

TOPS Award Amounts for the 2017-18 Academic Year

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. 1 - I have heard that TOPS is “fully funded” for the 2017-18 Academic Year. Does that mean that TOPS will pay 100% of my tuition?

A - ACT 18 of the 2016 Louisiana Legislature decoupled TOPS from tuition and set the “fully funded” amount going forward as the amount of tuition charged by the institution for the 2016-17 Academic Year.

Q. 2- Does that mean that if my school had a tuition increase for the 2017-18 Academic Year, I won’t receive the full amount of my tuition from TOPS?

A- That is correct. The amount of the 2017-18 tuition increase will be deducted from the amount TOPS pays.

Q. 3- How can I learn how much in dollars and cents TOPS will pay to the school I am enrolling in?

A- Click here, http://www.osfa.la.gov/MainSitePDFs/TOPS_Payment_Amounts.pdf, for a chart breaking down TOPS 2017-18 payment amounts by school.

Q. 4- Since TOPS is “fully funded” for 2017-18, does that mean that the option to “opt out” of receiving TOPS for a semester, or to “opt out” of enrollment altogether, is no longer available?

A- The ability to “opt out” of payment or attendance is only available when budget shortfalls prevent full TOPS payment amounts. With TOPS fully funded for the 2017-18 Academic Year, opting out of payment or required attendance will not be permitted without an approved Request for Exception. TOPS recipients must enroll full-time for the Fall and Spring semesters (or Fall/Winter/Spring terms) and earn 24 hours of credit during the Academic Year.

Q. 5- What is a Request for Exception?

A- If you are unable to attend or must withdraw due to circumstances beyond your control, you must submit a completed Request for Exception form with the required supporting documentation. For example, if you were sick during the semester/quarter/term and had to resign, you must provide a letter from your doctor to that effect. You can download the Request for Exception form with instructions and a list of the required documentation at www.osfa.la.gov/sgforms. Email your completed form to tops.exceptions@la.gov.

Q. 6- I “opted out” for a semester during the 2016-17 Academic Year. How does TOPS being “fully funded” this Academic Year affect me?

A- If you chose to “opt out” during any semester/term of the 2016-17 Academic Year remember: you have five years from the date of your first “opt out” semester or term to use all of your TOPS award. That means, if you “opted out” for the fall semester of 2016, you have until the spring semester of 2021 to use all of your TOPS eligibility. In other words, the clock is ticking.

Q. 7- My TOPS award was suspended last fall because I did not earn the required continuation GPA during the previous Academic Year. Since I wasn’t going to receive a TOPS payment anyway, I “opted out” of receiving TOPS for the Fall 2016 semester. How long do I have remaining to get my GPA back up to the required level?

A- The time period you were given to raise your GPA to the required level when you received your notice of award suspension did not change because you chose to “opt out” for a semester while on suspension. Again, the clock is ticking.

Q. 8- I just graduated from high school and I don’t plan to attend school this year. Do I need to do anything?

A- As a 2017 high school graduate, you are not required to enroll as a full time student until the fall semester of 2018.

Q. 9- What if I have questions that are not answered here?

A- You may email any additional questions to custserv@la.gov.