

**INFORMATION TRANSMITTAL 2021.01**

**DATE:** January 8, 2021

**TO:** All DCFS and POS Permanency Staff and Supervisors; Adoption Staff and Coordinators; ILO/TLP Program Administrators and Staff

**FROM:** Marc D. Smith, Acting Director

**SUBJECT:** 2021 Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) March 31, 2021 Scholarship Program Application Deadline and 2021 Scoring Changes

**SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE: MARCH 31, 2021**  
**ANNOUNCEMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS: MAY 1, 2021**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Information Transmittal is to announce that the Department is currently accepting applications for the 2021 Department of Children and Family Services Scholarship Program and to notify that American College Test (ACT) and/or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores are not being considered in the 2021 application process due to widespread COVID pandemic-related cancellations of testing.

**II. PRIMARY USERS**

Primary users of this Information Transmittal are youth who are: currently in DCFS care or were previously in DCFS care, who meet DCFS Scholarship program eligibility and are applying for post-secondary education assistance, as well as the Department and Purchase of Service Permanency Workers, TLP, ILO, and Residential Staff who work with these youth.

**III. BENEFITS**

The DCFS Scholarship Program provides 53 scholarships each year; four of which are awarded to children of veterans. Scholarship recipients will receive a waiver of tuition and mandatory fees if they attend a local Illinois community college or any of the following Illinois state universities:

Chicago State University  
Illinois State University  
Southern Illinois University

Eastern Illinois University  
Northern Illinois University  
University of Illinois

Governors State University  
Northeastern Illinois University  
Western Illinois University



**Note: Tuition and fee waivers are provided only to scholarship recipients who attend an Illinois public university or their in-district community college. Scholarship recipients who attend private Illinois or out-of-state colleges/universities do not receive tuition and fee waivers.**

All scholarship recipients will receive a monthly grant of \$1235 regardless of whether they attend an Illinois community college or university. The grant is effective the first day of attendance and will terminate at the end of the academic year. This includes recipients who attend summer school and maintain full-time status as defined by the college/university.

**Scholarships DO NOT cover room/board/dormitory fees, other non-academic fees, college/university fines, or travel expenses to/from campus.** Scholarship recipients are STRONGLY encouraged to use their monthly grant in combination with other scholarships, grants, benefits or loans to pay these expenses. Information concerning any of the following sources of educational funding may be obtained from high school counselors or college/university financial aid officers.

**Pell or MAP Grants**

**Student Loans**

**Basic Education Grant**

**Supplemental Education Grant**

**Work Study Programs**

**Illinois State Scholarship Commission Grants**

**National Defense Student Loans**

**Social Security**

**Veteran's Benefits**

#### **IV. Eligibility Requirements**

Department scholarship applicants must:

- Be at least 16 years of age and under 21 years of age on the scholarship application deadline date of March 31, 2021.
- Have earned a high school diploma from an accredited institution or a General Education Development (GED) certificate/diploma or met the state criteria for high school graduation before the start of the school year in which they are applying for the scholarship.
- The applicant must meet one of the following criteria: DCFS has court-ordered legal responsibility for the applicant, the applicant must have aged out of the Department's care at age 18 or older, the Department must have had legal responsibility for the applicant prior to the adoption being finalized, or the applicant must be in the Subsidized Guardianship Program.

#### **V. Application**

2021 Scholarship Program Applicants should submit a complete application packet using the CFS 438-2021 between 1/2/2021 and 3/31/2021 as directed in Information Transmittal 2021.01. An adjusted rubric will be used in scoring 2021 applications to compensate for the removal of ACT or SAT scores. If submitted, the ACT and/or SAT score(s) will not be considered. The updated versions of the CFS 438-2021 and CFS 449-3 are available on the DCFS website at [https://www2.illinois.gov/dcf/aboutus/notices/Pages/com\\_communications\\_forms.aspx](https://www2.illinois.gov/dcf/aboutus/notices/Pages/com_communications_forms.aspx) and in DCFS Templates on the DCFS T: drive.

Scholarship applicants are required to submit their applications to the Office of Education and Transition Services (OETS) **no later than March 31, 2021**. Applications emailed or postmarked after that date will not be eligible for consideration. Applications must be emailed or mailed; applications submitted by facsimile (fax) will not be eligible for consideration. Incomplete

applications will not be considered and will be returned to the Applicant who can then complete and resubmit the application packet before the deadline, if time permits.

**It is mandatory that scholarship application packets contain the following documents. All documents must come together in one email or envelope:**

- A completed **CFS 438-2021, DCFS Scholarship Program Student Application;**
- The applicant's transcript of high school grades or copy of GED;
- College transcript (if attending college);
- Three letters of recommendation from persons unrelated to the applicant.

The **CFS-438-2021, DCFS Scholarship Program Student Application**, may be obtained from:

- Any Department Regional office;
- The Department website at [www2.illinois.gov/dcfs](http://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs);
- The Department Intranet site (Click on Policy & Rules & Forms link, then forms, then CFS 438);
- Telephone 217 557-2689

**Mail completed scholarship applications to:**

Office of Education and Transition Services  
Attn: DCFS Scholarship Program  
Department of Children and Family Services  
406 E Monroe, Station #23  
Springfield, IL 62701

Or Email to: [DCFS.OfficeofEducationandTransitionServices@illinois.gov](mailto:DCFS.OfficeofEducationandTransitionServices@illinois.gov)

## **VI. Selection of Scholarship Recipients**

Applicants who do not meet the eligibility criteria for the scholarship program or do not submit the application by the deadline will not be considered. Scholarship recipients will be selected on their scholastic record and aptitude; community and extracurricular activities; volunteer and work experience; leadership experience; awards, honors and other recognitions; letters of recommendation; and purpose for higher education. The Scholarship Awards Selection Committee will meet in April to select the scholarship recipients. Applicants will be notified by mail of the committee's decision by May 1, 2021.

## **VII. Living Arrangements for Scholarship Recipients Who Are Still in DCFS Care**

Permanency workers for scholarship recipients shall establish a living arrangement plan with DCFS Scholarship Program youth who are still in DCFS care prior to the beginning of the school year. Scholarship recipients may not live in a DCFS-funded placement while receiving monthly grant payments under the Scholarship Program. However, DCFS-funded placements may be available to the youth under DCFS guardianship during extended academic breaks and summers. Youth in care also have the option to live in a DCFS-funded placement and not receive the monthly Scholarship grant payment. Youth in DCFS care in the Scholarship Program may also participate in the Employment Incentive Program or be involved with an internship program during the summer.

## **VIII. Questions**

Questions concerning the Department of Children and Family Services Scholarship Program may be directed to the Office of Education and Transition Services by email at [DCFS.OfficeofEducationandTransitionServices@illinois.gov](mailto:DCFS.OfficeofEducationandTransitionServices@illinois.gov).

Or by calling the Office of Education and Transition Services at 217-557-2689.

Please share the attached scholarship program information sheet with all potential scholarship applicants.