

# The Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance



## ***ACTION LETTER***

---

Action Letter #3  
January 2002

### **2001-2002 PROGRAMS GUIDELINES UPDATES**

Dear Colleague:

This Action Letter updates/clarifies information contained in the 2001-2002 Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance's Policies and Procedures Manual. The following changes, updates and/or clarifications shall become effective with the academic year 2001-2002.

Please replace guidelines for the *Department of Social Services Adopted Children Tuition Waiver* (Section P) and *Department of Social Services Foster Care Children Tuition Waiver* (Section Q), as contained in the tuition waiver section of the 2001-2002 State Financial Aid Programs Guidelines and Procedures Manual, with the following:

**SECTION P: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES ADOPTED CHILDREN  
TUITION WAIVER**

**DEFINITIONS:**

**INSTITUTION:**

An institution within the system of public higher education under Section 5 of Chapter 15A of the General Laws.

**ELIGIBLE STUDENT:**

Eligible students include:

- all children in the custody of the Department of Social Services adopted by an eligible Massachusetts state employee through the Department of Social Services who are age twenty-four or under;
- all children in the custody of the Department of Social Services adopted by an eligible Massachusetts resident through the Department of Social Services who are age twenty-four or under.

### **ELIGIBLE STATE EMPLOYEE AND RESIDENTS:**

Eligible state employees shall include all individuals determined to be Massachusetts State employees at the time of adoption of the eligible student including:

- all full and part-time employees employed at the time of the adoption by the Massachusetts state government for at least six months,
- employees who are working for the state at the time of the adoption and who continue to be employed by the state for at least six months after the adoption.

Eligible Massachusetts residents shall include:

- all individuals determined to be Massachusetts State residents at the time of adoption of the eligible student.

### **ELIGIBLE COURSE:**

Any state-supported course offered by an institution at a public college or university, excluding all graduate courses and courses in the MD program at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. Eligible courses include those toward an undergraduate degree program, certificate program, short-term certificate program, and non-credit courses. Institutions are encouraged to develop waiver programs for eligible students that would provide a 50% tuition waiver for any non-state supported course and/or certificate programs.

### **AWARD VALUE:**

Students eligible for the DSS Children Adopted by State Employees or Residents of Massachusetts Tuition Waiver program will be entitled to a tuition waiver equal to 100% of the resident tuition rate for eligible state-supported courses offered at the participating public higher education institution.

### **AUDIT:**

- (a) The Chancellor shall require each campus to furnish annually by August 31 a report detailing the number of DSS recipients for the previous year and the corresponding amount of tuition waived.
- (b) All financial books, records and documents pertaining to this program shall at all times be open to inspection, review and audit by the Chancellor, the State Auditor or their authorized representatives who shall have access to the premises wherever such books, records and documents are located. The institution shall retain such financial books, records, and documents for seven years. An institution may retain such records for a period of five years if approval is received from the Records Conservation Board in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 30, Section 42.

**SECTION Q: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOSTER CARE  
CHILDREN TUITION WAIVER**

**DEFINITIONS:**

**INSTITUTION:**

An institution within the system of public higher education under Section 5 of Chapter 15A of the General Laws.

**ELIGIBLE STUDENT:**

To be eligible for a tuition waiver, a foster child must meet all of the following requirements:

- The youth is a current or former foster child who was placed in the custody of the state through a Care and Protection Petition.
- The youth is age twenty-four or under.
- The youth was in the custody of the Commonwealth for at least twelve consecutive months.
- The youth was not adopted or returned home.

**ELIGIBLE COURSE:**

Any state-supported course offered by an institution at a public college or university, excluding all graduate courses and courses in the MD program at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. Eligible courses include those toward an undergraduate degree program, certificate program, short-term certificate program, and non-credit courses. Institutions are encouraged to develop waiver programs for eligible students that would provide a 50% tuition waiver for any non-state supported course and/or certificate programs.

**AWARD VALUE:**

Students eligible for the DSS Foster Care Children Tuition Waiver program will be entitled to a tuition waiver equal to 100% of the resident tuition rate for eligible state-supported courses offered at the participating public higher education institution.

**AUDIT:**

- (a) The Chancellor shall require each campus to furnish annually by August 31 a report detailing the number of DSS Foster Care Children recipients for the previous year and the corresponding amount of tuition waived.
- (b) All financial books, records and documents pertaining to this program shall at all times be open to inspection, review and audit by the Chancellor, the State Auditor or their authorized representatives who shall have access to the premises wherever such books, records and documents are located. The

institution shall retain such financial books, records, and documents for seven years. An institution may retain such records for a period of five years if approval is received from the Records Conservation Board in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 30, Section 42.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office at 617-727-9420, if you have any questions or need assistance.

Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance