



Cowlitz Indian Tribe Tuition Assistance Award - Application

2023–24 Academic Year — May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024

Tuition and tuition related fees are awarded under the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2014 to enrolled Cowlitz tribal members attending an accredited vocational school, college, or university.

- Award funds must be used in the 2023–24 academic year.
- Applications are approved and funds are awarded in the order received.
- Payment of the award funds are made directly to the school each quarter/semester/education term.
- All award recipients must submit a copy of their grades at the end of each Cowlitz funded term.

E-mail your completed application and required documents to tuitionassistance@cowlitz.org.

An incomplete application packet is not eligible for consideration and will be returned via e-mail.

If you are unable to submit your Tuition Assistance Application via e-mail, contact Carol Burnison at 360-353-9588 or Carissa Cothren at 360-353-9497.

Required Documents:

- ◇ Application.
- ◇ Education Goals Form.
- ◇ Copy of your Cowlitz Tribal Identification Card.
- ◇ Transcript—Unofficial transcripts meet this requirement. High school transcript for graduating seniors. GED Certificate. Current or most recent transcript for all other applicants.
- ◇ Copy of FAFSA Confirmation Letter/Student Aid Report showing EFC and Pell Grant eligibility.

Date: _____

Name: _____ Cowlitz Tribal Enrollment Number: _____

Birthdate: _____

Address (Street or PO Box, City, State, Zip Code) _____

Phone Number: _____ E-Mail (All communication will be to this e-mail address): _____

Mark all categories that describe you:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part-Time Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Full-Time Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Past recipient of a Cowlitz Scholarship/Tuition Assistance Award |

Vocational school, college, or university you will attend. If undecided, list all the schools you are considering.

I am requesting tuition and tuition related fees for the 2023–24 academic year in the following amount. **Mark one.**

- Up to \$12,000 for a Vocational Certificate
 Up to \$6,000 for an Associate Degree
 Up to \$12,000 for a Bachelor Degree
 Up to \$16,500 for a Master Degree
 Up to \$16,500 for a Doctorate Degree

By accepting this award, I confirm I have reviewed the Instructions and the Policies and Procedures of the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award Program and agree to complies with them.

- ✓ I agree to respond to all e-mails from the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Office.
- ✓ I agree all funds will be used in the academic year requested for tuition and tuition related fees.
- ✓ I agree all refunds and unused funds of this Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award will be returned to the Tribe.
- ✓ I authorize the Cowlitz Indian Tribe interoffice use of my personal information.
- ✓ I certify all of the information I have submitted is true and correct.

Signature

Date



Cowlitz Indian Tribe

Tuition Assistance Award - Educational Goals

2023–24 Academic Year — May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024

Date: _____

Name: _____ Cowlitz Tribal Enrollment Number: _____

Vocational school, college, or university you will attend. If undecided, list all the schools you are considering.

I will begin my 2023–24 academic year in _____ as a:

Month and Year or Quarter, Semester (Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring) or Education Term

Vocational Student **OR** College/University: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate Student

Certificate program or degree you are enrolled in:

Vocational Certificate Associate Degree Bachelor Degree Master Degree Doctorate Degree

Vocational Certificate: _____ Anticipated Date of Completion
Month/Year: _____

Associate or Bachelor Degree (if undecided, write "undecided"):
Degree: _____ Major: _____ Anticipated Date of Graduation
Month/Year: _____

Master or Doctorate Degree: _____ Anticipated Date of Graduation
Graduate Program or Department: _____ Month/Year: _____

Responding to the prompt below; submit an original essay — 150 words or less.

First-time applicant: Introduce yourself to your Cowlitz family. Include your educational and career goals and how this award will help you achieve your goals.

Previous recipient of this award: Provide an update on the progress you have made toward achieving your education goals.

**Cowlitz Indian Tribe Tuition Assistance Award 2023-24
Academic Year — May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024
Instructions**

Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award/Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2014 Benefit

Tuition and tuition related fees are awarded under the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2014 to enrolled Cowlitz tribal members attending an accredited vocational school, college, or university.

Follow the link below to IRS instructions for education benefits provided under the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2014. **NOTE:** Cowlitz education benefits are limited to tuition and tuition related fees.

<https://www.irs.gov/government-entities/tuition-and-other-educational-benefits-provided-by-tribes-form-1098-t>

Policies and Procedures

Included in this application packet is a copy of the Policies and Procedures that guide the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award Program. By accepting these Tribal funds, the applicant/award recipient agrees to comply with the Policies and Procedures of this program.

Cowlitz Tribal funding will support one of each of the following certificates or degrees:

- Vocational Certificate
- Associate Degree
- Bachelor Degree
- Master Degree
- Doctorate Degree

Awards for Tuition and Tuition Related Fees in the 2023–24 Academic Year—The certificate or degree program you are enrolled in will determine the amount of your award.

- Up to \$12,000 for a Vocational Certificate.
- Up to \$6,000 for an Associate Degree.
- Up to \$12,000 for a Bachelor Degree.
- Up to \$16,500 for a Master Degree.
- Up to \$16,500 for a Doctorate Degree.

Award funds must be used for tuition and tuition related fees. They may be drawn down for classes beginning on or after May 1, 2023. Payment of the award funds are made directly to the school each quarter/semester/education term.

All refunds of Tribal payments must be returned to the Tribe by the award recipient. Unused award funds will not rollover to future academic years.

2023–24 Academic Year/Application

- The application may be submitted between January 2023 and March 2024.
- Applications are approved and funds are awarded in the order received.
- Only complete applications submitted with all required documents are eligible for consideration.
- An incomplete application is not a placeholder and will be returned via e-mail.

E-mail—You are required to use it. It is the way we communicate with you.

To ensure prompt processing of your application and payment of your award, monitor the e-mail address you provide on your application and respond to e-mails from the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Office.

Scholarships and Other Educational Opportunities

Students applying for a Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award are required to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and are urged to seek outside sources of funding for their education costs. To assist you, links to scholarship programs and other educational opportunities are provided on the Tribe's website at <https://www.cowlitz.org/services/education.html>.

This is a two-step process.

Step 1: Apply for a Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award

Submit Required Documents:

- Completed 2023–24 Application.
- Completed Education Goals form.
If you change your education plans in the 2023–24 academic year, you must notify the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Office within two weeks of the change and submit an updated Education Goals form.
- Copy of your Cowlitz Tribal Identification Card.
If you do not have a Tribal ID card, request a replacement card from the Cowlitz Enrollment Office at cowlitzenrollment@cowlitz.org
- Transcript. - *Unofficial transcripts meet this requirement. (High school transcript for graduating seniors. GED Certificate. Current or most recent transcript for all other applicants.)*
- Copy of current FAFSA Confirmation/Processed Letter/Student Aid Report showing EFC and Pell Grant eligibility.
The 2023-24 FAFSA application is available at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>.

E-mail your completed application and required documents to tuitionassistance@cowlitz.org

If you are unable to submit your Tuition Assistance Application via e-mail, contact Carol Burnison at 360-353-9588 or Carissa Cothren at 360-353-9497

Only complete and legible application packets are eligible for consideration.

An incomplete application packet is not a placeholder and will be returned via e-mail.

You will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of your application prior to the Education Committee's review. A letter of award and Request for Payment form will be e-mailed within 4 weeks of submission of a complete application and approval by the Education Committee.

Step 2: Request for Payment of Your Award

All funds awarded must be used for tuition and tuition related fees in the 2023–24 academic year—May 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024. Funds may be drawn down for classes beginning on or after May 1, 2023. Unused award funds will not rollover to future academic years.

Payment of the award is made directly to your school each quarter/semester/education term after submission of a:

- 2023-24 Request for Payment form.
- School statement/invoice showing detail of tuition and tuition related fees owed.
This statement/invoice must include the name of the school, student name, and student identification number.
- Class list or schedule.
- Submit a copy of your grades at the end of each Cowlitz funded term.

To avoid delay in the payment of your award, respond to all e-mails from the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Office.

E-mail your completed Request for Payment form and required documents to tuitionassistance@cowlitz.org

Only complete Request for Payment packets will be processed. Incomplete packets will be returned via e-mail.

If you are unable to submit your request for payment via e-mail, contact Carol Burnison at 360-353-9588 or Carissa Cothren at 360-353-9497

Allow 3 weeks for processing and mailing of the payment to your school.

Accommodations will be made for students with disabilities. If you require accommodations or have questions about this application, contact either Carol Burnison at 360-353-9588, Carissa Cothren at 360-353-9497 or email us at tuitionassistance@cowlitz.org

Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award Program Policies and Procedures

The Cowlitz Tribe views vocational certificates and college or university degrees as an investment in both the Tribal member and the future of our Tribal community.

The Cowlitz Education Committee and staff administer the Tuition Assistance Award Program using these Policies and Procedures as guidelines. These Policies and Procedures are effective on the date they are approved by Tribal Council.

By accepting Tribal funds from the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award Program, the student agrees to comply with these Policies and Procedures.

Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award Defined

The Cowlitz Tribe will support Tribal members who meet the eligibility requirements and are progressing toward a certificate or degree. While Tribal funding is considerable; it is not all encompassing. The amount of funding available is dependent on the Tribe's ability to fund and the Tribal Council's annual budget approval. The Cowlitz Tribe does not guarantee the amount of funding beyond the current budgeted year.

Tribal funding will support of the following certificates/degrees:

- Vocational Certificate
- Associate Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctorate Degree

Students must be enrolled in a course of study leading to a certificate or degree from an accredited vocational school or an accredited college or university.

All students may proceed at their own pace toward their certificate or degree. Payment of the award is based on an invoice/statement from the school and is made directly to the school. Beginning in the 2023-24 academic year (May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024), assistance from this award is limited to:

- **Vocational Certificate** – Funding up to \$12,000 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$30,000.
- **Associate Degree** – Funding up to \$6,000 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$15,000.
- **Bachelor Degree** – Funding up to \$12,000 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$55,000.
- **Graduate Degree** – There are three pathways to a graduate degree. In no case will a student's total maximum lifetime limit exceed \$70,000.
 - **Master Degree** – Funding up to \$16,500 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$35,000.
 - **Doctorate Degree following a Master Degree** – Funding up to \$16,500 per academic year, with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$35,000.
 - **Doctorate Degree Bypassing a Master Degree** – If a student bypasses a Master Degree and moves from a Bachelor Degree to a Doctorate Degree program, funding will be up to \$16,500 per academic year with a maximum lifetime limit not to exceed \$70,000.

If a balance remains in the lifetime limit of an award after the student has completed a certificate or degree program, the student may use the balance to enroll in a second certificate or degree program or courses that will enhance their first certificate or degree. At no time will the student receive more than the lifetime limit of the award for the certificate or degree. Applications for a second degree will be reviewed by staff for completeness and forwarded to the Education Committee for approval.

\$500 GWE Educational Costs Benefit (High School/College Dual Enrollment and Dual Credit)

The Cowlitz Tribe recognizes that Cowlitz high school students who choose to get a jump start on an Associate's or Bachelor's degree or a Career and Technical Education Certificate (CTE) while earning a high school diploma are reducing their post-secondary education costs that would be paid by the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award Program.

Beginning in the 2023-24 academic year, the Cowlitz Tribe will support these high school/college dual enrolled and dual credit students by providing a \$500 GWE Educational Costs Benefit. This benefit may be used for, but is not limited to, tuition, class-based fees, lab fees, books, computers, calculators, and transportation to and from school.

These programs and the costs of these programs vary from state to state and school district to school district. To be eligible for the Cowlitz \$500 GWE Educational Costs Benefit, a student must be taking college classes while enrolled in high school. The classes must count for both high school and college credit.

The high school student must contact their local school district to enroll in a dual enrollment/dual credit program. After completing the enrollment process in the local school district, the student must contact the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award office and request an application for this Cowlitz GWE Educational Costs Benefit. The application will require both the student's and parent's signature. Payment of this benefit will be made to the parent of all students under the age of 18.

\$1,000 GWE Educational Costs Benefit (Vocational and College or University Student Benefit)

Beginning in the 2021-22 academic year, this GWE Educational Costs Benefit will be available to all Tuition Assistance Award recipients. The student will be eligible for this annual benefit following payment of tuition and tuition related fees in the student's first education term of an academic year.

This annual payment for educational costs may be used for, but is not limited to, books, computers, calculators, musical instruments, sports equipment, supplies for studies, tutors, clothing, room and board, and transportation to and from school.

A Cowlitz student not needing tuition assistance and enrolled in a certificate or degree program at an accredited vocational school, college, or university; may receive this GWE Educational Costs Benefit. This student should contact the Tuition Assistance Office to request this benefit.

If a student withdraws from school after receiving this GWE Educational Costs Benefit payment but before completing the term, future GWE Educational Costs Benefit payments will be made at the end of the term.

Study Abroad

To receive funding from the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Award Program, the study abroad program must meet the student's major or minor requirements and result in course credits earned toward the student's degree. A letter from an academic advisor or other school official must accompany the funding request confirming the study abroad experience and credits will be applied to the student's major or minor.

Study abroad and study at stateside schools will be funded at the same level and under the same rules. All deposits and fees are the student's responsibility. Only deposits of tuition and tuition related fees are eligible for reimbursement. Reimbursement for eligible deposits will be made at the time payment for tuition and tuition related fees is made.

Application Process

Applications will be accepted beginning January 10 of each year until funds are exhausted. When funding is exhausted, students will be placed on a waiting list. If additional funding becomes available, assistance will be offered to students on the waiting list in the order the applications were received.

A student cannot benefit by adjusting the start date of an academic year. The student is limited to one award in each academic year. Academic year is defined as a 12-month period beginning on or after May 1/Summer Term, current year through April 30/Spring Term, following year.

A school may define the academic year as quarters, semesters, or number of months beginning any month throughout the year. In some programs, the student is required to attend year-round, without interruption, until the program is complete. Award payments for these non-traditional academic years are limited to the Tuition Assistance Award Program academic year definition, award amount, and lifetime limit rules.

Funds must be spent for tuition and tuition related fees in the academic year they are awarded and may be drawn down for classes beginning on or after May 1. Funds will be available after approval of the application. Unused award funds from the current academic year will not rollover to future academic years. Refunds of Cowlitz payments of tuition and tuition related fees must be returned to the Tribe by the student or school. Upon receipt, the refund will be credited to the student's annual award balance and lifetime limit.

Following committee approval of an application, a letter of award including a Request for Payment form and instructions on how to draw down the award will be e-mailed to the successful applicant. Reminders will be e-mailed periodically throughout the academic year. Three weeks are required for processing of award payments. It is the student's responsibility to submit the Request for Payment form and supporting documents in a timely manner. All late payment fees are the student's responsibility.

Enrollment Status

The student confirms their active enrollment status at the start of each academic quarter, semester, or term by submitting a:

- Request for Payment form.
- Statement/invoice with the school name, student name, and student identification number showing tuition and tuition related fees owed.
- Class list for the upcoming term.
- School transcript, when available, showing grades from the previous Cowlitz funded term.

Change in Enrollment Status

Students changing enrollment status must notify the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Office by e-mail within two weeks of the change in enrollment. Examples of change in enrollment status are:

- A change of school.
- A delay in the start date of an academic year.
- Withdrawal from one or more classes if withdrawal results in a refund of Cowlitz funded tuition.

Student Accountability

The Tribe believes each tribal member should have the opportunity to achieve his/her vocational or higher education goals. The Tribe helps, but the student must make it happen.

- It is the student's responsibility to determine their education plans and goals and bring the commitment and drive to achieve their goals.
- It is the Tribe's responsibility to provide the financial support for the student's education goals. While Tribal funding is considerable, it is not all encompassing.

The student and the Tribe succeed when the student earns their certificate or degree.

Failure to Complete

Failure to complete is failure of or withdrawal from more than half of all enrolled courses.

If this occurs, the student will immediately be placed on probation. Cowlitz will continue to pay tuition and tuition related fees while the student is on probation.

If the student fails or withdraws from courses in a second consecutive term, the student's Tuition Assistance Award will be suspended. If award funding is suspended, the student will be responsible for self-funding their education.

Following completion of a successful self-funded term, the student may request reinstatement of the award. A successfully completed term is defined as a term without failures or withdrawals.

Future payment of the award will be based on the student's status, full-time or part-time, during the self-funded term.

Procedures for Reinstatement of a Suspended Award

The student must request reinstatement of their Tuition Assistance Award by e-mail to the Education Committee at tuitionassistance@cowlitz.org. The student must include a copy of their transcript providing proof of a successfully completed self-funded term with the request.

Appeal Process

A student may appeal Education Committee actions within 30 days of notification of that action. All appeals requesting reconsideration must be submitted by e-mail to the Cowlitz Tuition Assistance Office at tuitionassistance@cowlitz.org.

On receipt of the appeal, the Education Committee will review the reasons for reconsideration and determine if the appeal should be rejected or upheld. The appellant will be notified within 30 days of the result of their appeal.

Issues not covered in these Policies and Procedures will be addressed by the Education Committee on a case-by-case basis.

The Education Committee may amend these Policies and Procedures from time to time.

These Policies and Procedures will be included in the Tuition Assistance Award application packet.

Approved by Education Committee:

Approved without name change by Cowlitz Tribal Council: