

Checklist for applying for Squaxin Island Tribal Financial Aid:

1. Complete Squaxin Island Tribal Higher Education Application.
2. Apply to and be accepted by a college or university.
3. Write a letter to Squaxin Island Higher Education Committee. In this letter, explain your educational plans and goals. Explain how you plan to help the tribe as a result of your education. The more information you can include about yourself and your goals the better.
4. Complete applications for financial aid at the school of your choice.
5. Submit a copy (non-official is fine) of your high school transcript, and of transcripts of any college courses you have taken.
6. Provide proof of your tribal enrollment.
7. Submit all appropriate documents to the Squaxin Island Education Office no later than February 15.



SQUAXIN ISLAND HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Policies and Procedures

It is the goal of the Squaxin Island Tribe's Higher Education Program to encourage all Squaxin Island Tribal Members to seek higher education or additional job training to further career opportunities and enhance employability. The Squaxin Island Tribal Council and the Tribal Community places higher education as a top priority for its members.

Applicants applying for financial aid from the Squaxin Island Tribe are required to apply for ALL institution-sponsored (Federal, State, Private) financial aid programs and accept the entire Financial Aid Award offered by the college. College based aid and other sources of financial assistance would include, but not be limited to the following:

1. PELL GRANT
2. Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
3. Tuition Waiver
4. State Need Grant
5. College Work Study
6. Perkins Loan
7. Guaranteed Student Loan
8. Veteran's and Social Security Benefits
9. Aid to Families with Dependent Children

Tribal Education grants are awarded after the above aid is determined and reported by the student's college of choice to the Education Coordinator on the "Needs Analysis" or related report. The Squaxin Island Tribe's Higher Education Program award amount is based on the recommendations of the college's Financial Aid Officer and by student need after all other sources of aid have been applied. All applications go through a review process by the Squaxin Island Tribe's Higher Education Committee to finally determine an award amount. Funding through the Tribe will include financial assistance for Higher Education, Adult Vocational Training and Adult Education.

A. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must meet the following requirements in order to be considered for assistance through the Squaxin Island Tribe's Higher education Program, Adult Vocational Training, and Adult Education:

1. Must be enrolled member of the Squaxin Island Tribe.
2. Must be in need of financial assistance after all other sources of funding have been pursued and exhausted.
3. Must meet all deadlines.
4. Must submit all required documents needed for educational file.
5. Must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a community college or university which offers a Bachelor's Degree or courses transferable to a Bachelor's Degree program (if enrolled in the Higher Education program).
6. Current transcripts of grades.

B. STUDENT CIRCUMSTANCES

1. **Married Students:** Tribal financial aid may be awarded to married students on a family-unit basis with allowance only for college-related expenses. The Tribe will not be expected to bear the full cost of maintaining a family.
2. **Part-Time Students:** Part-Time Students (those maintaining less than 12 credit hours per term) may be funded for up to 5 years (15 cumulative quarters or 10 cumulative semesters) whether part-time or full-time. Part-time students are eligible for tuition and book expenses only. To be considered for Higher Education program the student must be full-time.
3. **Summer Students:** Depending on the availability of funds, current students may be funded for summer term upon receipt of written request and an approved budget from the financial aid office at the school. Requests for summer term funding must be received by Mar 15 of the current school year.
4. **Full-Time Undergraduate Students:** Students may be funded for a total of up to five years (15 cumulative quarters or 10 cumulative semesters) to complete a four-year degree.
5. **Graduate Students:** At the present time, the funding level will not support financial assistance for graduate students, however students are encouraged to contact the school of choice for a listing of graduate funding sources.
6. **Vocational Students:** Students interested in a two-year certified vocational program may be funded through the Tribe's Adult Vocational Training Program, depending on the availability of funds.

7. Adult Education Students: Students interested in basic education or educational instruction above or below the college level that are not enrolled in a vocational program or a two or four year institute program may be funded through the Adult Education Program, depending on the availability of funds. This program will include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Accredited short courses.
 - b. Accredited seminars or workshops that will further career opportunities and enhance employability.
 - c. GED/ABE testing, allowing one test per section, depending on the availability of funds.
8. Out of State Colleges: Applications from students electing to attend an out of state college will be evaluated on the basis of the anticipated financial support from within the college. Funds may be committed up to the comparable cost of a student attending an in state college, which offers a similar program.
9. Private Colleges: Applications from students electing to attend a private college will be considered. Funds may be committed up to the comparable cost of a student attending a public Washington State College.

C. FUNDING PRIORITY

Each year the Tribal Council establishes a budget limitation for all Higher Education Programs based on the available funding. The following is the program priority in providing financial assistance to students who are:

- a. Continuing full-time undergraduate students;
- b. New full-time undergraduate students;
- c. Part-time students;
- d. Continuing or new students who have failed to meet all required tribal and college deadlines.

Eligibility conditions are as follows:

- a. Meet the dates and the criteria set in the guidelines.
- b. Show a willingness to work towards a goal;
- c. And maintain a GPA of 2.0

D. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants will be required to submit the following information to the Tribe's Higher Education Coordinator prior to being considered for financial assistance through the Tribe's Higher Education Programs:

1. Tribal Education Grant Application: This application must be filled out completely, signed, and dated by March 1, for fall quarter funding.
2. Financial Aid Form (FAF): The Tribe must receive a copy of the Financial Aid Form (FAF). Applicant is responsible for sending a copy of the FAF to the Tribe's Higher Education Coordinator by February 15, for fall quarter funding.
3. College Financial Aid Application: Students must complete and apply for all available college-based aid. The Tribe's financial assistance contribution will be awarded based upon the recommendation of the financial aid officer at the applicable college and through a review by the Tribe's Higher Education Committee. The financial aid officer cannot recommend an award until a completed application is on file in the college financial aid office. The completion of this form is not required under the Adult Education Program.
4. Transcripts: A high school transcript of GED certificate must be included with your grant application. If college was attended previously, submission of previous college transcripts is required.
5. Proof of tribal Enrollment: Applicant should request from the Tribe's Enrollment Clerk, proof of enrollment of a copy of ID card.
6. Letter of Intent: A letter addressed to the Higher Education Committee explaining the applicant's educational plans and goals.

E. RENEWAL APPLICATION PROCESS FOR CONTINUING STUDENTS

Applications from continuing students will be given funding priority. Those individuals desiring to continue with their college, vocational, or adult education the following year will be required to follow the procedures outlined below:

1. Renewal of Higher Education Grant application: In order for the Higher Education Committee to be aware of the intention to continue in school, students must complete a renewal application by March 1, of each calendar year.
2. Financial Aid Form (FAF): Each year the continuing student must also complete and submit to the Higher Education Coordinator a FAF by February 15. This form must be on file in the Education office before an award will be considered and determined. This step is not required for students under the Adult Education program.

3. College Financial Aid Applications: Continuing students must complete and apply for all available college-based aid each year. The Tribe may continue providing financial assistance based on the recommendation by the financial aid officer at the college of attendance. The financial aid officer is not able to make this recommendation to the Tribe until a completed financial aid application and the FAF results are in that file in that office. This step is not required for those students funded through the Adult Education Program.
4. Transcripts: The Tribe's Education office must receive a current college transcript prior to a student being considered for a renewal grant. This transcript must be included with the renewal application. There may be an exception to this if all grade reports are present in the education Office.
5. Applications Submitted To: Squaxin Island Tribe
SE 70 Squaxin Lane
Shelton, WA 98584
ATTN: Higher Education Coordinator

F. APPLICATION REVIEW (Yearly Procedure)

Documents Required	First Time Applicant	Renewal Applicant
Education Grant Application	X	
Renewal of Education Grant Application		X
Financial Aid Form (copy)	X	X
Student Needs Assessment	X	X
College Financial Aid Applications	X	X
Transcripts	X	X
Proof of Tribal Enrollment	X	
Letter of Acceptance for Admission	X	If transferring
Letter of Intent	X	

G. FILING DATE

Applications must be received by the Higher Education Coordinator by March 1. Application must state which quarters student will be attending classes.

H. DETERMINATION OF GRANT AWARD AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The amount of the award is based upon demonstrated financial need and the recommendation of the financial aid officer from the appropriate college. The Tribe's Higher Education Coordinator will compile all relevant student information to present to

the Squaxin Island Higher Education Committee. The Committee will meet quarterly to review student application files and awards.

Upon finding that the applicant is a full time student and is eligible for financial assistance through the Tribe's Higher Education Program, the Higher Education Committee shall determine the amount of the award, which when combined with other resources, shall not exceed the applicant's educational budget as determined by the College Financial Aid Officer. The budget is composed of the following categories of expenses:

1. Tuition and books;
2. Fees and supplies;
3. Room and board;
4. Allowable educational expenses.

Upon finding the applicant is a part time student (less than 12 credits) and is eligible for financial assistance through the Tribe's Higher Education Program, the Higher Education Committee can only consider the costs of tuition, fees, books and supplies in determining the amount to be awarded to the student. Students will be funded for a total of up to five (5) years to complete educational goals.

Students determined to be eligible for financial assistance will receive a copy of their Award Notification at the mailing address indicated on the application form.

Awards will be determined annually but are issued at the beginning of each term through the college Financial Aid Office. The college will be responsible for dispersing the funds to the students upon verification of enrollment.*

*In the event that an institution has stated or implied that allocated state or federal funds will be revoked upon receipt of tribal aid, a check may be issued directly to the student with the following provisions:

-The student will be required to sign a compliance form with the education office.

-The student must submit all receipts to the education office.

-Funds may be used for allowable educational expenses only.

Should the student not comply with the above provisions, the student will be expected to refund the tribe in full before being considered for future funding.

*Please note that if the student's address changes, the education office needs to be notified in writing.

*Awards are made based on the availability of funds and review of student funding priority, student unmet need as determined by the school and student/family contribution to their education, consideration may be given to students who have higher educational loan obligation in their 1st and/or 2nd year.

I. SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

In recognition of outstanding/exceptional voluntary service to the tribe, a student may receive an extra monetary stipend, as determined by the Educational Committee, for use towards expenses. This is at the discretion of the Educational Committee and depending on whether funds permit.

J. DISAPPROVAL OF GRANT AWARDS

A grant application can be disapproved or reduced for any of the following reasons (however not limited to):

1. Failure to meet deadline dates;
2. Incomplete education grant application;
3. Insufficient grant funds;
4. Failure to make application for college based financial aid;
5. Not accepted by college;
6. Maximum period of eligibility for grant is reached;
7. No financial need is demonstrated;
8. Failure to complete the required number of credits per term with the required grade point average.
9. Failure to provide verification of information when requested (i.e. household income).

K. REFUND OF GRANT AWARDS

When a recipient of a grant award from the Tribe does not enroll, withdraws, drops, or is suspended from an institution, a refund of the unused grant will be made immediately to the Tribe. Failure to meet the refund deadline will result in action by the Higher Education Committee.

Grant funds cannot be used for the following expenses:

1. Insurance (excluding school health insurance);
2. Alimony payments;
3. Previous debts;
4. Medical and dental bills;
5. Purchase and upkeep of a motor vehicle;
6. All other costs not related to educational expenses.

L. GRADUATE STUDENTS

Funding through the Tribal Higher Education Program is not currently available to graduate students due to sufficient grant funds. However, in the future, if funding does not exist for graduate studies, the following will apply:

Graduate students will apply to other sources of funding prior to requesting financial assistance for the Squaxin Island Tribe. Letters of denial or letters indicating level of funding must be in the applicant's file prior to approval of grant awards for graduate students. These students are also required to complete and comply with the same policies as the undergraduate student.

M. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT CONTINUATION

Grant recipients will remain eligible for continued awards for the approved school year, providing funds exist, and the student;

1. Submit term grade reports **within 30 days of the end of the term.**
2. Complete a minimum of 12 credits each term, which are degree, related. Credits taken over the minimum of 12 are the choice of the student.
3. Maintain a 2.0 grade point average;
4. Must meet all required deadlines.

N. GRANT PROBATION AND SUSPENSION

All grant recipients will continue to be eligible for financial assistance through the Squaxin Island Tribe for as long as funds exist and academic and other requirements identified for this program are met.

A grant recipient who does not meet the minimum academic and other requirements under this program will, upon recommendation from the Higher Education Committee, be placed on financial probation for the following term. The student will then have one quarter to meet the minimum academic requirements (12 transfer, degree related credit hours with a 2.0 GPA) before being placed on grant suspension. This probation notice will be in written form to the student with a copy of forwarded to the appropriate Financial Aid Officer at the college or university.

A grant recipient on financial probation who fails to meet the minimum academic requirements may be suspended from the Tribe's Education Program and will no longer be eligible for full financial assistance. If the student has maintained a 2.0 GPA but has not earned 12 credits, the Higher Education Committee will have the option to reduce the funding level. The student will be notified in writing. This notification will clearly identify the reasons for the decision and explain the process through which the student

may appeal the decision. A copy of the grant suspension notification will also be forwarded to the Financial Aid Office of the student's college or university.

O. MAXIMUM PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANTS

Undergraduate grant recipients will be eligible to grant awards for a maximum of 15 cumulative quarters or 10 cumulative semesters to complete a degree. This will include all Higher Education students. Staff shall not have authority or discretion to waive from the policies of this program.

P. APPEALS

An applicant who has completed a grant application and is denied or is unsatisfied with the level of funding may within 5 days of receiving notice of denial, appeal the Higher Education Committee's decision. The appeal will be in writing, addressed to the Higher Education Coordinator, and will set forth the reason(s) why the applicant is appealing the decision.

Within 5 days of receipt of an appeal, the Higher Education Committee will set a date to review the case. This hearing must occur within 30 days. At or before the hearing, the student will be allowed to present justification for considering application and/or amount of award.

Q. PETITION

Student may petition the committee for reconsideration of grant amount during the school year. Request for consideration under this section is limited to emergency or unexpected expenses.