

**LOUISIANA STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

***Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)
Bulletin***

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TOPICS:	Revises the Scholarship and Grant Program Rules to Change the Definition of Tuition and adds New Responsibilities for Public Post-Secondary Schools

At its meeting on September 17, 2013, the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission (LASFAC) approved an Emergency Rule and authorized publication of a Notice of Intent to make the rules permanent that revises the Scholarship and Grant Program rules to change the definition of tuition and add new responsibilities for public post-secondary institutions.

The changes are summarized as follows:

- For the 2013-2014 academic year, the TOPS Award amount has been set at the postsecondary institution's published tuition as of August 1, 2013.
- For the 2014-2015 academic year and thereafter, the TOPS Award amount shall be the tuition amount published by the postsecondary institution as of August 1, 2013, plus any increase in tuition authorized by the Legislature which is not attributable to any fees.
- Beginning with the Spring semester of 2014, postsecondary institutions are required to post on student's fee bills the "Tuition Only" amount charged the student, the "TOPS Award Amount" (which must equal the "Tuition Only" amount) and "TOPS Stipends" in order for the college or university to be permitted to bill for a TOPS award amount.

See Emergency Rule at http://www.osfa.la.gov/MainSitePDFs/policy4_SG14150E.pdf

See Notice of Intent http://www.osfa.la.gov/MainSitePDFs/policy4_SG14150NI.pdf

For additional information, please contact Deborah Paul, Scholarship/Grant Director at Deborah.Paul@la.gov, or George Eldredge, General Counsel at George.Eldredge@la.gov.

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

Student Financial Assistance Commission Office of Student Financial Assistance Scholarship/Grant Programs (LAC 28:IV.Chapter 3 and 1903)

The Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission (LASFAC) is exercising the emergency provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act [R.S. 49:953(B)] to amend and re-promulgate the rules of the Scholarship/Grant programs (R.S. 17:3021-3025, R.S. 3041.10-3041.15, and R.S. 17:3042.1.1-3042.8, R.S. 17:3048.1, R.S. 56:797.D(2)).

This rulemaking amends the definition of tuition to provide that during the 2013-2014 academic year, tuition shall be the tuition amount published by the postsecondary institution. It further provides that beginning with the 2014-2015 academic year, tuition shall be the tuition amount as of August 1, 2013, published by the postsecondary institution plus any increase in tuition authorized by the Legislature. This rulemaking also provides a requirement that the institution list the TOPS award amount on a student's fee bill, whether paper or on-line, and that the TOPS award amount must be the same as the institution's tuition amount listed on the fee bill.

The emergency rules are necessary to implement changes to the Scholarship/Grant programs to allow the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance and state educational institutions to effectively administer these programs. A delay in promulgating rules would have an adverse impact on the financial welfare of the eligible students and the financial condition of their families. LASFAC has determined that these emergency rules are necessary in order to prevent imminent financial peril to the welfare of the affected students.

This declaration of emergency is effective September 17, 2013, and shall remain in effect for the maximum period allowed under the Administrative Procedure Act. (SG14150E)

Title 28 EDUCATION

Part IV. Student Financial Assistance—Higher Education Scholarship and Grant Programs

Chapter 3. Definitions

§301. Definitions

A. Words and terms not otherwise defined in this Chapter shall have the meanings ascribed to such words and terms in this Section. Where the masculine is used in these rules, it includes the feminine, and vice versa; where the singular is used, it includes the plural, and vice versa.

Tuition –

a. Through the fall semester or term and winter quarter of the 2010-2011 award year, the fee charged each student by a post-secondary institution to cover the student's share of the cost of instruction, including all other mandatory enrollment fees charged to all students

except for the technology fee authorized by Act 1450 of the 1997 Regular Session of the Legislature:

- i. which were in effect as of January 1, 1998;
- ii. any changes in the cost of instruction authorized by the legislature and implemented by the institution after that date; and
- iii. for programs with alternative scheduling formats that are approved in writing by the Board of Regents after that date. Any payment for enrollment in one of these programs shall count towards the student's maximum eligibility for his award:

(a). up to the equivalent of eight full time semesters of postsecondary education in full time semesters for the TOPS Opportunity, Performance and Honors Award; or

(b). up to the equivalent of two years of postsecondary education in full time semesters and summer sessions for the TOPS Tech Award.

b. Beginning with the spring semester, quarter or term of the 2010-2011 award year and through the spring semester, quarter, or term of the 2012-2013 award year:

- i. the tuition and mandatory fees authorized in subparagraph a above; or

ii. the tuition fee amount published by the postsecondary institution, whichever is greater.

c. Beginning with the fall semester, quarter, or term of the 2013-2014 award year, the tuition amount as of August 1, 2013, published by the postsecondary institution for the 2013-2014 award year for paying students.

d. Beginning with the fall semester, quarter, or term of the 2014-2015 award year, the tuition amount as of August 1, 2013, published by the postsecondary institution for the 2013-2014 award year for paying students, plus any increase authorized by the Legislature which is not attributable to any fees. No fees or increases attributable to fees of any kind shall be included in the TOPS award amount. Stipends for TOPS Performance and Honors awards shall not be included in the TOPS award amount.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 17:3021-3036, R.S. 17:3042.1 and R.S. 17:3048.1.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Student Financial Assistance Commission, Office of Student Financial Assistance, LR 22:338 (May 1996), repromulgated LR 24:632 (April 1998), amended LR 24:1898 (October 1998), LR 24:2237 (December 1998), LR 25:256 (February 1999), LR 25:654 (April 1999), LR 25:1458 and 1460 (August 1999), LR 25:1794 (October 1999), LR 26:65 (January 2000), LR 26:688 (April 2000), LR 26:1262 (June 2000), LR 26:1601 (August 2000), LR 26:1993, 1999 (September 2000), LR 26:2268 (October 2000), LR 26:2752 (December 2000), LR 27:36 (January 2001), LR 27:284 (March 2001), LR 27:1219 (August 2001), LR 27:1840 (November 2001), LR 27:1875 (November 2001), LR 28:45 (January 2002), LR 28:446 (March 2002), LR 28:772 (April 2002), LR 28:2330, 2331 (November 2002), LR 29:555 (April 2003), LR 29:879 (June 2003), LR 30:1159 (June 2004), LR 30:2015 (September 2004), LR 31:36 (January 2005), LR 31:3112 (December 2005), LR 33:86 (January 2007), LR 33:439 (March 2007), LR 33:1339 (July 2007), LR 33:2612 (December 2007), LR 34:234 (February 2008), LR 34:1388 (July 2008), LR 34:1884 (September 2008), LR 35:228 (February 2009), LR 35:1489 (August 2009), LR 35:1490 (August 2009), LR 36:311 (February 2010), LR 36:490 (March 2010), LR 36:2854 (December 2010), LR 37:1561 (June 2011), LR 37:1562 (June 2011), LR 38:1953 (August 2012), LR 38:3156 (December 2012), LR 39:308 (February 2013).

Chapter 19.

Eligibility and Responsibilities of Post-Secondary Institutions

§1903. Responsibilities of Post-Secondary Institutions

A.1. – B.3. ...

4. annually, all institutions are required to provide LASFAC a current fee schedule. The schedule must include an itemized description of the composition of the mandatory fees listed on the fee schedule, including the tuition amount, as those fees will appear on a student's fee bill;

B.5 – B.10.c. ...

11. Beginning with the spring semester of 2014, for a public college or university to be permitted to bill for a TOPS award amount under the provisions of section 1903.B.6 of these rules, the college or university must include on the student fee bill line items entitled:

a. "Tuition Only" that equals the TOPS award amount listed on the fee bill;

b. "TOPS Award Amount" as defined in section 301; and

c. "TOPS Stipends" for TOPS Honors and Performance Award stipends. These amounts shall not be included in the "tuition only" or "TOPS award amount" line items.

There shall be no reference to a tuition amount on a student's fee bill other than as provided herein.

C.1 – G.2. ...

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 17:3021-3036, R.S. 17:3042.1, 17:3041.10-3041.15, 17:3041.21-3041.26 and R.S. 17:3048.1 and R.S. 17:3050.1–3050.4.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Student Financial Assistance Commission, Office of Student Financial Assistance, LR 22:338 (May 1996), repromulgated LR 24:645 (April 1998), amended LR 24:1914 (October 1998), LR 25:1459 (August 1999), LR 26:1998 and 2002 (September 2000), repromulgated LR 27:1864 (November 2001), amended LR 28:448 (March 2002), LR 28:775 (April 2002), LR 28:1760 (August 2002), LR 28:2333 (November 2002), LR 30:784 (April 2004), LR 30:1166 (June 2004), LR 31:40 (January 2005), LR 31:3111, 3114 (December 2005), LR 33:1340 (July 2007), LR 35:1233 (July 2009), LR 35:1490 (August 2009), LR 35:1491 (August 2009), LR 36:2857 (December 2010).

George Badge Eldredge
General Counsel