

SECOND EFFORT SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAM RULES
AND
REGULATIONS

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Rule 1 – Organization and Structure

- I. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall administer the Second Effort Scholarship Program within the policies set by the State Board of Higher Education. All formal communication shall be addressed to or signed by the Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education or his/her designee.
- II. The final responsibility for selecting recipients of the Second Effort Scholarship shall rest with the Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, pursuant to the provisions of Act 705 of 1991 and Act 262 of 1995 and subsequent legislation, and program rules and regulations.
- III. When functioning under Act 705 of 1991 and Act 262 of 1995 and any subsequent legislation the Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall follow the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act.

Rule 2 – Scholarship Eligibility Criteria

- I. Eligibility Criteria

A student must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for the Second Effort Scholarship:

 - A. The recipient must be at least eighteen years of age or a former member of a high school class that has graduated.
 - B. The recipient may not be a high school graduate.
 - C. The recipient must be a citizen of the United States or a permanent resident alien.

- D. The recipient must have passed the Arkansas High School Diploma (GED) test in the calendar year prior to application for the Second Effort Scholarship.
- E. The recipient shall have been a resident of the State of Arkansas for at least the twelve months prior to successfully completing the Arkansas High School Diploma (GED) test.
- F. The recipient must be accepted for admission at an approved postsecondary school or college as a freshman, as defined by the Department of Higher Education, and must enroll in an approved institution within eighteen (18) months following passage of the Arkansas High School Diploma (GED) test.
- G. The recipient must have scored in the top twenty-five (25) of all Arkansans who took the Arkansas High School Diploma (GED) test in the calendar year prior to application for the scholarship.
- H. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education is authorized to award a scholarship to the individuals achieving the top ten scores of all Arkansans who took the Arkansas High School Diploma (GED) test in the previous calendar year. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education may award a scholarship to an otherwise eligible student who scored in the top twenty-five (25) of all Arkansans who took the Arkansas High School Diploma (GED) test in the previous calendar year if all test takers having a final score higher than the applicant have either:
 - 1. Received a Second Effort Scholarship, or
 - 2. Not applied by the application deadline, or
 - 3. Are otherwise ineligible to receive a Second Effort Scholarship.

No more than ten Second Effort Scholarships shall be awarded each year. In no case shall anyone scoring below those Arkansans achieving the highest twenty-five scores on the previous calendar year's Arkansas High School Diploma (GED) test be offered a Second Effort Scholarship.

II. Continued Eligibility

The Second Effort Scholarship shall be awarded for one academic year and renewed annually for up to three additional years, or their equivalent for part-time students, provided the recipient maintains a 2.50 cumulative college grade point average on a 4.0 scale, and completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours (or the equivalent) per academic year. An academic year is defined as regular Fall, Winter, and Spring terms only. In no case shall a recipient use these funds for educational purposes beyond the baccalaureate degree.

Rule 3 – Application Process

I. List of Those Persons Achieving the Highest Scores

The Office of Adult Education, Arkansas Department of Education shall provide the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by February 1 of each year a certified list of those persons achieving the highest twenty-five (25) scores on the Arkansas High School Diploma (GED) test administered in the previous calendar year.

II. Submission of Applications

- A. Following receipt of the list of those persons achieving the highest scores on the Arkansas High School Diploma (GED) test, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall send an Award Notice, application, general information, and appropriate instructions to each person achieving one of the ten highest scores as indicated by the list provided by the Office of Adult Education, Arkansas Department of Education. An application, general information and appropriate instructions shall be sent to each person achieving the scoring rank of 11-25 as indicated by the list provided by the Office of Adult Education, Arkansas Department of Higher Education.
- B. If any person achieving one of the highest ten scores declines the Second Effort Scholarship, does not meet the application deadline, does not meet the Second Effort Scholarship eligibility criteria, or is otherwise determined to be ineligible for the Second Effort Scholarship, an award notice shall be sent to the person achieving the next highest score who has returned an application to ADHE. In no case shall any person whose score is lower than those persons achieving the highest 25 scores be sent a Second Effort Scholarship application.

III. Application Deadline

The deadline for the Second Effort Scholarship applicants to return a completed application is April 1, or two weeks from the date on the award notice, whichever is later. Applications received after the deadline date are ineligible for the Second Effort Scholarship and applicants shall be notified. Applications sent in accordance with paragraph II B. above shall have an acceptance deadline date that shall allow the applicant sufficient time to complete and return the application to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. In no case shall this be less than two weeks.

IV. Application Review and Notification

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall review applications for completeness and eligibility. Those applicants who are eligible and whose applications are complete shall be sent a notice informing them that they shall receive the Second Effort Scholarship. Those applicants who are ineligible or whose application is incomplete shall be sent an Ineligible Notice or an Incomplete Notice. Those applicants whose applications are incomplete shall have two weeks to return the completed application to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. Applicants shall become ineligible and shall be sent a notice stating such if incomplete applications are not returned by the deadline date. Should this occur, the person achieving the next highest score shall be selected to receive the Second Effort Scholarship in accordance with paragraph II B. above.

V. Amount of Scholarship

The amount of the annual scholarship shall be the lesser of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or the annual tuition charged by the institution in which the recipient is enrolled. For part-time students who are recipients, the amount of the scholarship shall be prorated on the basis of the number of credit hours enrolled each term such that the recipient receives the prorated equivalent of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per year up to a maximum of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) per three (3) credit hour course.

Rule 4 – Scholarship Payment Process

I. Award Amount

A Second Effort Scholarship shall be awarded to those individuals returning a complete application to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by the specified deadline date and who are determined to be otherwise eligible.

The value of the scholarship is the lesser of \$1,000 per academic year or the annual tuition charged by the approved institution in which the recipient is enrolled.

II. Payment of Scholarships

Warrants payable to the recipient shall be sent to the approved institution indicated on the recipient's application. The Scholarship payments shall correspond to the academic terms, semesters, quarters, or equivalent time periods at the institution. In no instance may the entire amount of the scholarship for an educational year be paid to or on behalf of such student in advance.

III. Transfer of Scholarships

A student who has received a Second Effort Scholarship may transfer his/her scholarship to another approved Arkansas institution of higher education provided:

- A. The student notifies the Arkansas Department of Higher Education of the change of status by October 1 for the fall term, February 1 for the winter/spring term, and May 1 for the spring term for three term institutions.
- B. The student submits a transcript to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education certifying that the student has maintained a 2.5 cumulative college grade point average and has completed the required number of hours at the institution the student is leaving.

IV. Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawal for no more than one year from the Second Effort Scholarship Program may be allowed, upon written petition to, and approval by, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. The petition shall give the reason for withdrawal and be supported by appropriate documentation. In the absence of extraordinary circumstances, the scholarship shall be revoked if the recipient fails to enroll in an eligible Arkansas institution and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education receives neither written notification of transfer nor petition for withdrawal by October 1 for the Fall term or February 1 for the winter/spring terms. At the discretion of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the Second Effort Scholarship may not be revoked if a determination is made that extraordinary circumstances prevented the recipient from notifying the Arkansas Department of Higher Education of withdrawal or transfer by the designated deadline dates.

V. Renewal Policy

The Second Effort Scholarship may be renewed for a total of three academic years, or their equivalent for part-time enrollment, provided the student maintains a 2.50 cumulative college grade point average on a 4.0 scale and successfully completes six (6) semester hours or its equivalent per academic year. The scholarship shall be automatically renewed, provided the recipient meets the above minimum standards; recipients need not reapply each year.

VI. Cancellation of the Second Effort Scholarship

The Second Effort Scholarship shall be terminated for any of the following reasons:

- A. The recipient fails to maintain a minimum 2.50 cumulative college grade point average on a 4.0 scale, and fails to successfully complete a minimum of six credit hours or its equivalent per academic year.
- B. The recipient completes a first baccalaureate degree.

VII. Military Service

Recipients who are members of the Arkansas National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve units who are called to active duty for reasons other than regular unit training and are unable to complete the current term shall be allowed to repeat the missed term without loss of scholarship credit. In addition, they shall be placed in deferred status until six months after release from active duty, at which time they must be re-enrolled in an approved institution.

VIII. Repayment

If the recipient of a Second Effort Scholarship withdraws from the institution on or after the first day of class of an academic term and under the refund policy of that institution the student is entitled to a refund of any tuition, fees, or other charges, the institution shall pay that refund to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. At the discretion of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the refund obligation may be canceled by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education if it is determined that extraordinary circumstances exist that prevent such a refund from being made.

Rule 5 – Institutional Responsibilities

I. Administrative Agreement

An Administrative Agreement, outlining all of the requirements of the institutions participating in the various state aid programs, shall be obtained from each institution and kept on file at the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. This document shall be updated as necessary.

The chief executive officer of the eligible institution is responsible for appointing one representative from the financial aid office to act as administrator of the Second Effort Scholarship Program and to receive all communications, forms, rosters, etc. This representative is responsible for verification data and compliance with all program rules and regulations. The institution must comply with the following responsibilities in order to maintain continued eligibility status.

II. Disbursement Records

In addition to maintaining records, it is the responsibility of the institutions to insure that the Second Effort Scholarship recipient's signature acknowledging receipt of funds is maintained at the institution. The institution shall maintain information on the student indicating disbursement of these funds.

III. Institutional Information Sheet

The institution is required to complete annually the Institutional Information Sheet for all financial aid programs administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education for which the institution has chosen to participate. The institutional representative must provide a copy of the refund policy to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education which governs all students who completely withdraw from the institution. The administrator is responsible for designating a certifying official who is responsible for certifying enrollment and a disbursing official who is responsible for the disbursement of Second Effort Scholarship warrants.

This information sheet is due annually on July 1. Any changes in tuition and other institutional information after submission of the sheet shall be reported to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education within ten (10) days of institutional or Board of Trustees action.

IV. Institutional Verification

The institution shall provide certification to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education each academic term after registration, giving the names of the Second Effort Scholarship recipients who are officially enrolled. This

information is reported on a verification roster. The person responsible for verification of enrollment is the registrar or a member of the registrar's staff. The certifying official is responsible for completing the verification roster twice a year for those schools on the semester system, and three times a year for those schools on the quarter system. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall mail the verification roster to the financial aid administrator at the institutions prior to registration for the semester or quarter. The signed verification roster shall be returned to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by November 1 for the fall term, March 15 for the winter/spring term and May 1 for the spring term for three term institutions. The verification roster is an alphabetical listing by institution of all persons receiving

Second Effort Scholarship funds for a given academic term. Students who are not enrolled in the current term shall not receive scholarship benefits in that term.

V. Continuing Eligibility Roster

It is the responsibility of each institution to complete annually the continuing eligibility roster. This roster shall be mailed to all institutions that have a Second Effort Scholarship recipient enrolled. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall mail the continuing eligibility roster to the institutions by June 1. The roster is due back to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education by June 15. The person responsible for completing the continuing eligibility roster is the financial aid administrator. The continuing eligibility roster is an alphabetical listing by institution of all persons receiving a Second Effort Scholarship who attended that institution for the academic year immediately preceding receipt of the continuing eligibility roster. Completion of the roster requires the certifying official to give the number of credit hours completed for the previous academic year, and the cumulative grade point average achieved for each student listed.

VI .Deadline for Warrant Disbursement

All warrants must be disbursed by the institution by October 15 for the fall term, March 1 for the winter/spring term, and May 1 for the spring term for three term institutions. Any outstanding warrants not disbursed by the above dates shall be returned to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education for cancellation.

VII. Due Diligence

The institution shall exercise due diligence in providing complete, accurate, and timely information as requested by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education on any Second Effort Scholarship recipient or former recipient. In addition, the institution shall exercise due diligence in complying with all the rules and regulations of the Second Effort Scholarship Program. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall periodically review the institution's records concerning the Second Effort Scholarship Program in an effort to exercise its due diligence requirements as a steward of State of Arkansas funds.

Rule 6 – Second Effort Scholarship Recipient Responsibilities

I. Second Effort Scholarship Recipient Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Second Effort Scholarship recipient to notify the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, in writing, within twenty-one days, of any change in status. this will include:

- A. Change in name.
- B. Change in address.
- C. Change in institution.
- D. Change in enrollment status (three credit hours or the equivalent) per semester.

Failure to notify the Arkansas Department of Higher Education of any change in status may jeopardize future eligibility.

Rule 7 – Program Definition

The following definitions are used in the Second Effort Scholarship program:

<i>Approved Institution</i>	A public or private school or college or any public postsecondary vocational-technical school located in Arkansas which awards postsecondary certificates, degrees, or diplomas; further, such institution shall not discriminate against applicants, students or employees on the basis on race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin, consistent with the provisions of applicable state and federal law. The institution must have signed an Administrative Agreement with ADHE.
<i>Citizen</i>	The recipient must be a United States citizen or a permanent resident alien. If the recipient is not a United States citizen, but a permanent resident alien, the recipient must attach a copy of the permanent resident alien form I-151, I-551, I-94, or G-641 to the application.
<i>Eligible Student</i>	Any student who meets the eligibility criteria in Rule 2.
<i>Student</i>	A student enrolled for at least three (3) semester hours, or the equivalent per semester, in a program of study which leads to a postsecondary certificate, degree or diploma.
<i>TuitionCharges</i>	Levied for attendance at an eligible institution; for purposes of this program tuition charges shall not include any fees charged or used for student activities, including any student athletic fees.