

## Connecticut Early Childhood Professional Registry: **Scholarship Use**

### Scholarship Use Policy

Use of the OEC scholarship assistance fund is monitored.

Fraud (see Fraud Policy), or misuse of the funds will be grounds for probation or termination of eligibility. As such the following nonexclusive list is considered misuse:

- For an approved scholarship: Failure to attend a course or dropping a course / exam / training or other event outside the add/drop period and incurring a cost back to the State.
- For an approved scholarship: Failing to return textbooks to the textbook vendor for a dropped course for a full refund to the OEC resulting in cost to the State.
- Repeatedly requesting assistance and not following through on requests (pending or approved).

Scholarship funds will not be used to pay for a course / exam / event which already incurred a cost, i.e. to take a course or specific Pathways Exam more than one time.

Failure to maintain appropriate scholarship use will result in termination of eligibility. In the event of a termination of eligibility, the participant will be notified in writing via the participant's contact information available in the Registry. If a participant feels termination has been made in error, an appeal may be filed (see Scholarship Use Appeal).

To be considered for the OEC scholarship assistance, a participant must meet all eligibility requirements. For those using scholarship for credit-based work this includes maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy:** A participant will

- Complete credit-based course work with a passing grade, and
- Drop a course within the add/drop period of the institution, and
- Maintain the minimum grade or Grade Point Average (GPA) or Good Standing requirement of the institution.

**A participant that does not maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress will:**

1. Have the opportunity to appeal the noncompliance finding.
2. Be informed of being placed on scholarship probation due to noncompliance with the SAP Policy. The participant will be notified in writing via the participant's contact information available in the Registry. The probationary period is defined as the semester following the semester in which SAP was not maintained, or the next semester a course is taken (whichever comes first). No scholarship assistance will be granted during this time. It is the responsibility of the participant to send in documents showing compliance in order to reverse the probation.



3. If during the probationary period, the scholarship recipient is not compliant with the SAP Policy, no further scholarship assistance shall be made available (eligibility will be terminated).
4. The participant may appeal probationary status / termination of eligibility in writing to the OEC Registry unit. Appeals must be fact-driven and identify what led to the noncompliance and what has been done to rectify the noncompliance.

### Scholarship Use Appeal Policy

1. A participant may appeal the outcome of a scholarship request or probation/termination of eligibility ONLY under the following circumstances:
  - a. The participant can factually illustrate serious extenuating circumstances.
  - b. The participant has information that identifies compliance with policies.
2. If the participant believes one of the above is accurate, the participant may then appeal the scholarship use decision through the following steps:
  - a. **Informal Dispute Resolution:** Registry staff members seek to resolve all issues with the participant informally as the first step. A participant may informally request a review of a decision made by a Registry staffer by email or direct call to the staff member to discuss the decision. These informal actions are the first step in an appeal process and do not jeopardize the participant's right to a formal appeal.
  - b. **Formal appeal:**
    - i. Within 30 days of the decision, submit the appeal in writing to the Registry Manager via email, fax or mail (see letterhead above). It is strongly suggested that an appeal request and any other written documentation be sent in a manner that provides proof of delivery, such as certified mail – return receipt requested.

The appeal must include:

      - a dated and signed cover letter indicating which of the above circumstances is being argued; the individual's name, Registry ID#, address, phone number and email address; the request for appeal and a rationale.
      - copies of all documents involved;
      - copies of all correspondence between the individual and the OEC Registry staffer handling the scholarship situation; and
      - any new documentation to support the claim.
    - ii. Upon receipt of the appeal packet and verification that the appeal meets one of the approved circumstances, a review will be provided within 30 days.



- iii. The information on which the Registry staff made the initial decision will be made known to the individual upon receipt of the appeal packet if the information was not already disclosed.
- iv. The review team will be appointed by the Registry Manager. The team will make a decision based upon the information presented in the appeal packet and the resources of the OEC used in making Registry determinations. The determination will be shared with the participant.
- v. Final Decision: The determination by the review team is the final determination to be afforded to the Registry participant.