

Policy: Hourly Employee Tuition Assistance Policy

Policy code: HR

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Responsible office/dept: HR

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Applies to: hourly, full-time employees

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Policy Statement

1. Employees are encouraged to support the Seventh-day Adventist Church's philosophy of Christian education by enrolling their dependents in Seventh-day Adventist schools to allow them to obtain a quality education which integrates faith and learning and to assist youth in making a decision for and commitment to Christ, thus perpetuating the practice of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and teachings, enlarging the reservoir of future church employees and lay church leaders, providing a positive example, and reducing the possibility that the children adopt a lifestyle that is not in harmony with the teachings of the Church.

Purpose

2. Full time benefit eligible hourly employees whose dependents are attending Walla Walla University.

Definitions

Subsidy – assistance in paying for education

Procedures

3. Students Eligible for Tuition Assistance – To be eligible for tuition assistance the student must meet the following criteria:
 - a. An unmarried dependent of the employee (as defined by U.S. Federal Tax Standards)
 - b. Less than twenty-four years of age unless the student has given compulsory military service, volunteer service for the Church, or has a documented medical consideration (see Section 6(b) for exceptions to age requirement).
 - c. Eligible to be claimed as a dependent on the employee's income tax return.
 - d. Born to, or legally adopted by, the employee and/or spouse or is a stepchild by marriage.
 - e. Attending Walla Walla University
4. Students Eligible in Divorce and Remarriage Situations – To be eligible for tuition assistance the student must meet one of the following criteria:
 - a. Under the custody of a divorced employee and eligible to be claimed as a dependent on the employee's tax return.

b. Under the custody of the ex-spouse of the employee and eligible to be claimed as a dependent on the employee's tax return. The Director of Human Resources may make an exception to NAD Policy if the employee has assumed full responsibility for a child's educational expenses at Walla Walla University.

c. WWU extends NAD Policy to also include legal guardianship. In addition, WWU will give assistance to students of divorced employees whether or not they can be declared as dependents on the employee's tax return.

d. Tuition assistance is considered an employment benefit and as such, should be applied by the receiving school in a manner that benefits the employee of WWU. Employee(s) may receive the full tuition assistance their dependents are eligible for, even when the benefit is applied only to the employee's portion of the bill. The benefit may only be shared with other parties responsible for the bill if the employee agrees to this arrangement.

5. Assistance – Walla Walla University may provide tuition assistance for children of WWU eligible employees of up to 70% of the tuition and all required fees for students living in WWU Housing, and up to 50% for those living at home. For those not living in university housing or with their parents, tuition assistance is provided at 35%. "WWU Housing" includes dormitory, university apartments, and university-owned residences.

The tuition assistance for all grade levels is calculated on the gross charges for tuition and required fees, according to the current published Walla Walla University financial bulletin, before family or other discounts granted by WWU. In cases where an employee's church provides a subsidy to cover the differential between constituent and non-constituent tuition rates, the tuition assistance from the employer shall be based on the net tuition expense to the employee. Required fees do not include lesson fee charges for private music lessons, or fees for music ensembles (choir, band, brass ensemble, etc.). Tuition for music lessons taken for credit or music ensembles enrolled for credit will be included in the subsidy calculation.

6. Limitation on Assistance:

a. Total Number of Years of Study: Tuition assistance is provided for the completion of the minimum requirements for a bachelor's degree program for a maximum of four years of study (or the equivalent cost of twelve full-time quarters, eight full-time semesters, or a combined equivalent).

The goal of tuition assistance is to reach a bachelor degree in as timely a manner as possible. An extension may be granted for another year, totaling to five years of study (or the equivalent cost of fifteen full-time quarters, ten full-time semesters, or a combined equivalent), subject to approval by the Human Resources Department. A senior outline approved by Academic Records must be provided to the Human Resources department as well as a written request asking for an extension.

Once a bachelor degree has been conferred, students are no longer eligible for tuition assistance, regardless of age or total number of years of study.

b. Age Limitation: Extensions of the tuition assistance policy maybe be granted due to extenuating circumstances, such as compulsory military service, volunteer service for the Church, or medical illness. A request for an extension of the age limit, due to a student exceeding the age requirements in subparagraph 3b, can be made with Human Resources in conjunction with Student Financial Services/Academic Records but this extension will not exceed the five-year "total number of years of study" limitation of subparagraph 6a above.

e. Students must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress at WWU to continue to qualify for subsidy.

8. Summer Sessions – Students who attend summer sessions shall be eligible for tuition assistance. Such attendance shall not count against the maximum 8 semesters or 12 quarters referred to in paragraph 6. However, a maximum of one summer study tour (conducted by Walla Walla University only) and one summer of ACA study abroad will be subsidized per student.
9. Adventist Colleges Abroad (ACA) – Students would receive tuition assistance based on the cost of tuition at the home campus where they are registered (Walla Walla University only). A maximum of 2 semesters or 3 quarters of ACA will be eligible for tuition assistance, including summer terms.
13. Method of Payment – Assistance for students enrolled at Walla Walla University shall be made directly to the school.
14. Division of Assistance – When both employee and spouse are denominationally employed by separate organizations and both provide tuition assistance according to NAD policy, each organization shall be responsible for one-half of the assistance. The method of paying the assistance and dividing the cost may be mutually agreed on by the organizations

concerned. Where both employee and spouse are subsidy eligible employees of WWU, only one tuition assistance shall be provided per student.

15. Death or Disability of Employees – This policy would extend tuition assistance to the dependents of employees who pass away or become disabled as outlined in the NAD Policy Manual. Assistance would be continued through the school year in which the employee's elimination period occurs, but in no event would it be carried more than one school year.

17. Grandfathering Provisions:

- a. Students who attended Walla Walla University prior to fall of 2019, (or who, before August 1, 2019, applied and paid enrollment fees to attend WWU commencing no later than fall semester or quarter of 2019) and pursue their degree without an interruption which exceeds one year, will generally continue to receive subsidy assistance based on prior policy. Adjustments to this must be approved by Human Resources.

Training/Education Communication

Human Resources will provide information to hourly employees regarding this policy, notify them if there are revisions, and provide a tuition assistance request form each year for employees to complete.

Reprisal

If an employee does not follow this policy, he/she may lose the option to receive the tuition assistance benefit.