

Policy

It shall be the policy of the Cherokee Nation to provide emergency assistance to eligible Cherokee citizens. **Current scholarship recipients are ineligible.** Distribution of funds for emergency assistance shall only be made for the following educational purposes:

- 1.) Tuition
- 2.) Books
- 3.) Fees
- 4.) Certification and License Examinations

Definition

1. Imminent Need or Emergency is defined as an educational need that must be met to help prevent permanent or excessive academic loss or academic penalty.

Eligibility

An applicant for educational emergency assistance must meet all the following criteria before receiving emergency educational assistance funding:

1. Must be a Cherokee Nation tribal citizen.
2. Must live or have permanent residence within the boundaries of the Cherokee Nation.
3. Must be experiencing extreme personal hardship (evaluated on a case-by-case basis).

Limitations

The Educational Emergency Assistance Program may not duplicate or replace educational assistance available under any other program. A student must not currently be on any Cherokee Nation Scholarship Program.

1. Funding is limited to a one-time payment for a maximum of \$500.00.
2. The Educational Emergency Assistance Program is limited to accredited undergraduate and graduate higher education institutions.
3. Funding is limited to the availability of general assistance funds by the Cherokee Nation.

Application Process

All students must complete an Educational Emergency Assistance Program Application through the Cherokee Nation Higher Education Office. Tribal Council Members and Cherokee Nation employees

should refer all inquiries to the Cherokee Nation Higher Education Manager located in the Higher Education Office. A complete application shall consist of:

1. Cherokee Nation Tribal Citizenship Card (Blue Card)
2. Current transcript(s) of all higher education coursework completed and/or attempted by the student.
3. A letter stating why the student's situation is an emergency and what permanent or extraordinary academic damage will occur if the student does not receive emergency assistance.
4. A copy of the person or persons' current income tax returns claiming the student as a dependent or a current Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) report (which is the Student Aid Report).
5. Copy of invoice, billing statement or written estimate of balance due.
6. A completed Educational Emergency Assistance Program Application.

Selection and Denial Process

Students who submit a complete set of emergency application documents shall be evaluated for funding within a 48-hour period by the Higher Education Director. Every reasonable attempt to notify the student of their funding approval or denial will be made immediately following the application evaluation. Students who are approved for funding will receive a letter indicating the amount of the award and when the higher education institution may expect payment.

Students who are denied funding will receive a letter stating: 1) why they were denied funding; 2) possible alternative sources of funding the student may be eligible for; and 3) the student's appeal procedures.

Appeal Procedures

Students who are denied funding through the Educational Emergency Assistance Program by the Higher Education Director may appeal the denial to the Group Leader of Education. The student should submit all application documents, correspondence from the Higher Education Office, and a letter explaining why the student should be approved for funding after denial from the Higher Education Office.

The Group Leader of Education will evaluate the student's appeal request within 48 hours of receiving the appeal and make every reasonable attempt to notify the student of the appeal decision as soon as the appeal is evaluated. The decision of the Group Leader of Education is final.