Tuition Equalization Grant Program

REGULATIONS - 600.

2012 - 2013 Award Year

Effective Date – July 1, 2012

2082 East Exchange Place
Tucker, Georgia 30084

601. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Section	Page
600. Tuition Equalization Grant Program.	1
601. Table of Contents.	2
602. Program Overview.	5
603. Definitions.	6
604. General Eligibility Requirements.	12
604.1. Citizenship.	12
604.2. Georgia Residency.	12
604.3. Enrollment Status.	13
604.4. Satisfactory Academic Progress.	13
604.5. Selective Service Registration.	13
604.6. Defaulted Loan or Refund Due.	13
604.7. Georgia Drug-Free Act.	14
604.8. Incarceration.	14
605. Program Specific Eligibility Requirements.	15
605.1. Undergraduate and Graduate Student Eligibility.	15
605.2. Paid-Hours Limit.	15
605.3. Attainment of a Baccalaureate Degree.	15
606. Eligible Coursework.	17
606.1. Joint and Dual Credit Enrollment Coursework.	17
606.2. Learning Support Coursework.	17
606.3. Coursework Exemptions.	17
606.4. Distance Learning Coursework.	17
606.5. Transient Coursework.	17
606.6. Study Away Coursework.	18

606.7. Continuing Education and Audit Coursework. 18
606.8. Total Withdrawal from Coursework. 18
607. Student Application Requirements. 19
607.1. Application Forms. 19
607.2. Application Deadline Date. 19
607.3. Application for Subsequent Years. 20
608. Award Requirements. 21
608.1. Awards Amounts. 21
608.2. Awards Per School Term. 21
608.3. Student Notification of Award. 21
608.4. Adjustments to Award Amounts. 22
608.5. Insufficient Funding. 22
609. Invoicing Requirements. 23
609.1. Submission of Invoices. 23
609.2. Payment of Invoices. 23
609.3. Payment to Students. 24
610. Calculation of Refunds. 25
610.1. Student Refunds. 25
610.2. Collection of Refunds. 25
610.3. Emergency Military Duty. 26
611. Reconciliation Requirements. 27
611.1. Term-Reconciliation. 27
611.2. Award-Year Reconciliation. 27
611.3. Return of Funds. 27
612. Records Retention Requirements. 28
612.1. Length of Retention. 28

612.2. Documentation. 28

612.3. Extended Retention. 28

613. Administrative Reviews and Exceptions. 29

613.1. Administrative Reviews. 29

613.2. Exceptions. 29

614. Compliance Reviews. 30

614.1. Compliance Review Policy. 30

614.2. Compliance Review Process. 30

614.3. Institutional Repayment. 30

614.4. Examination by State Auditor. 31

602. Program Overview.

The Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG) Program provides grant assistance toward educational costs to residents of Georgia seeking Degrees as Full-Time students at eligible Georgia private colleges and universities. The eligibility requirements of the TEG program do not include academic merit, achievement, or financial need criteria. The TEG program results from recognition that facilities of accredited private and independent colleges and universities located within the State of Georgia can be used more effectively in the public interest, by the granting of financial assistance to citizens who choose to attend such colleges and universities, and that the provision of such assistance will reduce the costs to the taxpayers of the state below the cost of providing similar instruction within the University System of Georgia.

During the legislative session that precedes each Award Year, the Georgia General Assembly establishes the TEG award amount eligible students will receive for the coming Award Year, and the total amount of funds appropriated to the program. The TEG award amount and total funding for the program may be adjusted during the Award Year.

The Georgia General Assembly created the TEG program, beginning with the 1972-1973 Award Year, (State Fiscal Year 1973). State revenues provide the funding for this program, as authorized each year by the State of Georgia's Annual Operating Budget. The Georgia Student Finance Commission administers the TEG program, in accordance with the Official Code of Georgia Annotated §20-3-410 et. seq., in its entirety.

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603. Definitions.

"Academic Year" means a period of time, usually nine months, during which a Full-Time student is expected to complete the equivalent of two semesters or three quarters of postsecondary coursework.

"Administrative Review" means a review by Commission staff of an eligibility determination made by an Eligible Postsecondary Institution or by the Commission to determine if a Tuition Equalization Grant program rule, policy, or regulation was applied correctly in a student's specific case.

"Application Deadline Date" means the last day a student can submit an application for TEG for a school term, and still be eligible to receive TEG payment for that school term. Students must have a completed and approved TEG application on file with the Commission by the Invoicing Deadline Date.

"Associate Degree" means a two-year Degree conferred on students by a postsecondary institution upon completion of a unified Undergraduate program of study in an academic discipline or major. Associate Degrees typically require a student to earn at least 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours.

"Audit" means the act of a student attending a course for personal development, with the understanding and agreement of his or her postsecondary institution that no credit hours or grade will be earned for that course.

"Award Date" means the day after the end of an Eligible Postsecondary Institution's drop/add period of each school term. A student is not eligible for TEG payment unless he or she maintained Full-Time status through the drop/add period.

"Award Year" means four consecutive quarters or three consecutive semesters, beginning with the summer term and ending with the spring term, or the Non-Standard Term equivalent, or the Non-Term equivalent.

"Award Year Reconciliation" means a final student-by-student reconciliation for an Award Year conducted by Eligible Postsecondary Institutions with the Commission.

"Baccalaureate Degree" means a four-year Degree conferred on students by a postsecondary institution upon completion of a unified Undergraduate program of study in an academic discipline or major. Baccalaureate (Bachelor's) Degrees typically require a student to earn at least 120 semester or 180 quarter credit hours.

"Certificate" means an academic credential granted by a postsecondary institution indicating satisfactory completion of training by a student in an organized technical Undergraduate program of study which is not a Diploma program of study, an Associate Degree, Baccalaureate Degree, Graduate Degree

or Continuing Education. A Certificate program of study typically requires fewer credit hours than a Diploma program of study.

"Commission" means the Georgia Student Finance Commission, the agency responsible for administering certain postsecondary educational student financial aid programs offered by the State of Georgia, and other programs for which funds may be appropriated or assigned to it by the state legislature, or from other sources, from time to time.

"Compliance Review" means an assessment by the Commission of an Eligible Postsecondary Institution by evaluating the Eligible Postsecondary Institution's compliance with the regulations governing programs administered by the Commission, in accordance with the Commission's *Compliance Review Process and Procedures* document.

"Continuing Education" means postsecondary courses designed for personal development or an extension of the traditional on-campus learning process, and does not lead to credit toward a postsecondary Certificate, Diploma, or Degree.

"Cost of Attendance" means the estimated expenses, both direct and indirect, which may be incurred by a student and the student's family to finance the cost of receiving a postsecondary education. As determined by the student's postsecondary institution and as defined by Federal Title IV Regulations, these expenses may include Tuition, fees, room, meals, books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses

"Degree" means an Associate Degree or Baccalaureate Degree conferred on students by a postsecondary institution upon completion of a unified Undergraduate program of study in an academic discipline or major.

"Diploma" means an academic credential granted by a postsecondary institution indicating satisfactory completion of training by a student in an organized technical Undergraduate program of study which is not a Certificate program of study, an Associate Degree, Baccalaureate Degree, or Graduate Degree. A Diploma program of study typically requires more credit hours than a Certificate program of study.

"Distance Learning" means an educational process that is characterized by the separation, in time or place, between instructor and student. It may include courses offered principally through the use of television, audio, video cassettes/discs, correspondence, audio/computer conferencing, and transmission by computer, Internet, open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite.

"Dual Credit Enrollment" means an arrangement whereby a high school student is Enrolled in postsecondary coursework with a postsecondary institution and earning postsecondary credit hours while continuing to pursue a high school diploma, and the student's high school has agreed to accept the postsecondary coursework toward the student's high school graduation requirements.

"Eligible Non-Citizen" means a person who, in accordance with the Federal Title IV Regulations, is a United States permanent resident with a Permanent Resident Alien Card (I-551 or I-151); or a conditional permanent resident (I-551C); or the holder of an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from the Department of Homeland Security showing any one of the following designations: "Refugee", "Asylum Granted", "Parolee" (I-94 confirms paroled for a minimum of one year and status has not expired); or "Cuban-Haitian Entrant." Victims of human trafficking, in accordance with the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, may also be considered Eligible Non-Citizens. Persons with an F1 or F2 student visa, a J1 or J2 exchange visitor visa, or a G series visa are not Eligible Non-Citizens.

"Eligible Postsecondary Institution" means an institution that is:

(1) a private non-proprietary (non-profit) postsecondary institution located in Georgia, which is not a unit of the University System of Georgia, which is not a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, which is not a four-year or Graduate level institution of higher education that is, or is a part of, a college or university system that is owned and operated by a state other than Georgia, which is not a Graduate school or college of theology or divinity, and which is accredited or holds candidate status for accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or was previously accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools within the last seven years and which otherwise meets the requirements of this definition, except for the lack of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; or

(2) a private proprietary (for-profit) postsecondary institution located in Georgia, which is a Baccalaureate Degree granting postsecondary institution, which is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, which is not a Bible college, which is not a Graduate school or college of theology or divinity, which admits as regular students only persons who have a high school diploma, a General Education Development (GED) diploma, or a Degree from an accredited postsecondary institution, whose students are eligible to participate in the Federal Title IV Programs, which has been reviewed and approved for operation and for receipt of Tuition Equalization Grant funds by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission, and which is domiciled and incorporated in the State of Georgia and which has been in existence in Georgia for at least ten years and which met all requirements of part 2 of this definition by January 1, 2011. A proprietary institution which was an approved institution prior to January 1, 2011 will continue to be an eligible institution as long as it continues to meet all requirements which were in place prior to January 1, 2011.

"Enroll", "Enrolled'', or "Enrollment" means a student has completed the registration requirements, as defined by the postsecondary institution, except for payment of Tuition and fees.

"Exception" means a formal action by the Board to waive a specific program regulation for a student.

"Federal Title IV Program(s)" means the student financial aid programs administered by the United States Department of Education that are authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

"Federal Title IV Regulations" means federal regulations governing Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Higher Education Amendments of 1998, found in Chapter Six of Title 34 of the Federal Register.

"Freshman" means a first-year postsecondary student who is fully admitted and Enrolled in a Matriculated status to seek a Degree at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, and has earned less than 30 semester or 45 quarter credit hours.

"Full-Time" means Enrollment at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution as an Undergraduate student for the equivalent of at least 12 semester or quarter credit hours per term, or Enrollment at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution for the equivalent of at least 10 quarter or semester credit hours as a Graduate student, or while Incarcerated in an institution administered by the Georgia Department of Corrections.

"GAcollege411" means the Commission's website that provides information on careers, Georgia's postsecondary institutions, student financial aid, and accesses electronic college and financial aid applications.

"Georgia Resident" or "Georgia Residency" means an individual or the status of such individual who is a United States citizen or Eligible Non-Citizen and meets the criteria of the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulation,* as specified and limited by these regulations.

"Graduate" means the postsecondary program of study beyond the Baccalaureate Degree.

"GSFAPPS" means Georgia Student Financial Aid Application System, the Commission's web-based electronic application system by which students can apply for the scholarship and grant programs administered by the Commission.

"Home Institution" means an Eligible Postsecondary Institution in which the student is Enrolled and is in a Matriculated status working toward a Degree.

"HOPE" means Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally, a State of Georgia student financial aid program that provides scholarship and grant assistance to Georgia Residents attending Eligible Postsecondary Institutions in Georgia. HOPE is authorized by the O.C.G.A. § 20-3-519 and is funded by State of Georgia Lottery appropriations.

"Host Institution" means a postsecondary institution a student is temporarily attending as a Transient student.

"Incarcerated" means to be confined by competent public authority or under due legal process. A student is considered Incarcerated if he or she is serving a

criminal sentence in a federal, state, or local penitentiary, prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, half-way house, or similar correctional institution (whether operated by the government or a contractor) or is sentenced to home detention.

"Invoicing Deadline Date" means a date set by the Commission on which all invoices for TEG must be submitted and approved for payment, including the resolution of any reject, for each term.

"Invoicing Reject" means a condition or conditions that prevent an invoice submitted by an Eligible Postsecondary Institution from being fully processed and approved for payment.

"Joint Enrollment" means an arrangement whereby a high school student is Enrolled in postsecondary coursework with an postsecondary institution while continuing to pursue a high school diploma, and the high school has not agreed to accept the postsecondary coursework as credit toward the student's high school graduation requirements.

"Learning Support" means remedial or developmental coursework required by the postsecondary institution or chosen by the student that does not count toward program requirements for the Degree the student is seeking and for which TEG payment is sought.

"Matriculated" means a student is fully admitted and Enrolled at a postsecondary institution in a unified academic program of study leading to a Degree, Diploma or Certificate.

"Military Personnel" means an active member of the Armed Forces of the United States, including members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Commissioned officers of the Public Health Service or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on active duty are also considered to be Military Personnel.

"Non-Standard Term" means a term where all coursework is expected to begin and end within a set period of time, but is not a semester, trimester, or quarter term. Non-Standard terms may be of unequal length within an Award Year.

"Non-Term" means a program of study measuring progress in clock hours, or a program of study measuring progress in credit hours and has courses that do not begin and end within a set period of time, or has courses that overlap, or has sequential courses that do not begin and end within a term.

"Paid-Hours" means the number of quarter or semester hours for which a student received TEG payment. The number of Paid-Hours is used to determine when a student has reached the maximum number of hours he or she is eligible to receive TEG payment.

"Parent" means the natural/biological mother or father, adoptive parent, or United States court-appointed legal guardian of a student.

"Satisfactory Academic Progress" means the academic standards required of students by their postsecondary institutions in order to be eligible to receive payment from Federal Title IV Programs, in accordance with Federal Title IV Regulations.

"Spouse" means an individual who is legally married to and recognized as the wife or husband of an active qualifying Military Personnel member.

"Study Away" means postsecondary credit-earning coursework approved by an Eligible Postsecondary Institution for its students in locations outside the State of Georgia, including locations in foreign countries.

"SURFER" means the Commission's web-based system used by Eligible Postsecondary Institutions to electronically transmit and receive student data, award information, and conduct other administrative activities related to the Commission's scholarship and grant programs.

"Term-Reconciliation" means an official acknowledgement by an authorized official of an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, at the end of each term, that the number of students submitted for payment and amount invoiced by the institution and the number of students awarded and amount issued by the Commission, according to the SURFER system, are accurate on the date of such acknowledgement.

"Transient" means temporary admission to a Host Institution for the purpose of completing coursework and earning postsecondary credit that the Home Institution has agreed to accept as transferable postsecondary credit.

"Tuition" means the charges to a student for postsecondary academic instruction without regard to other fees such as technology, activity, athletic, health, etc.

"Tuition Equalization Grant" or **"TEG"** means a State of Georgia student financial aid program administered by the Commission to provide grant assistance to Georgia Residents who are Full-Time students attending a private (nonprofit or proprietary) Eligible Postsecondary Institutions located in Georgia, The TEG program is authorized by the O.C.G.A. § 20-3-410 et seq. and is funded by state appropriations.

"Undergraduate" means coursework that is included in a postsecondary program of study leading to an Associate Degree or Baccalaureate Degree, and is not included in a Graduate program of study.

"Withdrawal Date" means the date the student withdraws, as determined by the institution in accordance with the procedures set forth for determining Withdrawal Date under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

604. General Eligibility Requirements.

604.1. Citizenship.

A student must be a United States citizen or an Eligible Non-Citizen for 12 consecutive months immediately prior to the first day of classes of the school term for which TEG payment is sought.

604.2. Georgia Residency.

a. A student attending an Eligible Postsecondary Institution meets the Georgia Residency requirements for purposes of TEG eligibility, if he or she meets the criteria of the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulations.* However, A Freshman student with a non-resident Military Personnel Parent meets the Georgia Residency requirements, if such student graduated from a high school located in Georgia and his or her Military Personnel Parent was stationed in Georgia at the time of the student's high school graduation. In order to benefit from this provision, a student must be eligible for and begin receiving TEG payment prior to earning 30 semester or 45 quarter hours of Degree credit.

b. A student attending a private Eligible Postsecondary Institution who meets the Georgia Residency requirements of the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulations* at the time of his or her high school graduation, Home Study program completion or successful GED test, must also meet such Georgia Residency requirements for 12 consecutive months immediately prior to the first day of classes of the school term for which the TEG payment is sought.

c. A student who does not meet the Georgia Residency requirements of the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulations* at the time of high school graduation, Home Study program completion or successful GED test must meet such Georgia Residency requirements for 24 consecutive months immediately prior to the first day of classes of the school term for which the TEG payment is sought.

d. For purposes of TEG eligibility, to be a resident on the date of high school graduation, Home Study program completion or successful GED test means to have established residency in Georgia, as determined by policies, but without regard to the length of time such student has established such residency.

e. Military Personnel stationed in Georgia on active duty, or listing Georgia as his or her home of record, his or her Spouse, and his or her Dependent Child shall be treated as a Georgia Resident for purposes of TEG eligibility.

f. A student, who was correctly determined to meet the Georgia Residency requirements and began receiving TEG payment, will continue to meet the

Georgia Residency requirements for purposes of TEG eligibility, unless he or she has a break in Enrollment of two or more consecutive semesters or quarters and resides outside of Georgia for 12 or more consecutive months. If such student later returns to Georgia, he or she must re-establish Georgia Residency for 12 consecutive months, (in accordance with *Section 604.2.a.*), before regaining TEG eligibility. A student who has a break in Enrollment of two or more consecutive semesters or quarters, and who resides outside Georgia for less than 12 consecutive months, and then later returns to Georgia and Enrolls in an Eligible Postsecondary Institution within 12 consecutive months from his or her most recent date of Enrollment in an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, will continue to meet the Georgia Residency requirements for purposes of TEG eligibility.

604.3. Enrollment Status.

a. A student must be Enrolled at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution in a Matriculated status.

b. A student must be classified and Enrolled as Full-Time through the last day of the institutions' drop/add period in order to be eligible for TEG payment. The day after the drop/add period is referred to as the Award Date. If a student officially or unofficially withdraws, drops out, or is expelled prior to the Award Date, he or she is ineligible to receive TEG payment for that school term. If the Eligible Postsecondary Institution is unable to document the student's class attendance to the Award Date, the student is considered to have unofficially withdrawn and is ineligible for TEG payment.

604.4. Satisfactory Academic Progress.

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress, as defined and certified by his or her Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

604.5. Selective Service Registration.

A student must be in compliance with the United States Selective Service System requirements, if such requirements are applicable, prior to the TEG program application deadline in order to be eligible for TEG payment for that school term.

604.6. Defaulted Loan or Refund Due.

A student must not be in default on a Federal Title IV or State of Georgia educational loan, nor owe a refund on a Federal Title IV or State of Georgia student financial aid program, nor in any other way be in violation of Federal Title IV Regulations or State of Georgia student financial aid program regulations. A student must meet the requirements of this section at the time funds are disbursed by the Commission on behalf of the student. If such student has repaid the defaulted loan or refund due in full, or resolved the default status, then he or she may be eligible to receive TEG payment beginning with the school term in

which repayment was made in full, but not retroactively for previous school terms. A student's default status can be resolved one of four ways: 1) completing an acceptable rehabilitation plan, 2) having the loan repurchased by the original lender and the default status reversed, 3) by consolidating the loan out of a default status, or 4) by receiving an approved Title IV debt settlement, to include a compromised settlement.

604.7. Georgia Drug-Free Act.

A student convicted of committing certain felony offenses involving marijuana, controlled substances, or dangerous drugs, is ineligible for TEG payment from the date of conviction to the completion of the following school term, in accordance with the Georgia Drug-Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990, O.C.G.A. § 20-1-24.

604.8. Incarceration.

A student is ineligible for TEG payment while Incarcerated. Upon release from Incarceration, such student may begin receiving TEG payments, if he or she meets all other TEG eligibility requirements.

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605. Program Specific Eligibility Requirements.

605.1. Undergraduate and Graduate Student Eligibility.

a. A student Enrolled as an Undergraduate in a program of study leading to an Associate Degree or Baccalaureate Degree is eligible for TEG payment, if he or she meets all other TEG requirements, including the Paid-Hours limit.

    1. A student Enrolled in a program of study leading to a Doctor of Pharmacy Degree, at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution that does not offer a Baccalaureate Degree in Pharmacy, is eligible for TEG payment as an Undergraduate student (third and fourth years), if he or she meets all other TEG requirements, including the Paid-Hours limit. Upon entering the fifth year, such student is no longer considered an Undergraduate student, for purposes of the TEG program, and is ineligible for TEG payment.

    2. A student Enrolled in Medicine, Dentistry, Law, Optometry, Veterinary, Chiropractic, Podiatry, or other Graduate programs of study is not considered an Undergraduate student and is ineligible for TEG payment, even though he or she may not have received a Baccalaureate Degree.

b. A student Enrolled in a Graduate program is ineligible for TEG payment, unless funds are specifically appropriated by the Georgia General Assembly for the purpose of providing TEG awards to Graduate students.

605.2. Paid-Hours Limit.

A student is eligible to receive TEG payment for a maximum of 127 semester or 190 quarter hours of TEG payments, referred to as Paid-Hours.

a. As part of the invoicing process, Eligible Postsecondary Institutions must report to the Commission the actual number of hours attempted, not just the hours earned, by each student for which TEG payment is requested for a school term.

b. For the school term in which a student reaches the Paid-Hours limit of 127 semester or 190 quarter hours, the student can be paid only for the hours up to the Paid-Hours limit. However, a student who will reach the Attempted-Hours or Paid-Hours limit with a fraction of an hour can be paid for a full hour.

c. A maximum of 12 semester or quarter hours per term will be counted toward the Paid-Hours limit, even if actual enrollment is greater than 12 hours.

605.3. Attainment of a Baccalaureate Degree.

A student is eligible for TEG payment regardless of whether he or she has earned a Baccalaureate Degree. An otherwise eligible student who has already obtained a Baccalaureate Degree, and who is in a Matriculated status working

toward a second or additional Undergraduate Degree, is eligible for TEG payment.

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606. Eligible Coursework.

606.1. Joint and Dual Credit Enrollment Coursework.

A student seeking a high school diploma, who is simultaneously Enrolled in Degree coursework as a Joint Enrollment or Dual Credit Enrollment student at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, is eligible for TEG payment for such postsecondary Degree coursework, if such student meets all TEG eligibility requirements, including Full-Time status at the postsecondary level. Such Degree coursework credit hours are counted as Paid-Hours.

606.2. Learning Support Coursework.

A student seeking a Degree, who Enrolls in Learning Support (remedial) coursework, is eligible for TEG payment for such coursework, if he or she meets all TEG program eligibility requirements. Learning Support credit hours are counted as Paid-Hours.

606.3. Coursework Exemptions.

A student is ineligible to receive TEG payment for coursework that was exempted or given credit by examination, testing, training, or experience.

606.4. Distance Learning Coursework.

A student participating in Distance Learning coursework is eligible to receive TEG payment, if all other eligibility criteria are met, including Enrollment as a Full-Time student at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

606.5. Transient Coursework.

a. A Transient student is eligible for TEG payment, if the private Eligible Postsecondary Institution at which he or she is normally Enrolled and Matriculated (Home Institution) has a written agreement with a Host Institution to transfer the credit hours from the Host Institution, for application toward the student's Degree at the Home Institution. The TEG payment must take place through the Host Institution, which must also be an Eligible Postsecondary Institution. The Transient student must be Enrolled as Full-Time at the Host Institution and meet all other TEG eligibility requirements. Less than Full-Time status at the Home Institution and less than Full-Time status at the Host Institution for the same school term cannot be combined to establish Full-Time status.

b. A Transient student is ineligible for TEG payment, if either the Home Institution or the Host Institution is not a private Eligible Postsecondary Institution approved for participation in the TEG program.

c. The Host Institution awards TEG funds to the Transient student based on certification of eligibility from the Home Institution. The Home Institution is responsible for verifying the eligibility of their Transient students. The Host Institution must report TEG payment for Transient students to the Commission in the same manner it reports TEG payments for its regular students.

d. The Home Institution is liable for the return of funds the student receives at the Host Institution, if the Home Institution erroneously certifies the student's eligibility to the Host Institution.

606.6. Study Away Coursework.

a. A student Enrolled in a Matriculated status at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, who meets all other TEG eligibility requirements, may qualify for TEG payment while participating in a Study Away program.

b. A student's Eligible Postsecondary Institution, which is his or her Home Institution, must approve the Study Away program for credit toward the student's Degree program prior to the student's departure.

c. The TEG award must be the amount the student would normally receive at the Home Institution.

d. The TEG payment must take place through the Home Institution, unless the student is participating in a Study Away program via another private Eligible Postsecondary Institution serving as the student's Host Institution. In this situation, the Host Institution must treat the Study Away student as a Transient student, as prescribed by *Section 606.5.* The Home Institution may also coordinate the Study Away program through a postsecondary institution that is not an Eligible Postsecondary Institution. For example, the student's Home Institution may have an arrangement with a Study Away program offered by an out-of-state institution or a Georgia public institution. In this case, the TEG payment must take place through the Home Institution, which must be an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, and the student must be considered to be in a matriculated status by his or her Home Institution.

606.7. Continuing Education and Audit Coursework.

A student is ineligible to receive TEG payment for coursework classified by his or her Eligible Postsecondary Institution as Continuing Education or Audit coursework.

606.8. Total Withdrawal from Coursework.

A student is ineligible for TEG payment for coursework from which he or she totally withdrew if, as a result, such coursework does not appear on the student's academic transcript as a "Withdrawal" or any other type of identification.

607. Student Application Requirements.

NEW

Beginning with the 2013-2014 Award Year, a student must complete a current year FAFSA to receive TEG funding. The student must then complete a FAFSA for each subsequent year for which funding is sought.

607.1. Application Forms.

a. In order to be considered for a TEG award, a student must have one of the following application forms on file and in an approved status with GSFC:

   1. An electronic TEG application provided by GSFAPPS;

   2. An electronic HOPE application provided by GSFAPPS; or

   3. A paper TEG/HOPE application printable from GAcollege411.

b. In addition to, but not in replacement of, one of the three applications identified above, an Eligible Postsecondary Institution may require students to complete the institution's application for student financial aid and/or provide supplemental information for the purpose of determining TEG eligibility.

c. Once a student has submitted a GSFAPPS or paper TEG/HOPE Application, and it has been accepted on the Commission's system as a valid application, it will remain on the Commission's system as a valid application for 84 consecutive months following the application's approval date. The student's application will remain valid during the 84 month period, regardless of whether or not an institution submits a TEG invoice to the Commission on behalf of the student during the 84 month period. Upon conclusion of the 84 month period, the student's application will expire. Once an application has expired, the student will be required to submit a new application in order for a TEG invoice to be processed for the student by the Commission. If during the original application's 84 month period, the student submits to the Commission a new application for TEG, or an application for a program other than TEG, both applications will remain valid for 84 consecutive months following the second application's approval date. The above stipulations of *Section 607.1. Part c.* apply to all GSFAPPS and paper TEG/HOPE Applications accepted as valid applications on the Commission's system, including such applications that were submitted to and accepted prior to the 2008-2009 Award Year.

607.2. Application Deadline Date.

The only specific Application Deadline Date is the Invoicing Deadline Date applicable to Eligible Postsecondary Institutions. Pursuant to *Section 607.1* above, students must have a completed and approved TEG application on file with GSFC before the Eligible Postsecondary Institution can receive payment.

Eligible Postsecondary Institutions may institute their own student application deadline dates exclusive of the TEG regulations or requirements.

607.3. Application for Subsequent Years.

It is not mandatory, except as provided for in *Section 607.1.b*. of these regulations, for a student to complete a new TEG application for each Award Year. However, Eligible Postsecondary Institutions may require its students to complete a new TEG application each Award Year.

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608. Award Requirements.

608.1. Awards Amounts.

The TEG award amounts per semester or quarter are provided below. A student who meets all TEG eligibility requirements, including Full-time Enrollment, may receive payment for three semesters or four quarters for the Award Year. However, these award amounts are subject to change during the Award Year. (Refer to *Section 608.5*.)

	Semester System:	Quarter System:
Summer:	$350	$233
Fall:	$350	$234
Winter:	-	$233
Spring:	$350	$233

For a student Enrolled Full-time during a term in which he or she reaches the Paid-Hours limit, such student can receive payment only for hours up to the limit. The Per Credit Hour award for such student is:

	Semester System:	Quarter System:
Per Credit Hour:	$29.00	$19.00

608.2. Awards Per School Term.

TEG payment is available to students for the standard school terms of Summer, Fall, and Spring semesters or Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters. An Eligible Postsecondary Institution may combine mini-terms or modules to form the equivalent of a standard semester or quarter. An institution may offer Non-Standard Terms or Non-Terms, in which courses or modules are taken consecutively to form the equivalent of a standard semester or quarter. Regardless of the structure of an Eligible Postsecondary Institution's school terms, a student may only be awarded TEG funds for a maximum of three semesters or four quarters per Award Year.

608.3. Student Notification of Award.

a. An Eligible Postsecondary Institution must notify each TEG recipient of the amount of TEG funds he or she is awarded for the Award Year, and identify such funds as a Tuition Equalization Grant award.

b. A student who wishes to decline a TEG award must do so actively. The institution must maintain a record of the student's notification to the institution that he or she is declining the award. A student's decision to decline a TEG award becomes final and irrevocable on the last day of the term for which the TEG award was made.

608.4. Adjustments to Award Amounts.

A student's TEG award amount must be reduced if the student is receiving any other student financial aid from federal, state, institutional or private sources, which in combination with the TEG award amount would exceed the student's Cost of Attendance. The student's TEG award, plus any other student financial aid, must not exceed the student's Cost of Attendance.

608.5. Insufficient Funding.

Should TEG funds available to the Commission from state appropriations be insufficient to fulfill TEG payments for all eligible students for the Award Year, it may be necessary to reduce the TEG award amounts payable to students for a particular school term or terms or to eliminate TEG payments, altogether, for a school term or terms.

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609. Invoicing Requirements.

609.1. Submission of Invoices.

a. A student must have a completed and approved application for TEG on file with the Commission before an Eligible Postsecondary Institution can successfully submit a TEG invoice to the Commission for such student for a school term.

b. An Eligible Postsecondary Institution may submit invoices to the Commission as early as 15 calendar days prior to the first day of classes for the school term. This provision does not release an Eligible Postsecondary Institution from its responsibility to verify the Enrollment requirements of *Section 604.3*.

c. Invoices for TEG payment must be submitted, processed and approved by the Commission by the Invoicing Deadline Date as established by the Commission. TEG invoices submitted to the Commission by Eligible Postsecondary Institutions after the Invoicing Deadline Date for a school term will not be honored or paid by the Commission. Invoices submitted prior to the Invoicing Deadline Date but for which resolution of any applicable Invoicing Reject was not reached until after the Invoicing Deadline Date will not be paid by the Commission.

d. Prior to the beginning of any Award Year and no later than June 30 of each year the Commission shall establish and publish the Invoicing Deadline Dates for each school term for the upcoming Award Year.

e. An Invoice may be honored or paid after the Invoicing Deadline Date if the failure to meet the date was due to the need for supplemental documentation required by the institution or the Commission to support or verify a student's eligibility or late grades, late completions, grade changes or other adjustments made to the student's official academic transcript that resulted in a change in eligibility, and the student met all other eligibility requirements prior to the deadline.

f. The President of GSFC has sole discretion in the determination of deadline extensions.

609.2. Payment of Invoices.

Upon submission of a timely and valid invoice to the Commission, funds are paid to an Eligible Postsecondary Institution, on behalf of eligible invoiced students for a school term, by method of check or electronic transfer of funds.

609.3. Payment to Students.

TEG funds may be applied to any of the Eligible Postsecondary Institution's direct charges, such as Tuition, fees, room and meals. If a student does not owe a balance, the institution shall pay over the same or any remaining amount of the TEG award to the student.

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610. Calculation of Refunds.

610.1. Student Refunds.

a. If a student officially withdraws, drops out, drops hours, is expelled, or otherwise fails to complete a period of Enrollment, and is entitled to a refund, a portion of such refund may need to be returned to the institution's TEG fund.

b. If applicable, the Eligible Postsecondary Institution must first apply the Federal Title IV Return of Funds policy for any federal aid the student may have received. To determine the refund to TEG, the institution must then apply the institution's refund policy, if different from Federal Title IV Return of Funds policy, to the student's original TEG award.

c. The Eligible Postsecondary Institution must determine the amount of the refund due back to the TEG program. The amount of the TEG award not determined to be owed back to the TEG program is retained by the institution to cover the institution's cost for the portion of the school term that the student was enrolled.

    1. The Eligible Postsecondary Institution must adjust the student's invoice in SURFER to the new award amount remaining after the refund is calculated within 45 days of the determination.

    2. If the Eligible Postsecondary Institution has sufficient funds on hand to return to the Commission the refund owed to the TEG program, it should return the funds within 45 days of the refund determination. The Eligible Postsecondary Institution would then collect the refund amount from the student. However, the student should not be reported with a "Refund Due" status to the Commission since the funds have been repaid to the Commission.

    3. If the Eligible Postsecondary Institution does not have sufficient funds on hand to return to the Commission the refund owed to the TEG program, the student is considered to have a "Refund Due" to the Commission and the institution must report the student to the Commission with a "Refund Due" status.

610.2. Collection of Refunds.

A student who owes a refund to the Commission should pay the Eligible Postsecondary Institution and the Eligible Postsecondary Institution should pay the Commission or, at its sole discretion, the Commission may require the student to pay the refund directly to the Commission. Nothing herein shall be deemed to prohibit the Commission or the Eligible Postsecondary Institution from using all available legal and equitable remedies to collect the refund, including,

but not limited to, garnishment of pay, loss of professional license, offset of lottery winnings, and offset of state tax refund.

610.3. Emergency Military Duty.

A student who is a member of the U.S. Armed Services, National Guard, or Armed Forces Reserve receiving funds from the TEG program who is called to emergency military duty during a school term that is already in progress should not have his or her TEG eligibility negatively impacted by the loss of Paid-Hours. If the Eligible Postsecondary Institution the student attends allows the student to totally withdraw and receive a grade such as “WM” for “military withdrawal” or the institution totally removes all coursework for that term (grades and corresponding credit hours) from the student’s records, the institution should cancel the student’s TEG award on SURFER, and return the full amount of the student’s TEG payment to the institution’s TEG account. This regulation may also be applied to students who are not members of the military but are otherwise unusually and detrimentally affected by the emergency activation of members of the military, as determined by the president of the Eligible Postsecondary Institution that such student is attending.

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611. Reconciliation Requirements.

611.1. Term-Reconciliation.

An Eligible Postsecondary Institution must conduct a Term-Reconciliation prior to the end of each term. A Term-Reconciliation consists of an official acknowledgement by an authorized school official that the number of students and amount invoiced by the institution and the number of students awarded and amount issued by the Commission, according to the SURFER system, is accurate on that date. The Commission will not issue TEG funds for the following school term until the Term-Reconciliation is complete. Funds are not returned to the Commission as part of the Term-Reconciliation process.

611.2. Award-Year Reconciliation.

In addition to the Term-Reconciliations, the Eligible Postsecondary Institution must conduct the Award-Year Reconciliation. The institution must conduct a complete student-by-student Award-Year Reconciliation with the Commission, and submit a Reconciliation Certification Form to the Commission by July 15, immediately following the completion of the Award Year.

611.3. Return of Funds.

The institution must return to the Commission any TEG funds not utilized according to the Award-Year Reconciliation within 30 days of completing the Award-Year Reconciliation process. The institution must have a procedure in place to ensure that the TEG funds do not go to an unintended third party (i.e. State, institution).

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612. Records Retention Requirements.

612.1. Length of Retention.

An Eligible Postsecondary Institution shall maintain accurate records, books, documents and other evidence concerning the TEG program, including, but not limited to, individual student files for the later of three years after the Award Year in which the aid was awarded, or for such other period as required by an applicable statute, rule, or regulation; or such other time as requested in writing by the Commission.

612.2. Documentation.

a. Documentation contained within an individual student file or record, which supports the original determination of a student's eligibility, must be retained by the institution and available for review by the Commission on the institution's campus, located within the State of Georgia, for at least three years after the most recent Award Year for which the student received TEG funds. (Refer to Section 614.) Institutions are permitted to maintain these documents in an imaged media format. The imaged media format must be capable of reproducing an accurate, legible, and complete copy of the original document.

b. Such documentation may include, but is not limited to, copies of Permanent Resident Alien Cards, Georgia State Income Tax Returns, and applications for student financial aid. Documentation regarding a student's eligibility is not limited to files, records, and other information received and maintained by the institution's Student Financial Aid Office. Documentation supporting a student's eligibility that is received and maintained by the institution's Admissions Office, Registrars Office, Business Office, and other administrative operations of the institution must be available to the Commission for the purpose of Compliance Reviews. It is the institution's responsibility to resolve any inconsistencies or conflicting information within a student's records, prior to awarding or disbursing TEG funds to the student.

612.3. Extended Retention.

An Eligible Postsecondary Institution may be required to retain student records involved in a Compliance Review, Audit or investigation for more than the three-year retention period described above. If the three-year retention period expires before the issue in question is resolved, the institution must continue to retain all associated records until resolution is reached.

613. Administrative Reviews and Exceptions.

613.1. Administrative Reviews.

a. The Tuition Equalization Grant Program Regulations are applied to each student considered for TEG funds by appropriate officials of Eligible Postsecondary Institutions and by the administrative staff of the Commission. If a student believes a TEG rule or regulation was incorrectly applied in his or her case, the student has the right to file a request for an Administrative Review with the Commission. The Commission will review the case and determine whether the rule or regulation was applied correctly and notify the student and institution of the determination.

b. In order for an Administrative Review to be considered, the student must submit a written request for an Administrative Review to the Commission office within 45 days of receiving notice of denial from the Eligible Postsecondary Institution. If additional information is requested from the student, it must be provided within the time frame specified by the Commission. The Commission decides a case based only on documentation provided, rather than a personal presentation.

613.2. Exceptions.

Requests for Exceptions to the Tuition Equalization Grant Program Regulations cannot be considered, reviewed, or granted under any circumstances.

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614. Compliance Reviews.

614.1. Compliance Review Policy.

The Commission shall conduct Compliance Reviews of Eligible Postsecondary Institutions participating in the TEG program in order to assess institutional administration of the program and compliance with the program's regulations. Such Compliance Review shall be conducted no less frequently then once every three years in accordance with the Commission's Compliance Review Process and Procedures document, which is available at the ***gsfc.org*** website under School and Lender Information-Compliance Documents.

614.2. Compliance Review Process.

The Commission selects a sampling of the institution's TEG recipients, for the Award Year under review, and the institution's files and records for the sample are examined to assure compliance. Each Eligible Postsecondary Institution must have all student records, which document and support the eligibility of that institution's TEG recipients, available for review by the Commission on the campus of the Eligible Postsecondary Institution, and such campus must be located within the State of Georgia. (Refer to *Section 612*.)

614.3. Institutional Repayment.

a. In the event it is determined that a postsecondary institution knowingly or through error certified an ineligible student to be eligible TEG payment, the amount of such grant shall be refunded by the postsecondary institution to the Commission.

b. The Commission may suspend a postsecondary institution from receiving TEG payments if it fails to refund any monies deemed due based on the Compliance Review.

c. Any person who knowingly makes or furnishes any false statement or misrepresentation, or who accepts such statement or misrepresentation knowing it to be false, for the purpose of enabling an ineligible student to obtain wrongfully a TEG award shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

d. If later evidence, not available at the time of awarding, indicates that a student should not have received the TEG payment, then all future TEG awards must be canceled. The Eligible Postsecondary Institution is held harmless by the Commission if the student's file is appropriately documented with available evidence and it is determined by the Commission that the institution was not at fault. Evidence is considered unavailable at the time of awarding if it is not available in the student's institutional files (i.e. financial aid, admissions, registrar, etc.). The institution must notify the student and the Commission of a refund due. The student is ineligible to receive additional state aid from the Commission until the refund is paid in full, in accordance with *Section 610.2.*

614.4. Examination by State Auditor.

In addition to Compliance Reviews conducted by the Commission, an Eligible Postsecondary Institution may be subject to examination by the state auditor for the sole purpose of determining whether the institution properly certified eligibility of students and credited TEG payments on behalf of students. In the event it is determined that the institution knowingly or through error certified an ineligible student to be eligible for TEG payment, such payment must be refunded by the institution to the Commission.

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