



University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma

EMPLOYEE AND DEPENDENT TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM

Policy and Procedure

Effective Date: Fall Semester 2025

1.0 Purpose

The Employee and Dependent Tuition Waiver Program supports the professional and educational development of the University of Science & Arts of Oklahoma (USAO) employees and their families by offering tuition waivers for eligible courses and programs. This benefit promotes personal growth and academic advancement and strengthens faculty and staff recruitment and retention. This program is a valuable tool for attracting and retaining talented employees at the university.

2.0 Eligibility

- The Employee and Dependent Tuition Waiver Program is part of the comprehensive benefits package provided to USAO employees.
- **Employee Eligibility:** Full-time regular employees who have completed a minimum of six (6) months of continuous employment are eligible for their own tuition waiver benefits as outlined separately.
- **Dependent Eligibility:** Eligible participants for dependent tuition waivers include the employee's legal spouse and dependent child(ren) (natural, adoptive, stepchild, or a child for whom the employee has legal guardianship).
- A dependent child must not have attained the age of 25 years on the first day of the academic trimester for which the waiver is applied.
- Dependent children will be required to submit proof of dependent relationship as part of the application process (e.g., marriage certificate, birth certificate, tax documentation) unless FAFSA information already on file provides this information. The same applies to students in legal guardianships where this information is provided through FAFSA.

- An eligible participant must meet the standard academic requirements for admission and enrollment in courses.
- An eligible participant must be an Oklahoma resident.
- Tuition waivers apply only to courses taken at USAO.

3.0 Covered Expenses

- The dependent tuition waiver will cover **tuition expenses** for up to **sixteen (16) credit hours per trimester** and up to **one hundred forty (140) total credit hours**.
- The employee tuition waiver (for the employee's own enrollment) will cover a maximum of thirty (30) credit hours per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). An eligible employee may take up to one three-credit-hour course during scheduled work hours with the supervisor's approval.
- **Clarification on Fees:** Other fees such as application fees, textbooks, special fees for materials, private music lessons, zero-level courses, late fees, or other associated costs are **not covered**. (USAO does not have an application fee).
- Tuition waivers do not cover tuition charges incurred before the eligible dependent is admitted as a degree-seeking student, including fees or tuition for pre-college programs.
- Certain high-demand or specialized programs may have restrictions.
- If granted, the tuition waiver will be integrated with any other financial aid received from or through the university. In no case shall institutional waivers exceed the cost of the number of hours in which a student is enrolled.

4.0 Application Procedure

- Tuition Waiver Application Forms for spouses and dependents are located in the Financial Aid Office.
- Employees must submit a Tuition Waiver Application Form to Human Resources **before the first day of class** for the applicable semester, ideally by the last day of the add period. Early application is encouraged.
- Forms submitted for employee dependents do not require supervisor or department head approval.
- Human Resources will verify the employee's eligibility (full-time regular status and completion of the waiting period if applicable for employee's own waiver) and the relationship of the applicant to the employee.

- Once verified, Human Resources will forward the request to the Financial Aid Office for final approval and awarding.
- Employees applying for their spouse or dependent must provide proof of relationship (e.g., marriage certificate, birth certificate, or tax documentation) if not already established through FAFSA.
- The employee, spouse, or dependent will receive an official confirmation from the Financial Aid Office once the waiver is applied.
- Employees must submit a new request form each trimester for approval.
- Spouses and dependents must submit a new request form once an academic year. The financial aid office will confirm continued eligibility with the Human Resources office each trimester.

5.0 Academic and Work Performance Requirements (Applicable to Dependents)

- A cumulative GPA of **2.0** and Satisfactory Academic Progress (as defined in the USAO catalog under financial aid guidelines) are required to continue the waiver beyond the first awarded trimester.
- Dependent students on student conduct probation or may not receive the waiver.
- The **Financial Aid Office will oversee student academic requirements** for the dependent tuition waiver. Any appeals regarding the academic requirements for this scholarship should go through the Financial Aid Office's appeal committee.

6.0 Restrictions and Limitations

- Tuition waivers are non-transferable and may only be used by eligible employees, spouses, and dependents.
- The university reserves the right to modify or discontinue the tuition waiver benefit at any time.
- Employees who separate from the university, for any reason, before the end of a semester will not be responsible for the repayment of waived tuition for that semester for their dependents. This aligns with the Financial Aid Office's policy regarding scholarship adjustments after the add/drop period.
- Dependents are defined according to the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 2.0.

7.0 Tax Implications

- Tuition waivers may be subject to taxation based on IRS regulations. Employees are encouraged to consult a tax professional regarding potential tax liabilities.

- USAO is not liable for tax obligations that may arise from participation in the Employee Tuition Waiver Program.

8.0 Appeals Process

- Employees denied a tuition waiver may appeal the decision by submitting a written request to the Human Resources Office within ten (10) business days of notification.
- The appeal will be reviewed by a committee, and a final decision will be communicated within 15 days.

9.0 Contact Information

For questions regarding the Employee Tuition Waiver Program, employees may contact Human Resources located in Troutt Hall, room 306 or by email at hr@usao.edu.