

AN ESP'S GUIDE TO The Hope Scholarship

Anyone can be an Education Service Provider according to the Hope Scholarship Law and the Rules. Unlike with students, there is no deadline for when providers must apply for approval. All information on how to become a provider will be available on the West Virginia Hope Scholarship Website.

APPLICATIONS

How can I become an Education Service Provider?

- Submit a **Notice of Intent** on a form provided by the Board
- Enter into a contract with the Board

Terms of the Provider Contract

- Comply with the Hope Scholarship Law and the rules for this program.
- Only use the funds as required and mandated by the rules.
- Require a background check for anyone interacting with hope students.
- Providers are expected follow all already applicable and existing nondiscrimination laws.
- If you are a school, that you notify the superintendent of a student's participation.

REQUIREMENTS

- Providers cannot charge Hope Families above the regular tuition schedule.
- Notify the Board if a student withdraws from their school or fails to meet the minimum attendance requirements.
- Notify the Board of a request for refund(s) by an Account Holder and provide documentation that it is necessary.
- Comply with all audits.
- Providers may be audited if it has been found that they have committed:
 - Fraud
 - Criminal Activity
 - If found to have committed these activities, providers will be removed from participation in the Hope Scholarship program
 - Removals can be appealed.

RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

- **Hope Scholarship Board or Board:** The Hope Scholarship Board established in W. Va. Code §18-31-3.
- **Education service provider or provider:** a person or organization that the Board authorizes to receive Hope Scholarship funds as payment for providing educational services to Hope Scholarship students.
- **Hope Scholarship Program or program:** the Hope Scholarship Program, established in W. Va. Code §18-31-1 et seq.
- **Hope Scholarship student or student:** a student who has successfully applied to the Board and is enrolled in the Hope Scholarship program.
- **Funds:** Hope Scholarship money.
- **Academic Year:** the period of time occurring between the first day of July and ending on the 30th day of June, during which a student must meet the educational requirements equivalent to an instructional term as provided in W. Va. Code §18-8-1.

§18-31-11

Requirements for and rights of education service providers:

- This article does not limit the independence or autonomy of an education service provider or make the actions of an education service provider the actions of the state government.
- Education service providers shall be given maximum freedom to provide for the educational needs of Hope Scholarship students without governmental control
- A participating school or education service provider is not required to alter its creed, practices, admission policy, hiring policy or, curriculum in order to accept eligible recipients whose parents pay tuition or fees from a Hope Scholarship account pursuant to this article.
- This article does not expand the regulatory authority of the state, its officers, or any school district to impose any additional regulation of education service providers beyond those necessary to enforce the requirements of the program.



INFORMATION SOURCES

- *All definitions can be found on pages 1-3, Section §112-18-2, of the rules.

FOR MORE INFO PLEASE CONTACT ANDREW BAMBRICK

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