeding, \$40,000
2. Bachelor's degree - up to, but not exceeding, \$80,000
3. Master's & higher - up to, but not exceeding, \$100,000

**\*Program benefits are cumulative. All funds received through any category within the Program shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.**

### B. Distribution

All eligible loans will be repaid directly to the lending institution in one lump sum disbursement, not to exceed the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.

# **Continuing Education Reimbursement**

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## Continuing Education Units Reimbursement at a glance....

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### **Purpose:**

To help defray the costs associated with Continuing Education Units for eligible Tribal Member professionals.

### **Who is eligible to apply?**

Tribal Member professionals who are REQUIRED to obtain continuing education units (CEU's) to maintain licensure or certification for their profession are eligible to apply.

### **What are the limits for this category of the Program?**

Eligible Tribal Members may receive up to, but not exceeding, \$1,000 per calendar year for eligible expenses in this category. Only registration and CEU fees are reimbursable. Any funds received shall be deducted from the maximum lifetime benefit of \$100,000 per eligible Tribal Member.

### **What costs are not allowable?**

- Travel fees – airlines, mileage, etc.
- Hotel or other housing costs
- General workshops/conferences that do not award CEU's
- Any other costs that are deemed unnecessary by the Tribe's Education Department

### **How do I participate?**

Eligible Tribal Members must submit a completed "Request for Continuing Education Reimbursement Form" to the Tribe's Education Department, which may be found on the Tribe's website, <https://www.pci-nsn.gov>, or may be picked up in person at the Tribe's Education Department.

### **Who do I contact if I have more questions?**

Tribal Members may contact the Tuition Program Coordinator by calling (251)368-9136, extension 2241.

## Please Note

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**The above information is included to give you a general overview of this category of the Program limits/benefits. Please read the Policy in its entirety so that you are familiar with all aspects of the Program.**



# Continuing Education Reimbursement Program

Continuing Education Unit's (CEU's) are required for a variety of professions and are designed to ensure that practitioners are up-to-date with the current practices in their field. Proof of CEU's is often necessary to renew a license to practice particular professions, and the number of CEU's varies by industry and state. Examples of those for whom CEU's are necessary include doctors, nurses, lawyers, certified public accountants, real estate agents, and teachers.

To help defray the costs of obtaining CEU's, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians will reimburse eligible applicants for a portion of the costs incurred in obtaining their yearly CEU's.

The following guidelines apply:

## **Eligibility**

- must be an enrolled Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Member
- must be employed in a field that requires annual completion of CEU's
- must have funds remaining in his/her Tuition Assistance allotment (maximum lifetime benefit is \$100,000)

## **Allowable Costs**

- CEU courses and registration fees only

## **Required Documentation**

The following documents must be received by the Education Department before reimbursement is authorized:

- Completed Continuing Education Reimbursement Form
- Copy of registration for the event
- Current license or certificate to practice
- Brochure, flyer, copy of the webpage, etc. which outlines full details of the CEU event-date, time, location, cost, etc.
- State or professional guidelines documenting the number of CEU's that are required
- Proof of payment – canceled check, credit card statement, email receipt, etc.
- Certificate of completion and/or CEU certificate

The Education Department may require further information or documentation as may be necessary to substantiate an application for reimbursement. Reimbursements will not be made until all documents are received and validated.

## **Exclusions**

The Tribe will not reimburse for travel costs, including airfare, ground transportation, hotels, or meals. Reimbursement is not available for workshops, conferences, etc. that are not to obtain

CEU's as required for the Tribal Member's primary job, meaning that from which they derive their main source of income. A Tribal Member must have a current license in the profession for which they are requesting CEU reimbursement. This Program will not pay for license fees.

# **POLICY INTERPRETATION**

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## **GRIEVANCE & APPEALS**

## **I. Policy Interpretations and Revisions**

### **A. Interpretations**

It is the responsibility of the Education Department to interpret these policies. When circumstances warrant, further clarification may be sought from the Community Services Division Director and/or the Chief of Staff.

## **II. Grievance Process**

- A. If there is any disagreement about a denial of assistance or regarding the amount of assistance provided, the applicant must initiate the grievance process by submitting a letter in writing to the Education Department within ten (10) business days of the denial.
- B. When the signed letter is logged in with the date of time of receipt, it will be reviewed by the Education Department Director with input from any other involved staff. A written response will be provided to the applicant within ten (10) business days.
- C. If there continues to be questions or disagreements about a denial of assistance or the amount of assistance provided, the applicant must submit a letter to the Community Services Division Director within ten (10) business days after the decision of the Education Department Director is made, requesting a review of the case file and documents.
- D. The Community Services Division Director can concur with the decision of the Education Department or make recommendations regarding approval of or a revision to the dollar amount of assistance to be provided. A written response will be provided to the applicant within five (5) business days.
- E. If there continues to be questions or disagreements about a denial of assistance or the amount of assistance provided, the applicant must submit a letter in writing to the Chief of Staff within ten (10) business days after the decision of the Community Services Division Director is made, requesting a review of the case file and documents. The Chief of Staff can concur with the decision of the Education Department or make recommendations regarding approval of or a revision to the dollar amount of assistance to be provided. A written response will be provided to the applicant within five (5) business days.

## **III. Appeals**

- A. When the applicant does not agree with the decision rendered at the departmental level after exhausting all administrative remedies, the applicant may seek to appeal the decision by filing a notice of appeal with the Tribal Grievance Board.
- B. The appellant must provide written notice to the Tribal Grievance Board by filing the intent to appeal in the Regulatory Affairs Division Office within fourteen (14) calendar days of the receipt of the final departmental decision. The Appeal Notice shall set forth the specific issues and reason(s) for the request, along with any other relevant statements or documents

the appellant desires to include. Upon receipt of the Appeal Notice, the appellant will be provided a copy of the established appeal procedures set forth by the Tribal Grievance Board.

- C. Any decision made by the Tribal Grievance Board is considered final and no other administrative action is available to an appellant.