

Education Development Programs

Texas National Guard Tuition Assistance Program

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**Summary.** This regulation establishes policy and procedures for the Texas National Guard Tuition Reimbursement Program (TXNG TRP) of the Texas Military Forces. It provides information and describes procedures for administering the Texas National Guard Tuition Reimbursement Program. Program components include purpose, policy, responsibility, criteria, administration and terms.

**Applicability.** The contents of this regulation are applicable to all active members of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, and designated members of the Texas State Guard.

**Supplementation.** Supplementation of this regulation is prohibited without prior approval from the Adjutant General of the State of Texas.

**Statutory Authority.** Texas Government Code, Subchapter F, Section 431.090 and Texas Education Code, Subchapter D, Section 54.2155.

**Suggested Improvements.** The proponent of this publication is the Education Services Section, Military Personnel Office. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements to the Adjutant General’s Office, State of Texas, Post Office Box 5218, ATTN: AGTX-PAE, Austin, Texas 78763-5218.

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**Contents**

	Paragraph	Page
CHAPTER 1		
GENERAL INFORMATION		
Purpose.....	1-1	3
Explanation of Terms.....	1-2	3
References.....	1-3	3
Policy.....	1-4	4
Continuance.....	1-5	4
Funding.....	1-6	5
Tuition Assistance Prohibitions.....	1-7	5

	Paragraph	Page
CHAPTER 2		
MILITARY ELIGIBILITY		
Military Requirements.....	2-1	6
Military Ineligibility.....	2-2	7
Permanent Termination.....	2-3	7
CHAPTER 3		
ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS		
Eligible Student.....	3-1	7
Eligible Institution.....	3-2	8
CHAPTER 4		
RESPONSIBILITIES		
Unit Commander’s Responsibilities.....	4-1	8
Service Member’s Responsibilities.....	4-2	8
Education Services Office.....	4-3	9
CHAPTER 5		
PRIORITIES OF ENTITLEMENTS		
General.....	5-1	9
Priority.....	5-2	10
Priority of State Guard.....	5-3	10
CHAPTER 6		
RECOUPMENT		
False Statement or Misrepresentation.....	6-1	10
Recoupment Procedure.....	6-2	10
Recoupment Policies.....	6-3	10
CHAPTER 7		
APPLICATION PROCEDURES		
Application Procedures.....	7-1	11

## Chapter 1

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**1-1. Purpose.** This regulation established policy and provides guidance relative to the implementation, administration, eligibility, and certification processes required by the Texas National Guard Tuition Reimbursement Program (TXNG TRP). Benefits of the Program:

- a. Improves and maintains readiness and end strength of the Texas National Guard.
- b. Assists in the recruiting and retention of qualified service members of the Texas National Guard.
- c. Assists in recruiting minority students for colleges/universities.
- d. Assists in diversifying the Texas Military Forces while at the same time providing a Trained force that can be called into immediate action by the Governor of Texas for State active duty for emergencies, disasters, etc., such as fires, floods and tropical storms.
- e. Provides for a better-educated Texas worker who is more employable, marketable and more easily trained for emerging jobs and technology and thus become more valuable to Texas employers, National Guard units, and to the state in general.
- f. Gives the opportunity and encourages students/citizen soldiers to graduate with a degree in a timely manner.

### 1-2. Explanation of Terms

- a. "Tuition assistance" applies to "tuition and mandatory fees" which is defined as a direct charge for an instructional program. Money appropriated for purposes of this section, the adjutant general shall authorize the comptroller to reimburse an institution of higher education in an amount equal to the amount of the exemption from tuition and mandatory fees the institution grants to a person under Section 54.2155, Education Code.
- b. "TXMF Education Office" is defined as the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- c. "Soldier" is defined as a soldier or airman of the Texas National Guard or Texas State Guard.
- d. "TXMF" is defined as The Texas Military Forces.

### 1-3. References.

- a. AR 621-5, 17 Nov 93, Army Continuing Education System.
- b. Memorandum, NGB-ARZ-HRP, 30 Aug 02, subject: Education Programs and the Method of Obligation for Fiscal Year 2003 Tuition Assistance Funds.

- c. Section 431.090, Senate Bill No. 685.
- d. Chapter 54 Tuition and Fees of Education Code.

**1-4. Policy.**

- a. An active member of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, or Texas State Guard (not to exceed 30 members at any given time) in good standing, as defined in this regulation, is entitled tuition reimbursement, for up to 12 semester hours at the majority of Texas public, private, or independent institution of higher education.
- b. The tuition reimbursement applies to individuals enrolled or accepted for admission on a full-time (up to 12 credit hours) or part-time basis for any undergraduate, graduate, vocational, or technical course.
- c. Residency: Under Title 3, Texas Education Code, Section 54.058(b) of the Texas State Statutes, a member of the Texas National Guard is eligible for in-state tuition without regard to length of residency.
- d. A member may be enrolled either full-time or part-time.
- e. Minimum enrolled for part-time study is at least three (3) but less than twelve (12) credit hours per semester. For institutions using a quarterly basis, a student must enroll in at least four (4) but less than 16 hours per quarter.
- f. A member may not receive tuition reimbursement for more than 10 semesters or 5 academic years, whichever comes first, after the date on which the member began the first course for which funds were granted. Any semester that a member receives assistance under this program will count toward 10 semester maximum, regardless of the number of credit hours.
- g. Members are limited to only one certificate or degree program at each level of study, to include one certificate program, one associate's degree, one bachelor's degree, or one graduate degree regardless of who funded the initial degree.
- h. During periods of limited or reduced funding (less than two million dollars per year), reimbursement rates will be established at either nine (9), or six (6), semester hours per student, per term or semester. Students requiring additional funding and those pursuing graduate degrees will submit an application for Federal Tuition Assistance through "Go Army Ed" to procure federal funding in lieu of state funds, which will now be in high demand and short supply.
- i. Classes will not be repeated using STRP for a failing grade, improper withdrawal, or incomplete.

**1-5. Continuance.** The Texas National Guard (TRP) is contingent upon the student maintaining satisfactory academic performance and satisfactory Guard performance, attendance, and compliance with all related rules and regulations. Continuation in the program is not guaranteed from semester to semester. The student is required to furnish grade reports and degree plans to the Education Services Office and apply each semester for which tuition assistance is desired.

**1-6. Funding.** The amount of tuition assistance and mandatory fees will be based on several factors which include funds allocated, number of applicants for a particular semester/quarter/term, and eligibility. Tuition assistance will not exceed **(12)** semester hours per individual for any given semester/quarter/term, and may be less depending on annual funding established by the Texas State Legislature.

- a. Funding for the TXNG TRP is not guaranteed from year to year, nor is the individual's participation guaranteed from semester to semester.
- b. The Texas Military Forces Education Office has final authority on what courses will or will not be covered by the TXNG TRP.
- c. If a member applies for tuition assistance for a semester, such member is expected to attend that semester. The student will not receive tuition reimbursement for more credit hours than are applied for on the application form. If for any reason that member cannot attend they must notify their unit commander and the Education Services Office as soon as possible.
- d. The amount of tuition assistance will depend upon the institution type and the enrolled program as follows:

(1) Public Institution.

- (a) Undergraduate, vocational and technical courses. The student will be eligible for up to **12** semester credit hours of tuition reimbursement and will not exceed the in-resident rate. Tuition assistance does not include books
- (b) Graduate courses. In years of adequate funding (at least 2 million dollars per year) Tuition assistance will be equal to the average of the amount of reimbursement per semester credit hour under 1-6 d. (1) (a) above, not to exceed actual tuition costs. The average tuition will be the published rate as determined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

- (2) Private or Independent Institution. Tuition assistance will be equal to the average of the amount of reimbursement per semester credit hour under 1-6 d. (1) (a) above not to exceed actual tuition costs. The average tuition will be the published rate as determined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

**1-7. Tuition Assistance Prohibition.** Tuition assistance funds WILL NOT be authorized for:

- a. Courses taken at out of state institutions
- b. Any courses or labs involving flight training and air time unless they are required for part of a degree program.
- c. Duplicate courses when the soldier has an existing "incomplete" or "Fail" grade.

- d. Continuing education courses that are not part of a degree plan. However, the program will cover credit courses needed to obtain a vocational/technical certificate at a public community or public technical (TSTC) campus.
- e. Fees covering such items as books, equipment, student activity cards, medical services, matriculation, assessment of experimental learning, and graduation fees.

## Chapter 2

### MILITARY ELIGIBILITY

- 2-1. Military Requirement.** An eligible student is an applicant who meets the qualifications of this regulation, completes a Texas National Guard Tuition Assistance Program application, and:
- a. Non-prior service participants must have a three year enlistment.
  - b. Prior service must have an honorable discharge and enlist for three years in the Texas National Guard.
  - c. Is a member of a federally recognized unit of the Texas National Guard, Texas Air Guard, or member of the Texas State Guard.
  - d. Eligible members: Any enlisted soldier or airman, WO1 through CW3, and 2LT through CPT. A soldier who is promoted to rank of CW4 or MAJ during school term will continue to be eligible to use the tuition assistance program until the end of that term. AGR soldiers are not eligible for the state program, since they now qualify for 100% Federal Tuition Assistance at the Active Component Education Center, serving their region.
  - e. Soldiers must complete Basic Training prior to utilizing State TRP.
  - f. Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP), Officer Candidate School (OCS), Warrant Officer Candidate (WOC) members must have completed Army Basic Training, or its equivalent (i.e. ROTC Basic Camp and/or MSI and MSII {complete core classes}), prior to the effective date of Advanced ROTC enrollment. Officer Candidate Enlistment Option members must complete a military basic training. Upon completion of basic training, soldier will be enrolled into the State Officer Candidate School (OCS).
  - g. Is an active member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, or Texas Air Guard. Members of the Inactive National Guard (ING) are not eligible.
  - h. Has attended all scheduled drills and annual training periods or completed authorized make-up training (if scheduled training assembly [STA] or equivalent training [ET] has been approved for the period six months prior to the TXNG TAP application deadline date.
  - i. Has an Expiration of Term of Service (ETS) date that is beyond the end date of the semester for which the tuition assistance is being requested. Individuals who extend, or

reenlist in order to qualify for educational benefits must provide documentation of extension with the application for tuition assistance.

- 2-2. Military Ineligibility.** Members will not be eligible for the Tuition Assistance Program:
- a. If member has a non-transferable flag(s)
  - b. Is receiving a Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) scholarship with TA option.
- 2-3. Permanent Termination.** Service members receiving Tuition Assistance Program benefits who become unsatisfactory participants as governed by AR 135-91, Chapter 4, or ANGR 50-01 will lose tuition assistance eligibility permanently and may be required to refund tuition payment to the State of Texas. Under this section of the regulation, the student's tuition assistance is declared null and void. The TXMF Education Office, the company commander, and the service member will be notified by certified mail that termination has occurred.
- a. Upon acquiring the ninth unexcused absence from a scheduled military training period. This will disqualify the member permanently from program participation.
  - b. Entitlement will be terminated when continuously failing to meet any eligibility and qualification criteria.
  - c. Any member who is dismissed for academic or disciplinary reasons, the member shall be ineligible for Tuition Assistance Program.
  - d. Any member who submits a falsified grade report or transcript does not accurately reflect final course grades will repay tuition for the semester or quarter that tuition assistance was utilized and will be terminated and subject to TCMJ action.

### Chapter 3

#### ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- 3-1 Eligible Student.** An eligible student is an applicant who meets the military eligibility requirements of Chapter 2, completes an application and is a student enrolled in or applying to a program of instruction leading to an academic degree at an accredited college, university, community college, junior college, or vocational/technical college within the State of Texas.
- a. Must earn a passing or equivalent grade, as determined by the institution's academic policies, and pass each individual course for which education assistance is granted for continued tuition assistance eligibility.
    - (1) If the grade point average (GPA) is below 2.0, the recipient may complete a semester/quarter, without tuition assistance, to regain the required average and then submit an application with both grade reports.
    - (2) A one-time exception may be made for a second semester freshman if a letter of counseling from the unit commander is attached.

- b. For any course, which does not issue a specific grade, the student must show documentation to verify satisfactory completion (i.e. Pass or Satisfactory on a Pass/Fail basis).
- c. Those enrolled in post-baccalaureate coursework are subject to the same rules for members taking undergraduate coursework.
- d. At the conclusion of the semester, students must forward a copy of their grade report to the Education Services Office in order to maintain eligibility for the next semester.

**3-2. Eligible Institution.** An eligible institution is defined by the State Education Code, Section 61.003.

## Chapter 4

### RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 4-1. Unit Commander's Responsibilities.

- a. Will continually safeguard the program from fraud and abuse.
- b. Will utilize this program as a recruiting and retention tool.
- c. Will ensure active support for the program.
- d. Will explain the provisions of this regulation to each member and new members joining the Texas National Guard. Counsel individual members concerning the member's responsibility to maintain eligibility and termination criteria.

#### 4-2. Service Member Responsibilities.

- a. Service member is encouraged to apply for and utilize other available education assistance programs, including scholarships, grants and civilian employer programs.
- b. Service member will notify the unit commander and the Education Services Office or Base Education Training Manager of any changes in home of record (HOR) or status which could affect the entitlement of tuition benefits.
- c. Service member is expected to attend any semester in which tuition assistance has been applied for. If for any reason that member cannot attend they must notify their unit commander and the Education Services Office or Base Education Services Office as soon as possible. Service members will not receive tuition assistance for more credit hours than applied for on the application form.
- d. Service member must maintain all eligibility criteria (refer to chapter 3).
- e. Service member is responsible to submit required documents to the Education Services Office:

(1) Application

- (2) Statement of Understanding (SOU)
- (3) Degree Plan – listing classes for current program and any updates as soon as changes occur.
- (4) School Tuition Contract – school name, cost of tuition and fees should appear.
- (5) Official Transcripts – at the end of each semester.
- (6) Copies of enlistment contracts or extensions, if required.

**4-3. Education Services Office.** The Education Services Office shall:

- a. Review, accept, and approve the application for completeness.
- b. Determine if sufficient funds are available for award of tuition assistance for all who meet the application deadline. If sufficient funds are not available, make awards based on the criteria established in Chapter 5 Priorities of Entitlement.
- c. Notify institutions of student's eligibility for awards.
- d. Forward payment request to State Comptroller's Office, accounts payable for payment.
- e. The Education Services Office will notify the applicant, the Base Education Training Managers (BETM's), or the J1 Administration NCO of their reimbursement status once the Texas State Comptroller's Office has determined funds availability.

## Chapter 5

### PRIORITIES OF ENTITLEMENT

- 5-1. General.** This chapter sets the priority of entitlement in the event there are more applications than funding available for a given semester. Funding for this program is not guaranteed from year to year. During years of limited funding, reimbursement for semester hours will be reduced from twelve (12) to nine (9) or six (6). Under limited funding, graduate work will not be reimbursed under the Tuition Reimbursement program, Air Guard applicants will submit applications to their Base Education Training Manager (BETM's), and Army National Guard applicants will submit applications thru Go Army Ed in order to receive assistance for hours not covered by the Tuition Reimbursement Program for graduate work. When funding is not sufficient for an academic semester, the priority is Officers and Officer Candidates without a bachelor's degree, Air and Army National Guard and then State Guard applicants.
- 5-2. Priority.** For State Tuition reimbursement, Officers and Officer Candidates without a four year degree, Air and Army National Guard and then members of the Texas State Guard. In the event annual funding falls below 50% (one million dollars per year) Pay Entry Basic Date (PEBD) will be used to determine the order in which tuition assistance will be granted. Assuming funding is available, tuition assistance will be awarded to the applicant with the most recent PEBD, who meets the application deadline.

- 5-3. **Priority of State Guard.** The commander of the Texas State Guard will provide a list of thirty soldiers of the state guard, ranked in order of priority, to the Education Services Officer by the application deadline for each semester. These soldiers will receive benefits at the published rate if funding is available.

## Chapter 6

### RECOUPMENT

- 6-1. **False Statement or Misrepresentation.** Any person who knowingly makes or furnishes any false statement or misrepresentation knowing the same to be false, for the purpose of enabling an individual or institution to obtain monies wrongfully under this program, shall be permanently disqualified from this program and shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine or to imprisonment, or to both.
- 6-2. **Recoupment Procedures.** Recoupment funds will be paid back to the Texas Military Forces. Soldier's who have been wrongfully paid will be notified by certified letter. If a Soldier fails to reimburse the State of Texas the Attorney General will be notified for collection of funds.
- 6-3. **Recoupment Policies.** Recoupment of funds may be required for the following reasons:
- a. For submission of a false grade report.
  - b. The benefit has been paid through an administrative billing error.
  - c. A member resigns or is discharges from the Texas National Guard prior to completion of his entitlement agreement. Recoupment will not be sought when the cause is due to death, or disability incurred while serving in the Texas National Guard (must provide medical records containing medical board proceedings that indicate the discharge was for disability).

## Chapter 7

### APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- 7-1. **Application Procedures.**
- a. Texas Army National Guard can apply online at [www.txarng.com](http://www.txarng.com).
    - (1) The Education Service Office will process the tuition reimbursement payment.
    - (2) Additional required documents ie., previous semester transcripts must be submitted to the Education Services Office located at Camp Mabry.
  - b. Texas Air Guard can apply thru their individual Base Education Services Office Training Manager – (BETM's)

- (1) The unit commander will sign certifying the applicant's eligibility and that all unit requirements of this regulation have been met.
  - (2) The BETM will submit applications to the Education Services Office for processing.
  - (3) Applications must be received at the Education Services Office by the application deadline.
  - (4) Deadline for applications to arrive at the Education Services Office is as follows:
    - (a.) Fall semester deadline shall be 15 July of each year.
    - (b.) Spring semester deadline shall be 15 January of each year.
    - (c.) Late applications will not be accepted.
- c. Texas State Guard can apply thru the State Education Office. J1 Administration NCO will submit applications to the Education Services Office.
- (1) The unit commander will sign certifying the applicant's eligibility and that all unit requirements of this regulation have been met.
  - (2) Applications must be received at the Education Services Office by the application deadline. Late applications will not be accepted.
  - (3) Deadline for application submission to the Education Services Office is as follows:
    - (a.) Fall semester deadline shall be 15 July of each year.
    - (b.) Spring semester deadline shall be 15 January of each year.
    - (c.) Late applications will not be accepted.
- d. The Education Services Office will notify the applicant, the Base Education Training Manager (BETM's), or the J1 Administration NCO of their reimbursement status once the Texas State Comptroller's Office has determined funds availability.

  
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