

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Eligibility: Student has circumstances other than those listed below which are beyond his immediate control and which prevent him from enrolling full time in school or from earning the required hours. These can be “exceptional circumstances.”

Required documentation:

- Request for Exception form; and
- Official college transcript; and
- A notarized statement from the student detailing the circumstances that prevent/prevented the student from enrolling full time or from earning the required hours; and
- Documentation that supports the information provided in the student’s notarized statement.

A notarized statement is a written statement that is signed before a notary public after the person making the statement swears that the contents of the statement are true.

NOTE: An exception will not be granted without supporting documentation. Statements by the student may indicate a possible exceptional circumstance, but without supporting documentation, cannot be the basis of an exception. Because exceptional circumstances vary greatly, students should call the agency’s Public Information Representatives at 1 (800) 259-5626, Ext. 1012, for assistance.

Maximum length of Exception: 2 semesters (3 quarters)

IMPORTANT: The following are NOT exceptional circumstances:

- (a). Financial conditions related to a student's ability to meet his or her educational expenses;
- (b). Dropping a course, failing a course, or withdrawing from school to protect the student's grade point average or because of difficulty with a course or difficulty arranging tutoring;
- (c). Not being aware of or understanding the requirements;
- (d). Assuming that advanced standing, summer course work, or correspondence course work credited outside the appropriate regular semesters or quarters would be applied to the hours requirement;
- (e). Differing scholarship or award requirements for other programs, such as NCAA full-time enrollment requirements;
- (f). Voluntary withdrawal from school to move out-of-state or pursue other interests or activities;
- (g). Claims of receipt of advice that is contrary to the administrative rules, public information promulgated by LOSFA, award letters, and the rights and responsibilities document that detail the requirements for maintaining a TOPS award;
- (h). Failure to provide or respond to a request for documentation within 30 days of the date of the request, unless additional time is requested in writing, LOSFA grants

- the request, and the requested documentation is provided within the additional time granted;
- (i). An involuntary drop, suspension, or withdrawal from enrollment because of academics, scholastics, or failure to attend classes or to comply with institutional regulations;
 - (j). A suspension or expulsion for misconduct;
 - (k). An inability to register because of failure to satisfy financial obligations with the school.

COMMON EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

There are some requests for exception based on exceptional circumstances that are routinely approved. In those cases, specific documentation must be provided as noted below.

1. **Care of Grandparent or Other Family Member (other than an immediate family member)**

Required Documentation:

- Completed Request for Exception Form; and
- Official college transcript; and
- Notarized statement from the student detailing the care that was provided by the student; and
- Care of Grandparent Questionnaire; and
- Letter from the grandparent's doctor verifying the illness or the reason care was needed; and
- Letter from a family member verifying that student provided care.

If the Other Family Member is not an immediate family member and is not a grandparent, but is an aunt, uncle, brother or sister, a student may request an exception based on exceptional circumstances. The Student must provide the documentation noted above including the care of grandparent form (cross out grandparent and write the relationship of the person to whom care is given).

2. **Military Spouse:** The student is the spouse of a military member who has been ordered to training or to active duty, and the student would like to take up to 2 semesters off school to be with his/her spouse.

Required Documentation:

- Completed Request for Exception Form; and
- Official college transcript; and
- Notarized statement; and
- Marriage certificate; and
- Copy of military orders for spouse

3. **Death of a close friend or Other Family member (not student's spouse, parent, stepparent, custodian, dependent, sister or brother, step sibling, grandparent or step grandparent).** The student does not have documentation of his own temporary disability

(depression, anxiety, stress, etc.) related to the death, but was very close to the person that died and the student's studies suffered due to the death.

Required Documentation:

- Completed Request for Exception Form; and
- Official college transcript; and
- Notarized statement from the student detailing the relationship of the student to the person who died and the impact of the death on the student's studies; and
- A letter from at least one person with knowledge (parent, sibling, etc.) verifying student's relationship with the person who died (friend or how related) and the impact of the person's death on the student's studies; and
- A copy of the death certificate or a doctor's or funeral director's verifying statement or a copy of the obituary published in the local newspaper