

Georgia Driver's Education Commission
Driver's Education Grant Scholarship Program
Eligibility Requirements (Adopted 9/26/16 and Amended on 11/16/16ⁱ, 3/21/17ⁱⁱ, 6/26/17ⁱⁱⁱ, 9/26/17^{iv}, 3/27/18^v, 3/26/19^{vi}, 6/28/19^{vii}, 6/10/22^{viii}, and 3/17/2025^{ix})

A. Student Eligibility

1. The student must be a resident of the State of Georgia and actively enrolled in school.
2. The student must be between the ages of fifteen and seventeen and possess a valid Georgia instructional driving permit or driver's license.
3. First priority will be given to grant scholarship applicants who are a child or dependent of a Georgia first responder disabled or killed in the line of duty or member of the United States military killed in action and to applicants who are in state custody under the care of the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services. If the applicant is a child or dependent of a Georgia first responder disabled or killed in the line of duty, the applicant must identify said professional and provide a copy of the student applicant's birth certificate or other government issued documentation proving the student was a dependent of the identified Georgia first responder. For purposes of this grant scholarship program, the Georgia Driver's Education Commission will rely on the Georgia Public Safety Memorial Committee to identify a Georgia first responder killed in the line of duty. For purposes of this grant scholarship program, the Georgia Driver's Education Commission will rely on O.C.G.A § 35-8-7.4 (a) to identify and define a Georgia first responder. If the applicant is a child or dependent of a Georgia first responder disabled in the line of duty, the applicant must provide of letter of disability. If the applicant is a child or dependent of United States military personnel killed in action, the applicant must provide DD Form 1300 (Report of Casualty) as documentation. If the applicant is under the care of the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services, the applicant must submit a letter documenting custody from the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services. Grant scholarship allocations in this priority level will be evenly distributed among Georgia's United States congressional districts.
4. Second priority will be given to scholarship applicants who can demonstrate a need based on family income. Financial need eligibility will be based on 175% of the Free and Reduced Price Meal Eligibility program for the State of Georgia as published by the Georgia Department of Education. The Commission authorizes agency staff to make necessary technical adjustments to the Georgia Driver's Education Grant Scholarship Program application and award process to ensure that the eligibility level is appropriately adjusted as the financial need eligibility for the Free and Reduced Price Meal program is increased or decreased by the Georgia Department of Education. Grant scholarship allocations in this priority level will be evenly distributed among Georgia's United States congressional districts.
5. . Paragraph reserved.

6. Grant scholarships will be awarded monthly. Grant scholarship applications are due on the last day of every month. Grant Scholarship awards and denials will be issued on the 1st day of each following month and will be sent by electronic mail. The number of grant scholarships available to be awarded will be determined by staff and entered into the grant scholarship management system. Grant scholarships will be awarded based on the priority levels defined above. All of the applicants in the first priority will be awarded before the second priority applicants. If more grant scholarship applications are submitted than grant scholarships available in each priority level, grant scholarships will be awarded using a computer generated random selection method from the priority level applications. The grant scholarship will be awarded in the form of a voucher to the student. The student may then take said voucher to an eligible Authorized Provider. The Authorized Provider will then submit the voucher to the Commission for reimbursement as set forth herein.
7. Students are only eligible to apply for a grant scholarship one time. If a student's application is rejected, the application will be reconsidered for the following two months and given priority over new applicants.
8. Scholarships are only valid for students who agree to complete a standard 30/6 driver's education course in which the student receives a minimum of thirty (30) hours of classroom training and six (6) hours of behind the wheel training. Additionally, the student's parent or guardian must be a co-applicant and agree to complete forty hours of supervised driving with the student. Additionally, the scholarship must be awarded prior to the start date of the driver's education course.
9. Students will only be awarded one scholarship. In the event of a failure or withdrawal from the course, the student will not be eligible to apply for another scholarship.
10. Grant Scholarship awardees must identify the provider of choice from a list of authorized providers and redeem the grant scholarship with the provider within 30 days of the grant scholarship award notice. Further, the driver's education course must be completed within 180 days of the grant scholarship award date. If a scholarship is not redeemed after 30 days of notice of the award and the course is not completed within 180 days of notice of the award of the grant scholarship by the student, the grant scholarship is forfeited and the student loses the scholarship and eligibility to apply again in the future. Students and providers may petition the Chairman of the Georgia Driver's Education Commission, or his designee, for a one-time 60 day extension of these deadlines. Additional requests will be considered with a proven medical reason from a physician necessitating the addition time extension.

B. Provider Eligibility

1. Provider eligibility is open to the following types of providers:

- a. Public and private high schools that are licensed by the Georgia Department of Driver Services.
 - b. Private driving schools (commercial for profit, and not for profit) that are licensed by the Georgia Department of Drivers Services and that have been licensed for a minimum of two years.
 - c. Technical Colleges, Colleges, Universities and State Agencies that are authorized to provide driver's education by their governing bodies and that meet the minimum standards for drivers training and driver's education set forth by said governing body.
2. In order to participate in the scholarship program, providers must submit a completed Provider Application and meet the minimum qualifications set forth in these requirements. All providers must agree to abide by the State of Georgia vendor requirements including, but not limited to, compliance with the Statewide Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy in accordance with Executive Order 01.14.19.02, the submission of a Form W-9, Vendor Management Form, E-Verify documents and agree to receive payments by Automated Clearing House (ACH) transfer.
3. Private driving schools must be in compliance with the Georgia Department of Revenue.
4. Government-owned driving schools must be in compliance with all Georgia Department of Audit and Accounts regulations.
5. Public and private high schools and private driving schools must be in good standing with the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS). Additionally, public and private high schools must submit a copy of the most recent audit report conducted by DDS and a corrective action plan if one was issued. If a public or private high school or private driving school has received a moderate or severe risk assessment within the previous year from DDS, the driver training school must provide the subsequent audit report demonstrating that the concerns raised in the DDS audit report have been satisfactorily addressed before they will become an authorized provider in the program.
6. Technical Colleges, Colleges and Universities, and State Agencies who participate in the scholarship program must be in good standing with their governing body and the Georgia Driver's Education Commission and agree to general oversight including the enforcement of driver's education standards adopted by the governing body and annual program reviews or audits.
7. Providers must agree to auditing and general oversight as required by the Georgia Driver's Education Commission.
8. Providers must agree that the scholarship grants may only be applied toward a standard 30/6 driver's education course in which the student receives a minimum of 30 hours of classroom instruction and 6 hours of behind the wheel instruction. For the purpose of this scholarship criteria, classroom instruction means in-person training conducted by an approved instructor. Remote synchronous classroom instruction as defined in the Department of Driver Services Rules and Regulations 375-5-2-.10 (11)(b) qualifies for

eligibility in this grant scholarship program. Online asynchronous (self-paced) classroom instruction does not qualify for eligibility in this grant scholarship program. Providers shall not offer or provide a free or complimentary third party road test for scholarship recipients. Providers licensed by the Department of Driver Services as a “Third Party Tester Program” as defined by the Department of Driver Services Rules 375-5-2.27(1) may offer third party road tests to scholarship recipients for the same fee charged to the general public, but shall not mandate that a scholarship recipient purchase a third party road test for use of the scholarship.

9. The provider must agree that the reimbursement to the provider by the Commission based upon a scholarship grant to a student applicant for the 30/6 course will not exceed \$650.00. Further, the provider must agree that it will not impose any additional fee or surcharge to the student for the 30/6 course excluding a “no-show” fee. The “no-show” fee charged to the student shall not exceed ten percent of the contracted rate of the 30/6 course for students who fail to show up for a scheduled behind the wheel driving lesson without canceling or rescheduling 24 hours in advance of the scheduled lesson. The Commission agrees that contracts will not be amended to accommodate fee increases.
10. The provider must agree that request for reimbursement of the scholarship grant submitted to the Georgia Driver’s Education Commission will be the same cost or less than that cost charged to the general public for driver’s education for a 30/6 driver’s education course.
11. The provider must agree to submit an OCRA Certificate to the Commission within 30 days after completion of the course by the student grantee as proof that the course was completed. The provider must further agree that reimbursement to the provider by the Commission for any scholarship grant will be made after proof has been provided to the Commission after completion of the course. In the event that the student fails the driver’s education course, the provider must submit a copy of the Student Log detailing the student’s attendance in the course and a statement detailing the reason for failure in order for payment to be made to the provider. In the event that the student grantee withdraws from the course or fails to timely complete the driver’s education course, the provider may charge the Georgia Driver’s Education Commission up to \$5.25 per hour of classroom education completed and up to \$82.00 per hour of behind the wheel training completed. Providers must submit student logs detailing classroom hours and behind the wheel training completed in order to be compensated for students who have withdrawn from the course or have failed to timely complete the driver’s education course. The total amount reimbursed for a student who withdraws or fails will not exceed \$649.50.
12. The provider may not set in place additional eligibility requirements for the students in addition to those set forth by the Georgia Driver’s Education Commission.

ⁱ Paragraph A-4 amended to increase the maximum income level for second priority of scholarship awards for financial need to 125% of the free and reduced priced meals for students in the State of Georgia. Paragraph A-4 and A-5 amended to provide that grant scholarship allocations in priority level one and priority level two will be evenly distributed among Georgia's United States congressional districts. Paragraph A-7 amended to delete the provision allowing students reapply for the scholarship up to six times and including that students are only eligible to apply for a grant scholarship one time. Paragraph B-7 amended to delete the provision permitting the provider to charge the grant scholarship student and co-grant awardee parent up to half of the price of the driver's education course for students who withdraws or fails to timely complete the course and includes the provision for providers to charge hourly rates to the Commission for students who withdraw from the course or fail to timely complete the course.

ⁱⁱ Paragraph A-1 was amended to include a driver's license in addition to a learner's permit for student eligibility criteria. Paragraph A-9 was amended to delete the provision that the provider may charge the student applicant and co applicant for up to half of the price of the driver's education course. Paragraph B-5 was amended to require public or private high school or private driving school's previously receiving a moderate or severe risk assessment within the previous year from DDS to provide subsequent audit reports demonstrating that the concerns raise in the DDS audit report have been satisfactorily addressed before they will become an authorized provider in the program. Paragraph B-8 was amended to clarify that that virtual classroom programs do not qualify for eligibility.

ⁱⁱⁱ Paragraph A-3 was amended to require DD Form 1300 (Report of Casualty) as documentation for dependents of United States military personnel killed in the line of duty instead of Form DD 214 and DEERS records. Paragraph A-8 was amended to require that the scholarship must be awarded prior to the state date of the driver's education course. Paragraph B-9 was amended to include that the providers agree not to impose any additional fee to the student.

^{iv} Paragraph A-10 was amended to include a provisions for students to request a one-time 60 day extension to the 180 day deadline for course completion. Paragraph B-9 was amended to clarify that the Commission will not consider contract amendments with providers for fee increases.

^v Paragraph A-4 was amended to update the income eligibility levels for Tier 2 applicants to reflect updated free and reduced cost meal eligibility set by the Department of Education.

^{vi} Paragraph A-4 was amended to delete the chart used to determine financial need eligibility and language added authorizing agency staff to make necessary adjustments to the needs-based income level to ensure that financial need eligibility is consistent with 125% of the Free and Reduced Price Meal Eligibility program for the State of Georgia as determined by the Georgia Department of Education as changes are published.

^{vii} Paragraph A-6 was amended to change the award date of scholarships from the 20th of each month to the first day of each month. Paragraph B-2 was amended to include the Statewide Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy contractor requirements to the minimum qualifications for driver training schools to participate in the program.

^{viii} "Public safety professional" was changed to "Georgia first responder" throughout the document. Additionally, the term "provider" was changed to "Authorized Provider" in Section A to eliminate confusion from applicants on which driver training providers can redeem the scholarship voucher. Paragraph A-3 was amended to include children or dependents of Georgia first responders who were disabled in the line of duty and to applicants who are in state custody under the care of the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services. Paragraph A-3 was further amended to use O.C.G.A. § 35-8-7.4(a) to define Georgia first responder. Additionally, Paragraph A-3 was amended to update documentation requirements for applicants in Tier 1 to include a letter of disability for applicants who are the child or dependent of Georgia first responder's disabled in the line of duty and a letter of documenting state-custody for applicants in the custody of the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services. Paragraph A-4 was amended to change the financial need eligibility from 125% to 175% of the Free and Reduced Price Meal Eligibility program. Paragraph A-5 creating a third priority level for all other applicants who do not mee the criteria set forth in the first and second priority level was deleted. Paragraph A-6 was amended by deleting the award process for third priority level applicants. Paragraph A-7 was amended to provide reconsideration of a rejected application for the following two months after the application was rejected.

^{ix} Paragraph B-8 was emended to clarify eligibility for "remote synchronous classroom instruction", to prohibit online asynchronous classroom instruction", to prohibit providers from providing free or complimentary road test for scholarship recipients, and to clarify that authorized "third party tester programs" may offer third party road testing to scholarship recipients but shall not mandate that a scholarship recipient purchase a third party road test for use of the scholarship. Paragraph B-9 was amended to increase the reimbursement fee for a 30/6 course from \$500.00 to \$650.00 and to allow providers to impose a "no-show" fee, not to exceed 10% of the 30/6 GDEC contracted rate, to be charged to the students for failing to show up for a driving lesson that was not cancelled or rescheduled 24 hours in advance of the scheduled lesson. Paragraph B-11 was amended to increase the maximum

classroom hourly fee from \$4.00 to \$5.25 per hour of classroom education completed and the maximum behind the wheel hourly fee from \$62.50 to \$82.00 per hour of behind the wheel training for a student who does not complete the 30/6 course due to failure or withdrawal, and to increase the maximum reimbursement for a student who does complete the course from \$491.00 to \$649.50.