



Area Technology Center Employee Tuition Waiver Program

Approved by Council: January 30, 2026

Effective Date: January 30, 2026

Background and Statement of Purpose

The 1997 First Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly resulted in the creation of a faculty and staff tuition waiver program [KRS 164.020(33)] with the express purpose of promoting employee and faculty development. Specific responsibility was granted to the Council on Postsecondary Education to develop and implement this program.

The initial legislation provided tuition waivers for faculty and staff at postsecondary institutions and area technology centers. During the 2018 Regular Session, the statute was amended to remove tuition waivers for postsecondary institution faculty and staff, but retained tuition waivers for area technology center employees. Additionally, the revised policy stipulates that waiver program participants must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The revised policy below reflects changes required by the amended statute.

Statutory Authority

KRS 164.020(32) provides that the Council on Postsecondary Education shall:

“Develop a statewide policy to promote employee and faculty development in state and locally operated secondary area technology centers through the waiver of tuition for college credit coursework in the public postsecondary education system. Any regular full-time employee of a state or locally operated secondary area technology center may, with prior administrative approval of the course offering institution, take a maximum of six (6) credit hours per term at any public postsecondary institution. The institution shall waive the tuition up to a maximum of six (6) credit hours per term.”

The statute also stipulates that employees participating in the waiver program must:

“...complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid to determine the level of need and eligibility for state and federal financial aid programs. The amount of tuition waived shall not exceed the cost of tuition at the institution less any state or federal grants received, which shall be credited first to the student's tuition.”

General Requirements

1. The program shall be named the Area Technology Center Employee Tuition Waiver Program, hereafter referred to as the “tuition waiver program.”
2. The tuition waiver program only provides for the waiver of tuition. It does not apply to fees, including mandatory student fees, course and program fees, housing or dining fees, or any other student charges assessed by a course-offering institution.

3. The public postsecondary institutions that provide tuition waivers under this program shall report annually to the Council the number of area technology center employees who receive a waiver, the number of credit hours waived, and the dollar value of those waivers.
4. An area technology center employee participating in the tuition waiver program shall be identified in the institution's student records consistent with the Council's database reporting guidelines.
5. The tuition waiver program applies to all courses offered for college credit that are not specifically excluded by this policy.
6. Through written policy, a course-offering institution may exclude non-credit continuing education or community education courses, courses offered through overseas programs, correspondence courses, and audited courses.
7. Participation in the Area Technology Center Employee Tuition Waiver Program may generate additional taxable income under the provisions of the federal tax code for graduate, professional, and doctoral level programs.
 - a. The course-offering institution shall provide a report to personnel office staff of each area technology center that identifies employees who participate in the tuition waiver program, course number, and degree level (i.e., undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, or professional).
 - b. Area technology center staff are responsible for withholding taxes and reporting taxable income of program participants, regardless of where the course is taken.
 - c. Participating employees are responsible for any tax liability incurred through participation in this program.
8. This policy confers a financial benefit to regular, full-time employees and is not intended to guarantee access or preferential treatment to any academic course or program.
9. An employee eligible to participate in this program may take courses during normal working hours with written permission from their respective area technology center.
10. Public postsecondary institutions are not required to offer a given course during an academic term, unless there is a sufficient number of paying students taking the course. An institution may restrict enrollment in a given course if space is not available.
11. An area technology center may offer additional benefits to its employees that exceed the waiver benefits provided through this policy.

Eligibility Requirements

1. To be eligible for participation in the tuition waiver program, an employee must be classified by the area technology center as a regular full-time employee. Before the beginning of each academic term, area technology centers shall certify the full-time employment of eligible employees who seek to participate in the tuition waiver program
2. If employment is terminated before the first day of classes, an approved tuition waiver shall be cancelled.
3. An area technology center employee is not eligible to receive tuition waivers that exceed six (6) credit hours per academic term from any single institution or combination of institutions.
4. Eligible employees must meet the participating postsecondary institution's general admission and program-specific academic requirements to receive a waiver.
5. Participating institutions may require waiver recipients to maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale to continue to receive waivers from the tuition waiver program.