Education and Foster Care

Legislation for youth in foster care and young adults formerly in care (s. 409.1451, F.S.)

- Education and career path development for children in licensed care (409.1451(3)(b))
- Independent Living Staffings (13-18)– educational plans and needs, scholarship requirements (Bright Futures, Pell Grant, etc.), RTI requirements (409.1451(4)(a) & (b))
- Road to Independence program – award based on the living and educational needs of the student (high school or college) (409.1451(5)(b))
Tuition and Fee Exemption Timeline

MAJOR DATES:

Original Legislation
- 1996 and before – F.S. 240.235

New Legislation Passed
- 1997 – F.S. 240.35
- 2002 – F.S. 1009.25
- 2006 – F.S. 1009.25
1996 and Before – Florida Statute 240.235

Tuition and Fee Exemption Available to students in “extended foster care.” (Not available to under 18)

Student must apply and be DENIED financial aid

Exemption good for not more than 4 consecutive years or 8 semester hours

Student must maintain at least 2.0 GPA; full-time not required
Students adopted from DCF after December 31, 1997 added as an eligible population (Under 18 ok for adopted; not for foster care 409.145)

Exemption good for no longer than 4 years after graduation from high school for those adopted

Same restrictions on former foster youth (4 yrs, GPA)

Full-time not required
Eligible population for former foster youth changed to include only RTI Scholarship recipients
  - Includes only full-time students (RTI requirement)
  - Under 18 not included (RTI ineligible)

Eligible population expanded to include students who aged out of Relative Caregiver
  - Full or part-time; under 18 ok

Adopted population changed to those adopted after May 5, 1997 (Date changed in 1999)
  - Full or part-time; under 18 ok

Exemption valid for 4 years after high school graduation (RTI until 23)
A student who:

- (NEW) IS or WAS at the time he or she reached 18 years of age in the custody of the Department of Children and Families.
- IS or WAS at the time of reaching age 18 in the custody of a relative under s. 39.5065.
- Was adopted from the Department after May 5, 1997.
- (NEW) After spending at least 6 months in the custody of the department after reaching 16 years of age, was placed in a guardianship by the court.

2006 Florida Statute 1009.25
IS or WAS in the custody of the Department

- Revised eligibility population as of July 1, 2006 – House Bill 7173
- Now includes all young adults exiting licensed foster care at age 18 (Prior only RTI recipients)
- Now includes students in college under age 18 (new form available)
- Full or part-time students
No changes since 2002

Provide exemption form to the family as part of the subsidy packet

Adopted through the department from licensed or non-licensed care

Prepaid college – Tuition exemption is considered equal to prepaid tuition – can purchase prepaid housing (Kathy Waters)
IS or WAS at the time of reaching age 18 in the custody of a relative under s. 39.5085,

- Relative Caregiver Statute s. 39.5085
- Child placed with a relative as a result of a court's determination of abuse, neglect or abandonment
  - Dependent half-brother or half-sister of that dependent child eligible if placed in same home
- Court Ordered (temporary custody or permanency option)
- Home study required – safety evaluation
Placed in a guardianship by the court

- Revised eligibility population as of July 1, 2006 – House Bill 7173
- Age 16 or older
- Spent at least six months in department custody after reaching age 16
- Placed in a Guardianship by the court
- Florida Statute 39.6221 – could be relative or other approved adult (non-relative)
- Under 18 and full or part-time ok
What does the tuition and fee exemption cover?

- Tuition costs including matriculation, building, capital improvement and financial aid fees. Average $2750 - $3000 per year at universities and $1800 - $2100 at community college per year.
- Local Fees which include *required* student activity and service, health and athletic fees charged by Florida’s public universities and community colleges. Average $753 at universities and $161 at community college per year.
- Lab fees, college prep fees and skills testing fees
Education and Career Planning Resources

- FACTS.org
  - ePEP
- CHOICES.org
- FLDOE.org
Central Office Staff

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