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## **Tuition Refund Policy for Exceptional Cases**

### **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to inform students about what circumstances will be considered for tuition refunds and forgiveness of debt owed to the College. Refunds and debt forgiveness are exceptional, and should not be considered automatic or an entitlement.

### **2.0 Revision History**

This is a revision to an existing policy.

### **3.0 Applicability**

This policy is applicable to all students.

### **4.0 Policy**

This policy was originally approved May, 2014 and was amended July, 2015.

### **Students will automatically receive a refund if:**

- Student drops a class by the last day to drop with a tuition refund (also known as the census date). These dates are published in the College's Academic Calendar for the specific course session(s).
- The class is canceled by the College.

Students who do not plan to attend a class must drop it online through MYLFCC.

### **Students who are receiving financial assistance may be impacted by dropping or withdrawing from a class. Before dropping or withdrawing:**

- Financial aid recipients should contact the Financial Aid Office. Final decisions for approval of tuition refund requests involving financial aid funds require the consent of the Financial Aid Office.
- Third-party contract recipients should contact the assisting organization.

## Special Circumstances

**Students may request a refund or forgiveness of debt after the census date because of a special circumstance including:**

- A medical emergency that prevents student from continuing his/her studies.
- The death of the student or an immediate family member.
- An extreme financial hardship
- An administrative error by the College
- A national emergency declared by the President of the United States. Military students being called to active duty should refer to the *Tuition Refunds – Military Students Policy* found on the college website.

**The following circumstances do not qualify for a refund or forgiveness of debt:**

- Student's failure to drop a class by assuming it would be dropped for him/her by the College due to nonpayment or nonattendance.
- Misunderstanding or lack of knowledge about College policies and procedures.
- Dissatisfaction with the course content or instructor and/or his/her academic progress in a class.
- Inadequate investigation of course requirements, including prerequisites.
- Change in personal work schedule/hours, geographic location, or available transportation.
- Bookstore charges
- Financial Aid refunds

## 5.0 Definitions

### Medical emergency

An extended illness or major medical issue occurring during the semester student is registered, which requires hospitalization, is life-threatening, or is contagious and a danger to the remainder of the College community. Student must have been absent more than 10 percent of the session length. A written verification on letterhead by the attending physician is required and must include the initial date of the problem, a statement that student is unable to attend class, and the duration of the problem.

Or

A psychiatric/psychological emergency or severe, extended illness occurring during the semester that student is registered which requires hospitalization or that prevents student from attending classes. A written verification on letterhead by the attending mental health therapist is required and must include the initial date of the problem, a statement that student is unable to attend class, and the duration of the problem.

### **Extreme Financial Hardship**

Financial hardship is an event that created a financial hardship for the student such that the student's enrollment could not continue and involving sudden and unforeseen loss such as foreclosure, termination from a job, or catastrophic event such as a fire.

### **Death**

Deaths will be considered for refund if they are the student or a member of the student's immediate family (mother, father, sister, brother, husband, wife, or child).

### **National emergency or mobilization**

Declared by the President of the United States and in accordance with Section 23-9.6.2 of the Code of Virginia.

### **Administrative error by the College**

Any College error will be considered as a special circumstance if the error can be documented by the student. Disagreements with faculty, teaching methods or style, treatment or grading procedures are not considered administrative errors and must be resolved by contacting the division dean or through the College's student complaint/grievance procedures.

## **6.0 Responsibilities**

A College refund committee has been established and is responsible for determining approval for any refund or forgiveness of debt decision. The membership of this committee is made up of at least one representative from financial and administrative services, one from instruction, and one from student services.

## **7.0 Procedures**

Student must withdraw from all classes before submitting a request for a refund or forgiveness of debt. (Prior to this, it is recommended that student meet with an advisor to discuss possible options.)

Requests must be submitted no later than the end of the subsequent semester.

**Complete and submit the *Tuition Refund for Exceptional Cases Application Form* including appropriate documentation to the Admissions Office to justify one of the following:**

- **Medical Emergency** If a refund is approved for medical issues or a death, it may be prorated. For a problem that occurs in the first half of the class, a full tuition refund may be approved. For a problem that occurs after that, a refund may be prorated if the request is approved.
- **Death** (A copy of the death certificate or obituary must accompany the request)

- **National emergency or mobilization.** A copy of military activation orders must be attached. Requests must be submitted within 90 days of the date of activation orders.
- **Extreme financial hardship.** Provide documentation that fully explains the financial hardship.
- **Administrative error by the College.** The request must explain the circumstances of the error, including dates, names of employees, and publications, if applicable. Requests must be submitted within 90 days of the date the error was first discovered or made known.

## **Decisions**

Students will be sent a letter indicating whether his/her request has been approved or denied. Official communication will be sent only by U.S. mail or to his/her MYLFCC email address. Communication with individuals other than the student will require written consent of the student in accordance with the Family Educational Records and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

All committee decisions are final.

## **8.0 Interpretation**

Authority for interpretation for this policy rests with the vice president of financial and administrative services and the vice president of academic and student affairs.

## **9.0 Authority/Reference**

Virginia Community College System Policy 4.3.2