

Policy For GPEP Continued Education Aid

I. SCOPE

This policy is for former Goucher Prison Education Partnership (GPEP) students released from prison who are applying to and enrolling in a college, university, or certificate program, including but not limited to Goucher College's main campus.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

Goucher College is an institution that focuses on social justice and, as such, recognizes that when Goucher students are released from prison, they face challenges that are unique to system-impacted individuals (i.e., barriers related to paying for and receiving proper identification such as drivers and non-driver's license, seeking and obtaining gainful and sustainable employment, return to poverty-stricken environments often without choice, lack of medical care, child care, transportation, etc.). Therefore, this policy is intended to level the playing field of Goucher former students who are system-impacted (GPEP students) and those who have not been system-impacted.

III. PURPOSE

This policy aims to provide guidelines for GPEP students to request funds for purchases that will facilitate their re-entry and continued education, such as paying for a transcript, preloading a meal card, or buying a computer.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Re-entry: The transition from life in jail or prison to life in the community.

System-impacted: A person who is legally, economically, mentally/emotionally, and/or socially affected negatively by having been incarcerated.

V. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible former GPEP student have:

1. earned at least 4 credits and taken at least 1 year of courses with GPEP within eight years of their release and
2. been released from prison within the past five years, and
3. not exceeded the lifetime limit of \$8,000 funding.

Eligible expenses:

- 1) While applying to colleges, universities, and/or certificate programs, former GPEP students can request funds from GPEP to cover the following, either as a direct payment or as a reimbursement:
 - a) Copies of official Goucher transcript
 - b) Application, registration, and other fees related to applying and enrolling in a school that cannot be waived by the school to which the student is applying
 - c) Other expenses required for applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis

- 2) Upon enrolling in a college, university, or certificate program, former GPEP students can request funds from GPEP to cover the following, either as a direct payment or as a reimbursement:
 - a) A laptop and other required technology if the school in which the student enrolls does not provide a laptop, such as one that can be checked out free of charge for the semester from the school library
 - b) A bus pass to commute to and from school
 - c) Textbooks
 - d) Lab fees
 - e) Required art materials
 - f) For students on Goucher's main campus for whom the college's meal plan is not within their financial means: a preloaded meal card for students to use on days that they can't afford to pay for meals out of pocket
 - g) Other materials or expenses required to complete coursework are reviewed on a case-by-case basis (e.g., notebooks, backpacks, pens)

VI. PROCEDURES

The former GPEP student first requests in writing to GPEP's Coordinator of Office Operations (COO), in advance of incurring the expense.

The COO confirms the individual is an eligible former GPEP student (by reviewing internal GPEP records) *and* that they are either actively applying to continue their education -GPEP's Executive Director (ED) can provide this confirmation- or that they are enrolled in a college, university, or certificate program (by reviewing documentation provided by the student indicating enrollment).

The COO confirms the expense the student is requesting funding for is an eligible expense, confirms that there are adequate funds remaining in the supplies budget line for the fiscal year, works with the student on identifying the most cost-effective version of the item, and sends the request to the ED for final approval.

The ED confirms it is an eligible expense that does not exceed the student's lifetime limit, approves, or denies the request accordingly, and sends final confirmation to the COO.

Upon receiving final approval from the ED, the COO either purchases the item for the student using GPEP funds or requests a receipt from the student for the item they already purchased so a reimbursement can be issued.

VII. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

The Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies is responsible for this policy:
associateprovost@goucher.edu

VIII. HISTORY

Adopted September 2022