

**RHODE ISLAND COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
RHODE ISLAND PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Adopted: 10/25/2017 (CPE)
Amended: 06/26/2024 (CPE)**

Legal Citation: RIGL§ 16-107₁

Introduction

Education is critical for the state’s young people to achieve their dreams and develop their talents. The state’s economic success depends on a highly educated and skilled workforce. This Rhode Island Promise Scholarship program (“RI Promise”) is intended to make postsecondary education more accessible and affordable for Rhode Island students.

Authority and General Purpose

These policies and procedures are promulgated pursuant the authority conferred under, and apply to the “Rhode Island Promise Scholarship” established pursuant to Chapter 107 of Title 16 of the Rhode Island General Laws. They are intended to provide guidance to college administrators, parents and students regarding the provisions and requirements of the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship program and to effectuate the purposes of Chapter 107 of Title 16.

Program Overview

Beginning with the high school graduating class of 2017, and subject to reauthorization after the high school graduating class of 2020, the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship program has been established to enable eligible students to attend the Community College of Rhode Island (“CCRI”) for two (2) years of continuous full-time enrollment, with the state scholarship program covering the costs of tuition and mandatory fees less federal and all other financial aid monies available to the recipient-student.

PART I: Definitions used in these Policies and Procedures

Whenever used in these Policies and Procedures, the terms listed below shall have the following meanings which follow the definitions set out in R.I.G.L. §16-107-4:

- 1.1 “FAFSA” refers to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form;
- 1.2 “Mandatory fees and tuition” are the costs that every student is required to pay in order to enroll in classes, and does not include room and board, textbooks, program fees that may exist in some majors, course fees that may exist for some specific courses, meal plans or travel;
- 1.3 “On-track to graduate on time” means the standard determined by CCRI in establishing the expectation of a student to graduate with an associate degree within two (2) years of enrollment (recognizing that some students, including students who require developmental education, are double majors, or are enrolled in certain professional programs may require extended time for degree completion);
- 1.4 “Recipient-student” means a student attending CCRI who qualifies to receive the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship pursuant to RIGL§16-107-6;

1.5 "Scholarship program" means the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship program that is established pursuant to RIGL §16-107-3;

1.6 "State" refers to the State of Rhode Island;

In addition, whenever used in these Policies and Procedures, the term listed below shall have the following meaning:

1.7 "Full-time enrollment" means enrolling in at least 24 credits within all terms in an academic year toward an associate degree program.

PART II: Eligibility Requirements

2.1 Eligibility for initial award. A student must meet the following criteria to receive an initial RI Promise Scholarship award:

- (a) Rhode Island residency: The student must qualify for in-state tuition and fees pursuant to the Residency Policy adopted by the Council of Postsecondary Education, as amended, supplemented, restated or otherwise modified from time to time ("residency policy," please refer to <https://www.riopc.edu/page/policies/>); and
- (b) High school graduation or equivalency: The student must have earned a high school diploma or received certification of equivalent nature from the state or its municipalities as recognized by applicable regulations promulgated by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education;
 - (i) Provided, that, the student must have satisfied this requirement prior to reaching nineteen (19) years of age; and
- (c) Immediate enrollment: The student must be admitted, enroll in and attend CCRI by the semester immediately following high school graduation or the semester immediately following receipt of a high school equivalency certification; and
- (d) Full-time enrollment: The student must be enrolled on a full-time basis; and
- (e) Financial aid form submission: The student must complete the FAFSA and any required FAFSA verification or other financial aid forms by the deadline prescribed by CCRI; and
- (f) No previous award: The student must not have already received an award under this scholarship program; and
- (g) Commitment: The student must commit in writing to live, work, or continue their education in Rhode Island after graduation.

2.2 Eligibility for award renewal. A recipient-student must meet the following criteria to renew the RI Promise Scholarship:

- (a) Continuous full-time enrollment: The recipient-student must continue to be enrolled on a full-time basis; and
- (b) GPA of 2.5: The recipient-student must maintain an average annual cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or greater, as determined by CCRI; and
- (c) On-track to graduate on time: The student must remain on-track to graduate on time as determined by CCRI; and
- (d) Financial aid form submission: The student must complete the FAFSA and any required FAFSA verification or other financial aid forms by the deadline prescribed by CCRI; and
- (e) Commitment: The student must commit in writing to live, work, or continue their education in Rhode Island after graduation.

Part III: Special Circumstances

3.1 Exceptions to the eligibility requirements may be made on a case-by-case basis for students with special circumstances, as set out below:

- (a) Medical or personal circumstances: In the case of a recipient-student who has an approved medical or personal leave of absence or is unable to satisfy one or more specified conditions because of the student's medical or personal circumstances, the student may receive or continue to receive an award under the scholarship program upon resuming the student's education, so long as the student continues to meet all other applicable eligibility requirements;
- (b) Military service: In the case of a recipient-student who is a member of the national guard or a member of a reserve unit of a branch of the United States military and is unable to satisfy one or more specified conditions because the student is or will be in basic or special military training, or is or will be participating in a deployment of the student's guard or reserve unit, the student may receive or continue to receive an award under the scholarship program upon completion of the student's basic or special military training or deployment.

3.2 If a student, due to special circumstances as set out in section 3.1, is not able to fulfill any of the eligibility requirements in section 2.1 (a)-(g) or 2.2 (a)-(e), he or she may request and/or may be granted an exception to such eligibility requirement(s) by CCRI, pursuant to the process for same that is required by the College;

3.3 Regarding the "full-time enrollment" eligibility requirement in sections 2.1(d) and 2.2 (a), and the "on-track to graduate on-time" eligibility requirement in section 2.2 (c), a student seeking an accommodation due to a disability should request such accommodation(s) from the CCRI Office of Disability Services ("DSS Office"). Any student granted an accommodation regarding "full-time" and "on-track to graduate on time" status must fulfill the course enrollment and other conditions set out and/or specifically established for the student by/through this Process.

Part IV: Award Determination

4.1 An award of the scholarship program shall cover up to the cost of two (2) years of tuition and mandatory fees, less federal and all other financial aid monies available to the recipient-student.

- (a) As used in section 4.1, federal and all other financial aid monies available to the recipient-student does not include monies available through student loans.

4.2 Determinations of eligibility for initial and renewal awards shall be made at the beginning of each academic year, and reviewed by CCRI each semester.

4.3 Disbursement of funds for initial and/or renewal awards is conditioned upon the state's annual approval and appropriation of sufficient funding for the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship Program.

Part V: Campus Administration of Program

5.1 The CCRI Financial Aid Office in conjunction with the Office of Enrollment Management, or their respective equivalent offices, shall administer the scholarship program, including but not limited to the

following: verifying eligibility, determining award amounts, applying awards to student accounts, and notifying recipient-students about requirements for continued program participation.

5.2 CCRI shall develop a process that will document the commitment to live, work, or continue a recipient-student's education in Rhode Island after graduation.

5.3 CCRI shall establish appeal procedures for the award, denial, or termination of funding under the scholarship program, if it does not already have such appeal processes in place.

Part VI: Appeals of Award Decisions

6.1 Appeals of award decisions shall be determined through the appeal process(es) existing at or established by CCRI.

Part VII: Reporting

7.1 On or before November 10 and May 10 of each fiscal year following fiscal year 2017, the Community College of Rhode Island shall submit a report to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the State Budget Officer, the House Fiscal Advisor, the Senate Fiscal Advisor, the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education, and the chair of the Council on Postsecondary Education detailing:

- The number of students eligible to participate in the scholarship program;
- The amount of federal and institutional financial aid anticipated to be received by recipient-students;
- The aggregate tuition and mandatory fee costs attributable to recipient-students, and;
- The resulting total cost of the scholarship program to the state.

- (a) The report shall contain such data for both the current fiscal year and the most up-to-date forecast for the following fiscal year.
- (b) Data reported shall be subdivided by student-year cohort and shall be accompanied by a written explanation detailing the estimating methodology utilized and any impact(s) the forecasted data may present to institutional capacity, operational costs, and the tuition/fee revenue base of the institution.

7.2 On or before July 1, 2020, the Community College of Rhode Island and the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education shall submit to the Governor, Speaker of the House, and the President of the Senate a report evaluating the program based on the first two cohorts. This evaluation shall include the following:

- The number of students who started in each cohort;
- The number of students in each cohort who have attained a degree or certification in an on-time manner;
- The number of students in each cohort who have not attained a degree or certification in an on-time manner; and an analysis of why that has happened;
- The number of students in each cohort who began the program but have been unable to continue or complete the program, and an analysis of why that has happened;
- The costs of the program and the costs of continuing the program;
- Suggestions for ways to increase the success of the program;
- Recommendations as to modifying, continuing, expanding, curtailing, or discontinuing the

- program; and
- Any such other recommendations or information as the Community College of Rhode Island and the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education deem appropriate to include in the evaluation.

Part VIII: Compliance

8.1 The Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner may conduct an annual analysis of program participation and ensure institutional compliance with Rhode Island Promise Scholarship Program policies and procedures, e.g., verification of residency status, completion of FAFSA data, and projected eligibility for and consistency of awarding federal and institutional student aid.