



Department of Military Affairs Scholarship Program

Historical Background

The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) Scholarship Program is currently working in partnership with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) in the application and approval process of scholarships for National Guard members. This cooperation began in the Fall of 2020 with a tuition waiver being utilized for qualifying Army and Air National Guard members. Prior to this partnership, the National Guard solely managed the program with separate requirements and limitations. In the former functionality of the program, the National Guard approved individuals for up to \$1,500 per semester with qualifications to be a National Guard member, good academic standing, and limitations on rank to only include enlisted and lower ranking officers. In this, the agency did experience a waiting list each semester for approval with the funding level being adjusted to accommodate and reduce the size of this list.

Beginning in the fall of 2020, DMA instituted a partnership with OCHE to create the current tuition waiver aspect of the Scholarship Program. Due to the partnership, the responsibility of selection of the awarded applicants lies with OCHE with the recipient names being provided to DMA for certification of National Guard eligibility. The appropriated funding for the National Guard Scholarship Program is sent to OCHE for the tuition waiver.

Scholarship Guidelines

The guidelines surrounding this scholarship are very general in nature; however, certain aspects, other than the qualifications, must be met to receive this funding. As previously mentioned, this program exists on the basis of being a tuition waiver. In order to receive benefits through this program, all other avenues of funding need to be expended, to include: federal, state, and private grants as well as any federal military tuition assistance. Once these options have been expended, this scholarship can be utilized up to the in-state tuition amount. With that, this scholarship can only be applied to tuition, and possible GI Bill benefits are not considered when determining this waiver.

Qualifications

Qualification for this tuition waiver program include four key aspects, while also meeting all of the guidelines mentioned above. These include:

- Having applied for the waiver and a certified member of the Montana (MT) National Guard, no later than the third week of the first semester that the waiver is being utilized
- MT National Guard member in good standing that has completed initial entry training
- Currently is progressing academically according to the campus satisfactory academic progress policy
- Has applied all other aid sources to their outstanding tuition balance

Along with these qualifications above, if a National Guard member does not meet the residency requirements outlined by [BOR Policy 940.1](#), but still fulfills all other qualifications and guidelines, then the tuition waiver grants the individual in-state tuition, for which the tuition waiver can then be applied. Students that are a part of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) and receiving the ROTC scholarship are not eligible for the tuition. However, ROTC students which are not on the program scholarship are eligible for the tuition waiver.



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Summary Financial Information

The table below shows the Scholarship Program expenditures as well as the additional tuition waived by the Montana University System (MUS). The second chart below depicts the number of awards and the amount of tuition waived as broken out between Army and Air National Guard.

National Guard Scholarship Financial Summary				
	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Numbers of Awards	58	166	325	480
Total Tuition to be Waived	\$ 26,848	\$ 244,971	\$ 475,667	\$ 585,161
HB 2 Scholarship Program Appropriation	207,362	244,971	250,001	250,000
Funding Applied to Tuition	26,848	244,971	475,667	585,161
Funding Sent to MUS to be Held in Reserve	180,514	-	-	-
Reserve Funding Used	-	-	180,514	-
Tuition Waived by MUS	-	-	\$ 45,152	\$ 335,161

National Guard Scholarship Program by Guard Program				
	Fiscal Year 2021	Fiscal Year 2022	Fiscal Year 2023	Fiscal Year 2024
Awards Given				
Army National Guard	38	129	254	344
Air National Guard	20	37	71	136
Tuition Waived				
Army National Guard	14,526	202,201	371,635	425,735
Air National Guard	12,322	42,770	104,031	159,425
Total Tuition Waived	26,848	244,971	475,666	585,160