

Requirements for Blind/Deaf Student Exemption Program

1. The student must be a Texas Resident.

A citizen, national or a permanent resident of the United States or an alien who has been permitted by Congress to adopt the United States as his or her domicile while in this country and who has otherwise met the state requirements for establishing residency for tuition purposes.

2. The student must declare a major course of study.

Written statement of academic purpose indicating the certificate program, degree program or professional enhancement from the course of study for that certificate or degree program.

3. The student must provide certification that he or she is defined as a person who is Deaf, hard of hearing or blind through the State of Texas.

- Deaf/Hard of Hearing - *Texas Health and Human Services Commission*
(<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/deaf-hard-hearing/tuition-waiver>)
- Blind - *Texas Workforce Commission*
(<https://twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/vocational-rehabilitation-services>).

4. The student must provide a copy of a high school diploma, GED, or official high school academic transcript. If the student has received an associate's degree or higher, an official college academic transcript will be acceptable.

5. The student must provide a letter of good moral character.

A letter of recommendation from the principal of the high school where the student who is Deaf or blind attended, a public official, or some other responsible person who knows the person is deaf or blind and is willing to serve as a reference.

6. The student must meet all entrance requirements of the institution and/or program to which he or she is applying.

Additional Information

- Bring the requested documents for the Deaf/Blind Exemption to Student Accessibility Services
- The student should submit documents to Student Accessibility Services to request the exemption at least one month prior to the payment deadline to ensure application of exemption.
- The student must request application of the Deaf/Blind Exemption each semester for the specific class session, term, or semester of attendance.
- Exemptions may not apply to all classes. Determination will be on a per class per semester basis.
- Deaf/Blind Exemptions cannot be used for dual enrollment courses since students have not yet graduated from high school or obtained a GED (see requirement number 4 above).
- The Deaf/Blind Exemption is NOT an academic accommodation; other requirements exist to receive academic accommodations (students requesting accommodations will need to complete the intake process with Student Accessibility Services).

Academic Requirements of the Deaf/Blind Exemption (est. Fall 2014)

Senate Bill 1210 (83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session) has added a Grade Point Average requirement for persons to receive continuation awards through the program. This requirement is in line with Federal Pell Grant regulations. The Bill also establishes a Limit to the Total Number of Hours, cumulative, that a student may take and continue to receive awards through this program. These changes go into effect in fall, 2014.

According to federal regulations, all schools participating in Title IV programs must establish satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards. A SAP policy helps ensure that students are moving toward successfully completing the intended program of study for which they are receiving aid.

All students receiving the Deaf/Blind Exemption are required to meet SAP standards.

- a student must have a 'C' average (2.0 GPA) or its equivalent
or
- a student must have an academic standing consistent with the requirements for graduating from the intended program/degree.