

# College Tuition Assistance for Adopted Students

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## Issue

Do other states have laws similar to the Massachusetts program that awards tuition waivers for in-state public higher education institutions to certain adopted children? Is a student required to live in the same state in which they were adopted to use the tuition waiver?

## Summary

There are currently at least 12 states, including Connecticut and Massachusetts, that provide higher education tuition assistance in the form of waivers or grants to eligible adopted children. In most such states, this assistance is part of a broader program that provides assistance to foster children and certain other youth. (Connecticut and Massachusetts have a separate program for students in foster care.) For example, over 20 states provide tuition assistance for children who were in foster care at a certain age or for a specific length of time. This report focuses on programs that specifically reference children who were adopted.

Generally, a student must have been adopted from state care at a certain point in their youth to be eligible for a waiver or grant, and must use the award at a public institution of higher education in the state that provided the waiver. A few states' programs also apply to private institutions.

Additionally, students may be eligible to receive assistance through the federally funded Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) Program. This program provides grants administered by the states to current and former foster youth, who may be eligible to receive up to \$5,000 to apply towards their college education. For more information on this program, see the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid [website](#).

Table 1 lists state tuition assistance programs for adopted students, including (1) residency requirements, (2) financial aid provided, (3) age limits, and (4) enrollment requirements.

**Table 1: State Tuition Assistance Programs for Adopted Children**

<i>State</i>	<i>Program Name</i>	<i>Age Limit</i>	<i>Adoption and Residency Requirement</i>	<i>Financial Aid Provided</i>	<i>Enrollment Requirement</i>	<i>Additional Details</i>
Connecticut	College Assistance/ Postsecondary Education Assistance for Adopted Children Tuition Waiver  <a href="#">DCF Policy Manual: Adoption Subsidies 25-2</a>	Student must be accepted to an accredited institution by age 21; remains eligible to receive funding until end of school year in which student turns 23	Adopted from Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) after December 31, 2004 and before 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday	Tuition, fees, and room and board at an accredited college, university, or institution of higher learning equivalent to such costs at the UConn Storrs campus	Full-time only	Expenditures are paid only after deducting a \$500 required contribution, and any additional educational grants and scholarships awarded to the student
Florida	Tuition and Fee Exemption Tuition Waiver  <a href="#">Fla. Stat. § 1009.25(1)</a>	Student remains eligible until age 28	Adopted from Florida DCF after May 5, 1997	Tuition and fees at Florida state public universities and colleges, and School District Workforce Education Programs	Not specified	Each institution can annually grant exemptions (for adopted students and certain other categories) for up to 54 full-time students, or 1% of the institution's total full-time enrollment, whichever is greater

Table 1 (continued)

<i>State</i>	<i>Program Name</i>	<i>Age Limit</i>	<i>Adoption and Residency Requirement</i>	<i>Financial Aid Provided</i>	<i>Enrollment Requirement</i>	<i>Additional Details</i>
Illinois	Department of Children and Family Services Scholarship Program  <a href="#">89 Ill. Adm. Code 312.10 et seq.</a>	Student must be at least age 16 and under age 23	Adopted from Illinois DCF	Tuition and fees at an Illinois state university or community college; student may attend another college or university and receive the same state assistance if he or she is awarded a scholarship	12-credit hour minimum per semester	Waiver is good for up to four consecutive years after first admittance. Maximum of 53 scholarships each year (for adoptees and other categories), four of which are awarded to children of veterans
Kansas	Kansas Foster Child Educational Assistance Tuition Waiver Program  <a href="#">Kan. Stat. § 75-53, 112 et seq.</a>	Student can receive aid through the semester in which he or she turns 23	Adopted from foster care placement on or after 16 <sup>th</sup> birthday while in the custody of Kansas DCF	Tuition and fees at Kansas educational institutions including vocational-technical schools, community colleges, the municipal university, state educational institutions, or technical colleges	Not specified	

Table 1 (continued)

<i>State</i>	<i>Program Name</i>	<i>Age Limit</i>	<i>Adoption and Residency Requirement</i>	<i>Financial Aid Provided</i>	<i>Enrollment Requirement</i>	<i>Additional Details</i>
Kentucky	Kentucky Foster or Adopted Children Tuition Waiver Program  <a href="#">Ky. Rev. Stat. § 164.2847</a>	Student can enroll up to four years after high school graduation	Adopted from Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services; student may live outside of the state at the time of application and apply to a Kentucky postsecondary institution	Tuition and fees at any Kentucky public postsecondary institution, including four-year universities and colleges and Kentucky community and technical colleges. An adoptee residing outside of the state may apply for a tuition waiver to a participating Kentucky school, up to the tuition amount for a state resident.	Full-time or part-time	Waiver is good for five years after first admittance; five-year period can be extended in some cases (e.g., military service)
Maine	Post-Secondary Education Tuition Waiver  <a href="#">Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. 20-A §125721 et seq.</a>	No age limit	Maine resident who was adopted from care at the time of high school graduation, and adoptive parent receives a state subsidy	Tuition only at any University of Maine campus, Maine community college, or the Maine Maritime Academy	Full-time only	Capped at 30 new students per year (for adoptees and other categories)

Table 1 (continued)

<i>State</i>	<i>Program Name</i>	<i>Age Limit</i>	<i>Adoption and Residency Requirement</i>	<i>Financial Aid Provided</i>	<i>Enrollment Requirement</i>	<i>Additional Details</i>
Maryland	Tuition Waiver for Foster Care Recipients  <a href="#">Md. Code Educ. Law § 15-106.1</a>	Student must enroll by age 25	Maryland resident adopted after 13 <sup>th</sup> birthday	Tuition and fees at a Maryland public institution of higher education, including vocational schools	Full-time or part-time	Waiver is good for five years after first admittance
Massachusetts	<a href="#">Department of Children and Families Adopted Child Tuition Waiver and Fee Assistance Program</a>	Student must be age 24 or under at the start of the academic year	Adopted by an eligible Massachusetts resident or state employee through the Massachusetts DCF	Tuition and fees at Massachusetts public higher education institutions equal to 100% of the resident rate, subject to budgetary appropriation	Full-time or part-time	
New Hampshire	Tuition Waiver for Children in State Foster Care or Guardianship  <a href="#">N.H. Rev. Stat. § 187-A:20-b (2017)</a>	Student must be less than 23 years of age	Adopted while in state guardianship or adopted from the care of the department following surrender of parental rights	Tuition and fees only at in-state public institutions	Full-time only; 12 credit minimum	Capped at 10 tuition waivers each for both the New Hampshire University System and Community College System (for adoptees and certain other categories)
New Jersey	New Jersey Foster Care (NJFC) Scholars Program  <a href="#">DCF Policy Manual: Child Protection and Permanency VII-A-1-300</a>	Student must enroll between ages 16 and 23	Adopted through New Jersey Child Protection and Permanency after turning 12	Full cost of tuition and fees for students attending a NJ public college, university, or technical school	Full-time or part-time	

Table 1 (continued)

<i>State</i>	<i>Program Name</i>	<i>Age Limit</i>	<i>Adoption and Residency Requirement</i>	<i>Financial Aid Provided</i>	<i>Enrollment Requirement</i>	<i>Additional Details</i>
Tennessee	Tennessee HOPE Foster Child Tuition Grant  <a href="#">Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-4-933 (2018)</a>	Student can enroll up to four years after high school graduation	Adopted after age 14 and have been a Tennessee resident for one year immediately preceding the date of application for a grant	Cost of attendance, less other gift aid, not to exceed tuition and fees, at any eligible Tennessee public or independent postsecondary institution	Not specified	Waiver is good for six years after first admittance
Texas	College Tuition and Fee Waiver  <a href="#">Tex. Educ. Code Ann. § 54.367 (2017)</a>	Student can enroll up until age 25; no age limit if student was the subject of a financial assistance agreement meeting certain criteria	Adopted on or after September 1, 2009	Tuition and fees at a Texas public institution of higher education	Not specified	No limitation on number of semesters or years student may receive the waiver as long as student enrolls by age 25 and remains continuously enrolled until completion of degree

Source: [Education Commission of the States, Tuition Assistance Programs for Foster Youth Pursuing Postsecondary Education; North American Council on Adoptable Children, State Adoption Assistance Programs; and State Statutes](#)

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