

# CHILDREN OF TEAMMATES TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

## FAQ

August 15, 2022

- **Q1: Which Nebraska Community Colleges are participating?**
  - **Answer:** The following community colleges are participating:
    - Southeast Community College
    - Mid-Plains Community College
    - Northeast Community College
    - Central Community College
    - Western Nebraska Community College
    - Metropolitan Community College
- **Q2: Who is eligible to participate?**
  - **Answer:** Qualifying participants are:
    - Dependents as follows: Any naturally born child, legally adopted child, stepchild, or ward of a current permanent full-time (1.0 FTE) State of Nebraska employee. Employees of the University of Nebraska and Nebraska State Colleges are not State of Nebraska government employees and are not eligible for this program.
    - Dependents who begin their programs of study between the ages of 18-25 years old, or are high-school graduates under age 18, and complete their programs of study by age 27.
    - Dependents under this program do not have to be dependents for tax purposes.
- **Q3: How does this program cover 100% of the tuition costs at participating Community Colleges?**
  - **Answer:** Tuition is due and paid to the Community College by the deadline established by each College. After the term has ended and the courses are graded, the student submits all necessary documentation to Department of Administrative Services(DAS). DAS verifies that the student meets eligibility requirements. DAS will process the tuition reimbursement for 75% of the cost of tuition remaining after all other sources of grants, scholarships have been applied. DAS will notify the Community College that the student was eligible for a reimbursement and then the Community College will apply a 25% tuition discount and refund that back out to the student.
- **Q4: Is there a limit to the number of credit hours eligible for reimbursement and is any course eligible for reimbursement?**
  - **Answer:** Tuition Discounts under this Program shall only apply to required credits of a degree or certificate program only up to a maximum of 65 credit hours (97.5 quarter hours) per Eligible Participant.
- **Q5: What do I need to do to determine if my child is eligible?**
  - **Answer:** Teammates must submit an Eligibility Verification Request form with required documentation to [as.employeebenefits@nebraska.gov](mailto:as.employeebenefits@nebraska.gov) for eligibility determination. The documentation will need to verify:
    - Your relationship to the child
    - Your child's age

Some examples of supporting documents are birth certificate, adoption records, or other legal documentation.

- **Q6: Will a teammate's agency be involved in this process?**
  - **Answer:** No, the Department of Administrative Services will manage the entire process.
- **Q7: Does a teammate need to complete original probation to participate in this program?**
  - **Answer:** No, a qualifying teammate does not need to complete original probation, but must be a current full-time permanent State of Nebraska employee at the time any qualifying dependent begins a course(s) and at the time a completed Child of State Teammate Tuition Reimbursement form with required documentation is submitted to [as.employeebenefits@nebraska.gov](mailto:as.employeebenefits@nebraska.gov).
- **Q8: If a teammate transferred to another agency are they eligible for the dependent tuition reimbursement?**
  - **Answer:** Yes, a teammate need only to be a current full-time permanent State of Nebraska employee at the time any qualifying dependent begins a course(s) and at the time a completed Child of State Teammate Tuition Reimbursement form with required documentation is submitted to [as.employeebenefits@nebraska.gov](mailto:as.employeebenefits@nebraska.gov).
- **Q9: If the teammate is a rehire and comes back to the state within 5 years are they eligible?**
  - **Answer:** Yes, a teammate need only to be a current full-time permanent State of Nebraska employee at the time any qualifying dependent begins a course(s) and at the time a completed Child of State Teammate Tuition Reimbursement form, with required documents submitted for verification, is provided.
- **Q10: If a teammate's employment ends before the last day of classes would the dependent's benefits continue until the end of the semester?**
  - **Answer:** No, teammates must be a current permanent full-time State of Nebraska teammates at the time any qualifying dependent begins a course(s) and at the time a completed Child of State Teammate Tuition Reimbursement form with required documentation is submitted to [as.employeebenefits@nebraska.gov](mailto:as.employeebenefits@nebraska.gov).
- **Q11: Are qualifying students no longer eligible for tuition reimbursement when they reach age 27?**
  - **Answer:** Correct, they are no longer eligible. Dependents must begin their programs of study between the ages of 18-25 years old, or are high-school graduates under age 18, and complete their programs of study by age 27. This means course work for a degree and/or certificate program must be started before turning age 25 and those programs of study must be completed before turning age 27.
- **Q12: Is the dependent required to be a full-time student or can they be part time?**
  - **Answer:** The student can be full time or part time.
- **Q13: How is tuition reimbursed?**
  - **Answer:** The State of Nebraska Teammate (and/or Student) will pay upfront to the community college for the classes.
  - After the completion of each semester and/or quarter, and after all other student aid funds have been applied the student will submit the necessary documentation (Paid Receipt for the course(s), Validation of approved program/course, Validation of C grade or better and all submitted within 30 days of the end of the course) to DAS and DAS will determine eligibility for tuition reimbursement. If student is eligible for the reimbursement DAS will process the 75% reimbursement and then notify the College. Reimbursement from DAS will be made directly to the Teammate Parent. The 25% Tuition Discount will be applied by the

College once notified by DAS that the reimbursement was processed, and the tuition discount will be refunded to the student.

- **Q14: What are the tax implications for the teammate or dependent?**
  - **Answer:** Reimbursement payments are taxable as supplemental wages to the teammate. Reimbursements will be processed through payroll, so the applicable income and FICA taxes are withheld. Retirement will not be withheld on these tuition reimbursements.
- **Q15: When does this program begin and how long does it run?**
  - **Answer:** The program begins on May 8, 2022, and runs through June 30, 2023, unless the program is extended.
- **Q16: Can this program apply retroactively to credits the student has already completed?**
  - **Answer:** No, this only applies to courses that begin after May 8, 2022
- **Q17: Can the reimbursement be made directly to the student if the student personally paid for the tuition?**
  - **Answer:** No. The reimbursement will only be paid to the teammate parent. It is the responsibility of the teammate parent and the student to work out how the funds should be allocated.
- **Q18: Does the eligibility determination need to be made before the courses begin?**
  - **Answer:** No, but teammates are encouraged to submit the forms as early as possible so that community colleges are informed and can process tuition discounts accordingly.
- **Q19: What is the deadline for reimbursement forms to be submitted?**
  - **Answer:** All Child of State Teammate Tuition Reimbursement forms are to be submitted within 30 days of the completion of each course(s). Additional information will be provided concerning submission after June 30, 2023, if the program is extended.
- **Q20: Will the reimbursement be available for courses that begin during the timeframe of the program, but end after June 30, 2023?**
  - **Answer:** Submissions for qualifying tuition reimbursement must be made by June 30, 2023. Therefore, courses must be completed, and all required information submitted in the tuition reimbursement request by June 30, 2023, unless the program is extended.
- **Q21: How is the tuition reimbursement program funded, will it affect agency budgets?**
  - **Answer:** LB 1012 provided for the funding of the program with a transfer to the *Community College State Dependents Fund*. This fund is managed by DAS and tuition reimbursements are paid with DAS appropriations. Your agency is responsible for the incremental increase in FICA taxes (7.65%) on the reimbursements.