2023 Wisconsin Act 117 Changes to the Wisconsin National Guard Tuition Grant Program – FAQ for School Officials

**Q: What is changing?**

A: 2023 Wisconsin Act 117 changes several things related to the WING Tuition Grant Program.

1. Grant applications can be received 90 days prior to the semester begin date and up to 90 days after the semester end date.

2. DMA will not pay students but instead will pay tuition directly to schools.

3. Students now have to demonstrate “satisfactory academic progress” as determined by the school.

4. Schools will be required to recoup money from students if it is determined that one of the statutory bases obligating a student to repay a grant exists.

As a result of these changes, DMA will update the application form. All other grant program criteria remain the same.

**Q: When will these changes go into effect?**

A: These changes go into effect for the Summer 2024 term (any terms that begin on or after 3/15/24). It does not apply to prior terms.

**Q: When can students apply for this tuition benefit?**

A: The law states students are now eligible to apply for the benefit up to 90 days before the beginning of the term they are applying for, during the term, and up to 90 days after the end of the term.

**Q: Will I have to certify a student’s eligibility twice for each academic term?**

A: Yes, if the student applies for the benefit before the end of the term the law now requires school certifying officials to certify the student’s eligibility at the time of their application and again at the end of the term.

**Q: How is “satisfactory academic progress” defined?**

A: This is to be determined by the schools.

**Q: If a student appeals their satisfactory academic progress determination to the school and their status is changed, will DMA honor that decision?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Is there an appeal process at DMA for this benefit if a student is determined to be ineligible for a term?**

A: No.

**Q: Can students receive payment from the Department of Military Affairs (DMA)?**

A: No, the law now only allows DMA to pay schools on students’ behalf. There are no exceptions. This is the case even if students have received payment previously for this benefit.

**Q: When will students be required to repay the benefit they received for the term?**

Students are required to repay DMA if any of the following apply:

a. If a student received this benefit for the term but was no longer eligible for the benefit as of the end of the term for the reasons specified in the statute.

**Q: Are schools responsible for the amount a student owes to DMA if it is determined that there is a statutory basis for recovery of the tuition?**

A: No, the law states the student is responsible for the amount they owe to DMA. However, the law permits DMA to require schools to recover money from students in such circumstances and send it to DMA.

**Q: The law states “the department may require the qualifying school that received the tuition grant on behalf of the guard member the amount of the tuition grant and remit it to the department”. Is DMA going to require schools to be involved in the repayment process?**

A: Yes. With this change in the law, DMA is requiring schools to recoup all tuition grant funds from the student when statutory bases for repayment are present. The school is authorized by statute to take any reasonable action to secure repayment of the amount of a tuition grant, including placing a hold on course registration or on the awarding of a degree or certificate, undertaking collection efforts or initiating legal action.

**Q: If, after DMA has already paid tuition for a student, the student drops one or more courses (but does not withdraw) and there is a corresponding drop in tuition, where should the refund of tuition be sent?**

A: The refund must be payable to DMA.

**Q: If a student withdraws from school after receiving the benefit, will they owe DMA the money they received for that term?**

A: Yes.

**Q: This is “tuition specific benefit”. What is covered by “tuition”?**

A: Tuition is not defined in statutes. Tuition is defined as whatever the school identifies as tuition on its websites and informational materials. Anything defined as a fee in the schools websites and informational materials is not covered.

Questions? Contact the DMA Tuition Grant Administrator: Addison Tryon P: 608-242-3159 E: addison.tryon@widma.gov