

What is the Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship Program?

The Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship Program is a tuition assistance program to help eligible individuals develop a knowledge foundation in child care and development by attending undergraduate courses at accredited Virginia institutions of higher learning. The scholarship program is financed by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), through Virginia's share of the federal Child Care and Development Fund.

Who is eligible to participate?

The program is for current and future child care providers. A child care provider is someone who is employed in a regularly operating service arrangement for children where, during the absence of a parent or guardian, a person or organization has agreed to assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child under the age of 13 for less than a 24-hour period. Child care may be provided in the child's home as well as outside of the child's home.

To be eligible to participate in the program, an individual must be in one of the following categories:

- Already providing child care in a program located in Virginia,
- Domiciled in Virginia and employed in a child care program outside of Virginia, or
- Domiciled in Virginia and planning to become employed in child care.

Scholarships are not available to individuals who are or plan to become teachers and teachers' aides in the public or private school systems for all mandatory instructional programs serving school-age children and special education programs serving preschool children.

Scholarships are available, however, to public or private school personnel who are employed in education and care preschool programs or before-school or after-school child care programs. Some examples of eligible child care programs operated by public or private schools are: Head Start, Virginia Preschool Initiatives, school-based before-school child care programs, and school-based after-school child care programs.

How does the Program Operate?

Scholarship applicants submit a completed application to the address on the application during the appropriate application period. Awards are made on a first come, first served basis to all eligible applicants who submit completed applications.

All courses must be approved by VDSS. Recipients may attend more than one institution at a time using scholarship funds.

The scholarship pays the cost of the tuition and technology fee for each course up to the lifetime maximum award, which is \$1,707.60. The program will pay for up to two courses each semester and up to a total of eight courses altogether. All other costs are the responsibility of the student.

Applicants will be notified by mail of the application decision and will inform the institutions of approved scholarships. Scholarships are awarded on a semester basis and cannot be transferred across semesters or students. An appeal process is in place for those persons who believe the scholarship determination was based on inaccurate information.

VDSS pays the institution directly, therefore, students do not need to have funds available to pay for the courses.

APPLICATION PERIODS

Applications are accepted as follows:

Fall Semesters
June 1 – August 10

Spring Semesters
October 15 – December 15

Summer Semesters
March 15 – May 1

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q. Does the scholarship program help pay for books, parking or other fees?
- A. No. However, you may seek other sources to help with expenses.
- Q. Can the scholarship be used at any college or university?
- A. No. The scholarship can be used to attend all Virginia based public and private accredited institutions of higher learning approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. The application has a complete listing of these institutions.
- Q. Do scholarship recipients have to be employed full-time in child care or in a particular setting?
- A. No. There are no minimum requirements on the number of hours per week a person must work or the amount of time recipients must have been employed. In addition, persons who are not currently employed in child care can participate in this program if they are planning to enter the field of child care.

Benefits

The program benefits Virginia families and providers. Virginia families benefit from having better trained child care providers. The provider benefits from having an improved knowledge and skill level. This

may result in improved job satisfaction or career advancement and the opportunity to receive some financial assistance toward obtaining a certificate or degree. The courses may be used toward such achievements as:

- ◆ Career Studies Certificate in Early Childhood Education
- ◆ Career Studies Certificate in School Age Child Care Education
- ◆ Career Studies Certificate in Child Care Management
- ◆ Advanced Careers Studies Certificate in Early Childhood Education
- ◆ Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education
- ◆ Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Education

Additional Information

For more information about the Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship Program or to obtain an application, please contact:

Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship Program

Virginia Department of Social Services
Division of Child Care & Development
7 North Eighth Street
Richmond, VA 23219
1-866-636-1608

www.dss.state.va.us/facility/scholarship.html

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