



# Freehorse Family Wellness Society

## Post-Secondary Funding Program Student Handbook

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## **Introduction**

Freehorse Family Wellness Society (FFWS) is a non-profit organization that administers a post-secondary funding program on behalf of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). This program is run in accordance with the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and University and College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEP) Policies of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

The Post-Secondary Funding Program assists students with registration in specific Alberta First Nations, as well students with Alberta residency (12 months minimum), who are registered with a Northwest Territories First Nation.

FFWS is committed to quality administration of a program that is equitable, considers the needs of individual students, and works within policy and budgetary restrictions.

## About this Handbook

Our Student Handbook was developed:

1. To provide information regarding who we are, what we do, and for whom we provide services;
2. To assist eligible students with the application process;
3. To provide approved students with important information regarding sponsorship from FFWS.

This is the most current edition of the handbook and it is based on all previous editions. It is YOUR responsibility to read and understand the most current edition of the handbook. Address any questions you may have to FFWS staff.

It is important that students read and understand the newsletters, as the information provided may affect current procedures. Newsletters will also be posted on our website.

**Office Hours:** Monday to Friday: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm  
**Closed:** 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm for lunch  
Closed on weekends and all statutory holidays

# 1. Eligibility

Three eligibility criteria must be met by ALL applicants:

- a. Personal      b. Educational Institution      c. Program

## a. Personal Eligibility

**\*To be eligible for funding, you must have been a resident of Canada for the last twelve consecutive months\***

Students eligible to apply for funding are those who answer YES to ONE of the following questions:

1. Do you have registration with a NWT-based First Nation but have lived in Alberta for the last twelve consecutive months (prior to the date of application) and are not eligible for funding from the Government of the Northwest Territories and/or Nunavut student financial assistance programs due to residency?
2. Are you registered on the Alberta General List (Michel Band)?
3. Are you registered in affiliation with one of the following Alberta-based First Nations AND not eligible for funding with that First Nation:

\*Bears paw

Beaver

Beaver Lake

\*Blood Tribe

\*Chiniki/Stoney

Cold Lake

\*Driftpile

\*Frog Lake

Goodfish Lake

\*Goodstoney (Wesley)

Heart Lake

Kapawe'no

Kehewin

Long Lake

\*Peigan/Piikani

Saddle Lake

\*Sawridge

\*Sucker Creek

\*Swan River

\*Tall Cree

\*Tsuu T'ina

**\*Note - Band Membership:** These First Nations have their own membership list in place. FFWS does **not** sponsor individuals who are on their band membership list, regardless of eligibility or status.

## **b. Educational Institution Eligibility**

Eligible institutions must be on the Master List of Designated Educational Institutions on the Government of Canada's website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/designated-schools.html>

## **c. Post-Secondary Program Eligibility**

FFWS only sponsors students who are enrolled in programs eligible for sponsorship under the PSSSP and UCEP (below) policies. This means eligibility to apply to FFWS for funding is also based on program eligibility.

Students applying for sponsorship under the PSSSP (for post-secondary programs) may only be eligible for sponsorship if the program meets ALL THREE of the following criteria:

1. You will be attending a degree, diploma, or certificate granting institution recognized/accredited by a province, territory or state as a post-secondary institution.
2. Your program of studies requires completion of Grade 12 as a mandatory entrance/admission requirement for all students, including mature.
3. Your program of studies is at least one academic year (eight months) in length and leads to a certificate, diploma, or degree.

## **UCEP Eligibility**

UCEP stands for University and College Entrance Preparation. These upgrading programs are offered by post-secondary institutions to enable students to gain the academic level required for entrance to degree and diploma programs. FFWS recognizes that some programs are not specifically referred to as UCEP when they provide the same results. Academic upgrading-type programs may also fall under the UCEP category.

To be eligible to receive support for a UCEP program:

1. Students must qualify for admission to the UCEP/upgrading program under the mature student admission requirements of the post-secondary institution.
2. Students must be able to achieve, through the UCEP/upgrading program, the academic level required for entrance to a post-secondary program (Grade 12 equivalency) within one academic year. Courses below a Grade 12 level (30 or 31) will not be eligible for tuition support and will not count toward full time status.
3. Students may not receive funding for an UCEP/upgrading program if they have previously or are currently enrolled in a post-secondary program of studies.

## 2. Sponsorship

### a. Levels of Sponsorship

#### **University and College Preparation (UCEP):**

Eligible sponsorship months: 10 months maximum

Eligible books and supplies allowance: \$500 per academic year

#### **Level 1 - Certificate or Diploma:**

Eligible sponsorship months: 8 months maximum: Certificate

16 months maximum: Diploma

Eligible books and supplies allowance: \$600 per academic year

**Note:** If a student was enrolled in a Level 1 (diploma) program and transfers into a Level 2 (degree) program, their Level 1 diploma months will be transferred to Level 2 degree months if these courses are now being applied to the degree.

#### **Level 2 - Undergraduate Degree:**

Eligible sponsorship months: 32 months maximum

Eligible books and supplies allowance: \$800 per academic year

**Notes:** Students enrolled in this level may be assisted up to one additional academic year if such an extension is approved in writing by the student's institution's Dean or Program Head.

#### **Level 2 After-Degree:**

Eligible sponsorship months: 16 months maximum

Eligible books and supplies allowance: \$800 per academic year

**Notes:** Only the following after-degree programs are eligible for sponsorship:

- a) Education

- b) Law
- c) Bachelor of Science in Nursing

### **Level 3 - Professional Degree (i.e. MD)**

Eligible sponsorship months: 16 months maximum

Eligible books and supplies allowance: \$700 per academic year

#### **- Master Degree**

Eligible sponsorship months: 16 months maximum

Eligible books and supplies allowance: \$700 per academic year

\* Books and supplies allowance may differ if registered in a *thesis-based* program.

\* If taking a course-based or combination thesis/course-based program, you must be in three courses, with your thesis counting as one course, to be eligible for a monthly living allowance.

\* If taking a thesis-based program, you will only be eligible for part-time sponsorship (no monthly living allowance)

\* For **full-time** students, if your program is longer than 16 months, a letter from your Department Head will be required with your **first** application for the program. The letter must state how many *months* a student in good standing should take to complete the program, *when registered as a full-time student*. This will be the number of months you **may** be considered eligible to receive a monthly living allowance for.

\* For **part-time** students, a letter from your Department Head will be required with your **first** application for the program. The letter must state how many *terms* a student in good standing should take to complete the program, *when registered as a part-time student*. This will be the number of terms you **may** be considered eligible to receive tuition sponsorship for.

## Level 4 - PhD Degree

Eligible sponsorship months: 5 years (**tuition support only**).

**Note:** If you are unable to determine your Level of Sponsorship, contact a Funding Officer. You may still be eligible!

### **b. Important Information about Sponsorship**

- FFWS will determine how many courses per term are considered full-time for your program, to be eligible to receive a monthly living allowance. Check with your funding officer if you are unsure if you are considered a full- or part-time sponsored student.
- All students receiving full-time sponsorship should be attending **in class** courses.
- Courses taken **online** are eligible for tuition and books sponsorship only (no monthly living allowance).
- Students are only eligible to complete **one** program at each level of sponsorship, even if never funded by FFWS before.
- Students are eligible to receive sponsorship for only **one** program at a time. This means that Combined Bachelor Degree programs (completion of two degrees at the same time), for example, are ineligible.
- Students who have completed a Level 2 program, with or without support from FFWS, are ineligible for Level 1 program support.
- Students who have completed a Level 3 program, with or without support from FFWS, are ineligible for Level 1 and/or Level 2 program support.

- Students registered in Level 3 programs may not be eligible to receive a monthly living allowance, depending on the content of their programs, as decided by FFWS.
- Part time students are eligible to receive support for tuition, books and supplies only.
- Students who have **not** completed their program but have utilized the maximum number of full-time sponsorship months available at their Level of Sponsorship, will be eligible to receive part time sponsorship only (tuition, books and supplies but no living allowance) for the remainder of their program.
- Students must reapply for sponsorship each academic year.
- FFWS does not pay for repeated courses previously paid for by FFWS. If you choose to take a repeat course and pay for it on your own, this course will **not** count toward your full-time status.
- FFWS does not pay for audited courses. These courses may not be counted toward a full-time course load.
- FFWS does not sponsor combined programs
- FFWS will only pay for the courses that go toward the program you are being funded for. If you choose to take any extra classes that do not go toward your program, you will be responsible for payment directly to your institution.
- FFWS will only pay tuition up to a specific number of credits for each level of sponsorship (i.e. 30 credits for a Certificate, 60 credits for a Diploma, 120 credits for a Degree, etc.). Therefore, if you switch programs but stay in the same level of sponsorship, you may not have all of your tuition paid for by FFWS.

- Students who do not take all of their courses in a term at the same time, as part of a staggered/module-based course load, will **not** be eligible for full-time sponsorship only.
- Students who withdraw from a course(s) must ensure they maintain a full-time course load for the entire designated sponsorship period to continue receiving a living allowance.
- Students who have withdrawn from a funded course for which FFWS does not receive reimbursement, full or partial, from the educational institution, will be placed into an overpayment for all monies that FFWS paid for that course. Students will have to immediately make a full repayment to FFWS to remain eligible for future sponsorship.
- Students who choose to withdraw from their program of studies, or who have been withdrawn from their program of studies by their faculty or institution will be required to sit out for one year with FFWS. When the student re-applies, they will return as Priority 10. If and when a Priority 10 student is being considered for sponsorship, the student may be required to meet with a review panel to discuss their application for funding. The review panel will consist of the funding officer handling the application, the program supervisor, and possibly an FFWS board member and the Executive Director
- FFWS will review the academic progress of **all** students at the end of each term throughout their sponsorship period. FFWS reserves the right to cancel sponsorship if good academic standing is not maintained. A grade of failure, failure withdrawal, and /or withdrawal for **all** courses in a student's first term (i.e. Fall), will result in an **immediate cancellation of sponsorship** for the second term (i.e. Winter), regardless of the original sponsorship approval terms. An overpayment for any deposits made for the second term, including tuition, will be assessed.

- Students who require sponsorship letters regarding their funding, for the purpose of scholarship application, housing, etc., may be written following submission of a signed request by the student. Letters will take 2-3 days to process.
- Students will not be reimbursed for costs incurred while not receiving sponsorship from FFWS (i.e. previous years of education). FFWS does not provide retroactive funding.
- Due to Finance Department deadlines, students whose applications are approved late may not receive monthly living allowance deposits, retroactively, for months prior to approval.

### 3. Application Process

#### a. Deadlines

Sponsorship application forms must be submitted to FFWS by midnight (Mountain Standard Time) of the application deadline dates. Be aware that providing incomplete information on the application form will result in the application being sent back to the student to be completed and resubmitted by the deadline.

The deadlines for applications are as follows, although you are encouraged to submit applications earlier than these dates:

Fall/Winter Term (September - December/April): **JUNE 15<sup>th</sup>**

Winter Term (January – April): **OCTOBER 15<sup>th</sup>**

Spring/Summer Intersession (May - August): **MARCH 15<sup>th</sup>**

\*Late applications may still be accepted for the Fall/Winter terms only but **not for the Intersession term**.

#### b. Priority Structure

This is the number assigned to your application based on the transcripts you provide:

**Priority 1 Continuing Students:** Students who are continuing current post-secondary studies in the same program (i.e. second year of a two-year program).

**Priority 2 Continuing Students from High School:** Students who are directly out of high school and are applying for a post-secondary program of studies.

**Priority 3 Continuing Students (new to funding):** Students who are continuing current post secondary studies in the same program (i.e. second year of a two-year program) but have never received funding from PSSSP in the past.

**Priority 4 Waitlisted Students:** Students who applied for sponsorship for a post-secondary program of studies for the previous academic year, but were not funded due to lack of funds. Only students whose applications for sponsorship were completed may be waitlisted.

**Priority 5 Returning Students:** Post-secondary students who *have* received previous sponsorship from the PSSSP and have interrupted their post-secondary studies and are now returning to their studies.

**Priority 6 Returning Students:** Post-secondary students who *have never* received previous sponsorship from the PSSSP and have interrupted their post-secondary studies and now are returning to their studies.

**Priority 7 New Students:** Students who have never attended a post-secondary program in the past and are not directly out of high school.

**Priority 8 Post-Secondary Graduates:** Students who have already completed a post-secondary program, not including UCEP, with or without funding from the PSSSP.

**Priority 9 UCEP/Upgrading Students:** Students applying for a UCEP program or upgrading at a Grade 12 level and who will be continuing on to an eligible post-secondary program.

**Priority 10 Probationary Students:** Students who have withdrawn on their own from their program of studies or students who have been withdrawn from their program of studies by their faculty or institution, have sat out for one year with FFWS, and are now re-applying to go back to school.

**Priority 11 Part Time Students:** Students who are enrolled as a part time student in a post-secondary program.

**Priority 14:** Staggered programs (Eligible for part time funding only), and other specialized programs that FFWS determines to be in this category

Students who were registered in, and completed, the intersession prior to the Fall semester will retain the same priority level assigned during intersession

### **c. Late Applications**

- FFWS *may* accept applications for Fall/Winter terms (not the Intersession term) after the deadline, however these applications are considered late. Late applications are immediately waitlisted and may be reviewed only if funds become available. Students are not able to submit an appeal if their application is late and is not approved for funding as a result.
- Late applications for the Fall term will not be transferred to the Winter or Spring/Summer Intersession terms. Students must apply for each intended session they wish to attend.
- Students planning to attend the Winter term should apply for the June 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. Do not wait for the Winter deadline.
- Applications submitted for the Winter term will only be reviewed if funds are available.

### **d. Intersession (Spring/Summer) Applications**

**\*Intersession sponsorship does not necessarily fall under the same rules and regulations as sponsorship during Fall/Winter\***

Applications must be received by **March 15th**, as late applications will not be considered. Applications will be processed in order of completeness; however, sponsorship will still be budget dependent as Intersession funding is extremely limited.

#### **Approved Intersession Students:**

- The Intersession term is **part-time only** sponsorship: tuition, books and supplies only. This means students will not receive a living allowance regardless of program academic start date(s) and/or course load.

- Students will be notified of their approval by e-mail. Any changes to an approved application must be reported to FFWS immediately, as changes in financial commitments will not be possible later in the term.
  
- Educational Institutions will be notified of sponsorship terms including the maximum amount of tuition that will be sponsored; this means that the student will be responsible for any additional payment(s) for courses added after receiving an approval letter.

## 4. Required Documentation

All required documentation will be requested through a Document Request Letter. Everything that is required should be submitted by the deadline given. Your application will not be put forward for approval until ALL requested documentation has been received.

As FFWS has a very limited amount of funds, it is in your best interest to submit required documentation as soon as possible.

Students may be asked to submit all or some of the following documents upon submission of their application:

- a) Email consent & Student Consent to Release/Obtain Personal Information form: the email listed must be the students personal email address, not a parent, spouse, etc.; also, this form allows FFWS to obtain information from your institution regarding your registration status and attendance.
- b) Banking Information: void cheque or deposit slip, with student's name on it, for direct deposit purposes;
- c) Photocopy of your Indian registry status card: (front and back must be legible). If you are of Inuit status, you must provide proof of your registration, through a photocopy of your Certificate of Enrolment, Beneficiary card or letter, or Inuvialuit Trust letter;
- e) Photocopy of personal health care card, as well as photocopies of the cards of any dependents you will be claiming, including spouse;
- f) A course registration with your name and/or identification number printed on it from your institution: a photocopy is acceptable;
- g) Course Registration Summary form: the courses should match what is on the official course registration;
- h) Most recent transcripts: these must be **official** transcripts;

- i) Tuition and fees assessment: this must be for the academic year you are applying for. You can either provide a copy of your registration detailing the actual costs, a program brochure, or a photocopied page of the school calendar that identifies the fees;
- j) Letter from your band confirming you are not eligible for funding, if from an Alberta-based band; must include Bill C-31 status information, if a new applicant to Freehorse;
- k) Letter from your band confirming your band membership status – only applicable to students from bands that have an internal membership list in place. Band membership letters will only be accepted from the membership clerk/department;
- l) Previous year's tax assessment, showing Line 150 Total Income. If married, including common law, spouse's previous year's tax assessment must be submitted also;
- m) Student Budget form
- n) If you are registered with a band from the NWT: a letter from the Government of the NWT (NWTSA) and/or Nunavut student financial assistance (FANS) programs indicating you are ineligible for funding due to residency;
- \*You may be required to provide additional information as requested by your funding officer.

## 5. Application Review

The application review begins one week after the deadline. Applications are reviewed in order of priority number and their order of completeness.

It takes 4 to 6 weeks to complete the application process. Students will be notified of their application status by mail only. Information will NOT be provided over the phone or by email.

Sponsorship is never guaranteed. Students are encouraged to seek alternative funding in addition to applying to FFWS for sponsorship. Students should not wait until receiving a decision from FFWS to seek alternative funding. FFWS will make every effort to notify students if their application is ineligible as soon as possible. If alternative funding is applied for after the student has applied with FFWS, the student must notify FFWS.

### Here are some suggestions for alternative funding:

- *Your First Nation*
- *Alberta Supports (formerly Alberta Works)*
- *Oteenow*
- *Scholarships, Bursaries and Grants*
- *Human Resources and Social Development Canada (ISET)*
- *Student Finance (Student Loan)*

For more resources and suggestions, students should inquire at the student financial services or with a student advisor at the institution they plan to attend.

## 6. Approved Students

Students will be notified of their approval by email. It is important for students to review all documents sent to ensure all the information is correct. Any changes to an approved application must be reported to FFWS immediately, as changes in financial commitments may not be possible later in the year.

If at any point circumstances change, students are responsible for notifying FFWS immediately. FFWS will not assume responsibility if a student does not receive correspondence due to incorrect or outdated contact information.

Examples of possible changes, which students must report to FFWS in the form of a written and signed notification, include but are not limited to:

- address/phone number
- email address
- program/institution
- number of dependents
- start/end date
- attendance status
- marital status
- addition/deletion of courses
- banking information

Students must report any other funding they receive during the sponsorship period to FFWS. Students should also notify other funding agencies (federal or provincial) of the details of their FFWS sponsorship.

### **a. Documents Due, After Approved for Sponsorship**

FFWS requires certain documents to be submitted throughout the sponsorship period of an approved student. These documents will be requested on the approval letter or by subsequent letter and will be due

by a specific deadline. If a required document is not submitted by the deadline, the student's sponsorship will be cancelled.

**Fall (Term 1) Current Course Registration:** one week after the sponsored student's registration add/drop deadline has passed, a current course registration (with current print date) must be submitted, even if no courses have changed.

**Fall (Term 1) Midterm Grades:** due by November 1<sup>st</sup> of each academic year. Photocopies and faxes will be accepted in order to accommodate this deadline only.

**Winter (Term 2) Course Registrations:** due by December 1<sup>st</sup> of each academic year. Photocopies and faxes will be accepted in order to accommodate this deadline only.

**Fall (Term 1) Final Grades:** due by January 10<sup>th</sup> of each academic year. Photocopies and faxes will be accepted in order to accommodate this deadline only. Tuition for the winter term will not be paid until the Fall grades are received.

**Winter (Term 2) Current Course Registration:** one week after the sponsored student's registration add/drop deadline has passed, a current course registration (with current print date) must be submitted, even if no courses have changed.

**Winter (Term 2) Midterm Grades:** due by March 1<sup>st</sup> of each academic year. Photocopies and faxes will be accepted in order to accommodate this deadline only.

## **b. Monthly Living Allowance**

The monthly living allowance is intended to supplement the costs of daily living, including transportation, food, shelter, utilities and daycare.

Please be aware that just because your school considers you or your program to be full-time, FFWS will determine if you are considered full-time *for funding purposes*, and therefore, eligible to receive a monthly living allowance.

Even if you are considered full-time by FFWS, you still may not be approved for a monthly living allowance if your total income (as stated on your previous year's tax return) is **above the Canadian low-income cut-off for that year**. If you are married, including common-law, your total income will be added to your spouse's total income from their previous year's tax return, for a combined household total income. If your combined household total income is above the Canadian low-income cut-off for that year (for the number of people in your household), you may not be approved for a monthly living allowance.

**Living allowance rates** are determined by the following chart:

<b>Allowance Category</b>	<b>Monthly Allowance</b>
<b>A1</b> Single student living with employed parent	\$600
<b>A2</b> Single student	\$1100
+ 1 dependent	\$1250
+ 2 dependents	\$1400
+ 3 dependents	\$1550
+ each additional dependent	+\$50

## **Deposits**

Monthly living allowances will be deposited directly into student bank accounts on or around the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. No advances will be given for monthly living allowances. FFWS does not issue cheques. Electronic Funds Transfers (EFT) are released into student accounts once a month. All students are responsible for submitting accurate banking information to FFWS. Requests for changes to allowance categories must be made by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month in order for the

change to be reflected in the next month's deposit. Any receipts must be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month in order to receive reimbursements with the next month's deposit.

If your monthly deposit seems unusual, contact FFWS immediately. Students may be held responsible for repaying any accidental over-deposits.

### **c. Books and Supplies**

The amount that appears on the approval letter is the amount approved for the entire sponsorship period. Half of this amount will be deposited at the beginning of each term.

A basic amount for each level will be resourced as follows:

UCEP	\$500 per year
LEVEL I	\$600 per year
LEVEL II	\$800 per year
LEVEL III	\$700 per year

For students whose institutions provide the books to them, such as, Athabasca University, Blue Quills First Nations College, Northern Lakes College, NorQuest (UCEP) or Yellowhead Tribal College their supplies rate will be \$50 per term for full time students.

FFWS does not pay for lockers, parking passes, uniforms, bus passes (unless a mandatory fee), computers, software, internet connections, audio-visual equipment, etc. If necessary, contact a Funding Officer for further clarification.

Additional funds may be available for **mandatory books** subject to submission of a written request for reimbursement, along with all original receipts (must be mailed or submitted in person) and required books lists to FFWS by the respective deadlines:

Fall term:	November 15
Winter term:	February 15

Spring term: May 15

Summer term: July 15

Please note that to be included in the reimbursement, your receipt(s) **must list the title** of the book(s) purchased. This is often not the case if you are purchasing your books used.

Additional funds for books/supplies are not available to students in Level 3 Masters or Level 4 PhD programs or to students who choose to attend Foreign Institutions.

Any books/supplies reimbursement is subject to budget availability.

#### **d. Tuition Support**

Arrangements are made between FFWS and the institution to pay tuition directly to the school. Students will be informed if other arrangements have to be made.

Students are responsible for opting out of **Health and Dental plans**. At most institutions these are non-mandatory fees. **Students must opt out at the beginning of each academic term/year at most institutions**. Contact your institution for more details. FFWS will not cover these costs, as all students funded by FFWS have either Indian or Inuit status and are covered through AANDC-First Nations and Inuit Health Services. This means that students who fail to opt out of Health and Dental plans will be directly responsible to their institution for the payment of these fees.

**Optional and/or non-mandatory fees** will not be paid by FFWS. Students who fail to opt out of these fees will be directly responsible to their institution for the payment of these fees.

**Application fees** may be eligible for reimbursement. Receipts must be submitted to FFWS by the above-mentioned deadlines.

**Re-registration fees or late fees** will not be paid by FFWS. In addition, students are responsible for advising FFWS of any changes to their financial record or outstanding fees with their institution, particularly after the initial invoice has been paid to avoid any academic or financial penalties. Students will be held responsible for any penalties incurred.

**Tuition/registration/confirmation deposits** must be paid by the student to the institution. The deposit may be reimbursed to the student by their institution or by FFWS but not by both. Many institutions automatically reimburse funded students their tuition deposits. FFWS will not reimburse a tuition deposit unless the institution's invoice indicates that this deposit has been applied directly to the tuition balance.

### **Athabasca University (AU) Tuition Fees**

Students completing correspondence courses through AU, will only be eligible for tuition sponsorship (no monthly living allowance), on a reimbursement basis only. Tuition must be paid upfront to AU, by the student. If approved, tuition reimbursement will occur only after the first 30 days from class start date.

### **Private Institution Tuition Fees**

Students who choose to register in a program offered by a private institution are only eligible to receive tuition fees equivalent to those charged by the Canadian public institution nearest to the student's place of residence at the time of application that offers a comparable program. Proof of your payment (to your institution) for the difference in tuition must be shown before any tuition payments will be made by FFWS to your institution.

### **Foreign Institution Tuition Fees**

Students registered in eligible programs in eligible institutions outside of Canada, who have lived in Canada for 12 months prior to applying to FFWS, enrolled in full time course loads will be funded as follows:

Level 1: maximum \$2500 CDN per 4-month term

Level 2: maximum \$3500 CDN per 4-month term

Level 3: maximum \$3500 CDN per 4-month term

Level 4: maximum \$3500 CDN per 4-month term

Students that are enrolled in part time course loads will be funded significantly different than above, contact the offices for more information if you find yourself in this situation.

Students funded by FFWS for foreign institutions are required to pay their tuition directly to their institution. FFWS will then reimburse the student, up to the maximum amount listed above, **after** an original tuition receipt is submitted by the following deadlines:

Fall term: November 15

Winter term: February 15

Intersession term: July 15

Tuition funds will not be given in advance. If the student lived outside of Canada solely for the purpose of education the student will be deemed to be a resident of Canada. If eligible, travel support may be provided only to the Canadian border.

Students attending foreign institutions are not eligible to receive reimbursements for additional expenses for books and supplies. In addition, students attending foreign institutions are not eligible to receive support for any administrative costs associated with studying in a foreign country (i.e. student visas).

### **Tax Receipts**

FFWS is not required to issue T4-A tax receipts to post-secondary student receiving grants. Be advised, you must not claim your tuition on your taxes, even if you receive a T2202 tax receipt from your school, as your tuition was paid by FFWS. Direct any other tax questions you may have to a tax professional. FFWS will notify you if any changes occur as per direction from Revenue Canada and/or INAC.

### **e. Other Tuition Costs**

**Correspondence and Internet courses** are eligible for tuition, books and supplies support only. No living allowance will be provided regardless of course load.

**Articling or Work Terms** that are required to become licensed or certified are not eligible for full time sponsorship.

**Practicums** required for the completion of a degree, diploma, or certificate may be eligible for sponsorship.

**Co-op students** will not receive a living allowance during their paid work term, however they will be considered full time students during course-work terms and their files will be kept active during the work term.

**Non-mandatory conferences** are not eligible for sponsorship.

**Mandatory conferences or workshops** need to be included with the initial application. Students must provide documentation stating that the conference or workshop is mandatory as well as a breakdown of costs associated with the event. Funding for mandatory conferences and workshops is budget dependant.

## 7. Overpayments

A student may be placed in an overpayment with FFWS for a number of reasons that include but are not limited to:

- change in student status from full time to part time;
- withdrawal from program of studies;
- withdrawal from a course;
- tuition payment for unauthorized repeated courses;
- errors or omissions made by FFWS;
- providing false information to FFWS.

It is a student's responsibility to notify FFWS **immediately** of any changes or errors pertaining to their sponsorship.

Overpayments must be paid back to FFWS immediately, as a student with an outstanding overpayment will not be considered eligible for future sponsorship.

## 8. Appeal Process

There is an appeal process in place if a student feels a procedural decision was unfair and does not reflect the policy and its objectives. However:

- The policy itself may not be appealed.
- Decisions based on lack of funds may not be appealed.
- Deadlines may not be appealed; they are absolutely firm. This is to ensure all applications can be assessed as quickly and as fairly as possible.
- A signed contract between the student and FFWS cannot be appealed.

Step 1: Student (not parent, spouse, etc.) must submit a written, signed and dated request for an appeal, within 10 working days of when the decision in question was made.

Step 2: An appeal form will be mailed to the student.

Step 3: Student must fill out the form and return it to FFWS within 5 working days.

Step 4: FFWS will review the appeal form and decision in question. The program supervisor will contact the student in writing within two weeks.

Step 5: If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of this review, they must submit a request to review letter to the FFWS; Executive Director within one week of receiving the program supervisor's letter, to review the program supervisor's decision.

Step 6: The Executive Director will contact the student within one week.

Step 7: If the Executive Director does not consider the appeal to be closed at this time, an appeal committee will be formed within two weeks.

Note: Winning an appeal does not guarantee that you will receive funding. If funds have already been fully utilized for the year, funding will still not be available.

## 9. Privacy Statement

FFWS is committed to providing our students and potential students with privacy regarding their personal and financial information. Any personal information provided to FFWS is managed according to the *Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. This means that, at the point of collection, you will be informed that your personal information is being collected, the purpose for which it is being collected, and that you have a right of access to the collected information. This privacy is extended to all schooling and financial matters if approved for sponsorship.

As part of the FFWS post-secondary approval process, students must read, complete, and sign the *Student Consent to Release/Obtain Personal Information Form*. This form is used for the collection of personal information and for the purpose of managing the consent for disclosure of personal information. It allows FFWS access to information from and/or to release student information to post-secondary institutions, banks, government funding agencies, First Nations, or any other relevant organization.

No personal information will be released to anyone other than the sponsored student or one of the aforementioned organizations without specific signed consent by the student (Consent to Release Information form). **This includes family members.** Consent must be given with **each** sponsorship period.

Please note that just because consent may be given for your funding officer to release information pertaining to your sponsorship to the person(s) listed on the Consent to Release Information form, this does not mean that this person(s) should be the main point of contact for the student's sponsorship. **Regular communication is expected to be done solely with the sponsored student, not a parent, family member, spouse, etc.**

Any questions regarding privacy or the handling of personal and financial information should be directed towards your funding officer.