

# POLICIES

## To remain TN Promise eligible, students must:

### High School:

#### 1. Attend and graduate from an eligible high school.

- Students must apply their senior year of high school with the Class of 2025 and meet the established TN Promise application deadline.
- A student must be a Tennessee resident.
  - Students' residency will be determined by their post-secondary institution.
  - Students who reside with a parent outside of Tennessee pursuant to military orders will be considered eligible to participate in the scholarship program.
- Students who complete a GED or HiSET diploma must enroll full-time in an eligible post-secondary program in the fall after they receive their diploma, provided that the diploma was earned before the student reached 19 years of age. This assumes the GED or HiSET student met all TN Promise requirements.

#### 2. Attend all scheduled mandatory TN Promise meetings. Students must attend their assigned scheduled meeting as outlined in the student handbook and tNAchieves website.

- Excuse forms will be reviewed for the following: participation in a school-sanctioned event (e.g., athletic event and/or practice, concert and/or rehearsal, national or state conference or competition), death in the immediate family, personal illness, conflict with post-secondary class schedule, conflict with religious observance, personal or immediate family emergency, conflict with work schedule, lack of transportation.
- Students are responsible for notifying tNAchieves prior to or following their missed meeting via the excuse form provided at tNAchieves.org. Failure to meet this requirement, even with a valid excuse, may result in the loss of TN Promise eligibility.
  - All other excuses outside those outlined above are not considered excusable absences and will result in a student losing TN Promise eligibility. This includes meetings that are rescheduled due to inclement weather or school closings.
  - Students who arrive late to a mandatory meeting will lose their TN Promise eligibility. Likewise, students that leave a meeting prior to adjournment will lose their TN Promise eligibility.
  - Students who have an approved absence from tNAchieves must complete the mandatory meeting requirement virtually.
    - Excused students will gain access to the virtual mandatory meeting on February 11, 2025 via email from tNAchieves.
    - Excused students must complete the mandatory meeting requirement by March 15, 2025 to remain eligible for TN Promise.
- Students who graduate high school during the fall term are required to return to their high school for the assigned mandatory meeting.
- Students who transfer during their senior year are responsible for alerting tNAchieves and attending the assigned mandatory meeting designated for the high school to which they transferred.
- A parent/guardian cannot attend the assigned meeting or view the virtual mandatory meeting on a student's behalf. Students must complete the mandatory meeting requirement to remain eligible for TN Promise.
- Students who require accommodations at their assigned team meeting will be responsible for alerting tNAchieves at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting (e.g., sign language interpreter).

#### 3. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 15, 2025. This deadline is tentative and is subject to change should the 2025-2026 FAFSA not open on October 1, 2024.

- Failure to qualify for federal aid in the form of a Pell Grant and/or state aid in the form of TELS (e.g., HOPE) or TSAA funding will not affect a student's TN Promise eligibility.
- Students must be eligible for in-state tuition.
- Students must complete the correct year's FAFSA each year prior to the deadline established by TSAC.

#### 4. Submit all financial aid verification documents each year for community and four-year colleges.

- Students attending a TCAT must complete the verification process by October 1 each year.
- tNAchieves encourages students to submit all documents by July 1 to ensure the post-secondary institutions have adequate time to process.
- Students must select the eligible institution they plan to attend as their first choice on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as direct their TSAC Student Portal to the eligible institution.
- It is the responsibility of students to confirm with the post-secondary institution that their admissions and financial aid files are verified, processed and ready for award.

#### 5. Complete and submit at least 8 hours of community service prior to the start of each semester/trimester/quarter by the established deadline. See the Community Service Policy on page 10 for further details regarding this requirement.

### College:

#### 1. Maintain full-time status each semester.

- If students fall below full-time, they will no longer be eligible.
- TCAT students must be enrolled in a full-time program.
- Failure to attend class can result in loss of eligibility.

#### 2. Begin at an eligible post-secondary institution in the fall term directly following high school graduation.

- Students who graduate from high school prior to the spring 2025 term may begin at their post-secondary institution early. Early graduates need to complete the current and previous academic year's FAFSA and submit community service by April 1, 2025. Students must also complete their mandatory TN Promise meeting requirement by the established deadline.
- Students may begin college in the summer directly following high school graduation if they have met all TN Promise requirements. Please note that community college and 4-year students who begin college in the summer directly following high school graduation will be subject to a GPA check after the summer term. Students must maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA to remain eligible for TN Promise.
- Students may be granted a medical or personal leave of absence from timely enrollment in the initial semester full-time attendance or continuous enrollment at an eligible post-secondary institution as long as all other acceptable eligibility criteria are met. Students must request a leave of absence with their chosen post-secondary institution or TSAC for approval.
  - An approved leave of absence of six months or less shall not count against the five-semester or eight-trimester limit at an eligible post-secondary institution.

#### 3. Attend an eligible post-secondary institution for continuous semesters.

- Students cannot leave the post-secondary institution for a period of time and remain eligible.
- If students withdraw from all classes or stops attending during the semester, they will no longer be eligible.

#### 4. Maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA at the end of each academic year.

- TCAT students must maintain satisfactory academic progress each trimester.

#### 5. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the established deadline each year throughout their post-secondary experience.

- Failure to qualify for federal aid in the form of a Pell Grant and/or state aid in the form of TELS (e.g., HOPE) or TSAA funding will not affect a student's TN Promise eligibility.
- Students must be eligible for in-state tuition.
- Students must complete the correct year's FAFSA each year prior to the deadline established by TSAC.

## **6. Submit all financial aid verification documents each year for community and four-year colleges.**

- a. Students attending a TCAT must complete the verification process by October 1 each year.
- b. tnAchieves encourages students to submit all documents by July 1 to ensure the post-secondary institutions have adequate time to process.
- c. Students must select the eligible institution they plan to attend as their first choice on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as direct their TSAC Student Portal to the eligible institution.
- d. It is the responsibility of students to confirm with the post-secondary institution that their admissions and financial aid files are verified, processed and ready for award.

## **7. Complete and submit at least 8 hours of community service prior to the start of each semester/trimester/quarter by the established deadline.**

See the Community Service Policy below for further details regarding this requirement.

### **Community Service Policy:**

**Complete and submit at least 8 hours of community service prior to the start of each semester/trimester/quarter by the established deadline.**

**Community service must be completed under the supervision of an established organization (e.g., nonprofit, public service organization).**

- a. Community service is not:
  - i. Work resulting in payment.
  - ii. Work done under the supervision of an extended or immediate family member.
  - iii. Work done for an individual rather than an organization (e.g., babysitting, mowing a neighbor's lawn, picking up trash in the neighborhood).
  - iv. Proselytizing (sharing or teaching faith).
  - v. Work done off the clock/unpaid at the student's job.
- b. Virtual community service webinars are available as a means to complete up to 4 community service hours for each deadline. The remaining 4 hours must be completed via job shadowing and/or community service opportunities that fit within the guidelines.
  - i. Each virtual community service webinar counts as one hour. Students will be automatically credited one hour per webinar after viewing the webinar in its entirety and following on-screen instructions.
  - ii. Students are not required to submit a community service form for viewing the webinars.
  - iii. Webinars may only be accessed via tnAchieves.org. All other forms of virtual community service will be denied.
- c. Students must complete and submit all information regarding community service by the established deadline at tnAchieves.org. Failure to comply by the established dates will result in loss of eligibility. Keep in mind, it is not the responsibility of the organization and/or supervisor to submit hours on a student's behalf.
- d. Should students feel that extenuating circumstances beyond their control prohibited them from completing and submitting community service by the deadline, they may file an appeal with tnAchieves at <https://tnAchieves.org/appeal-form/>.
  - i. If the appeal is denied, students will not be able to submit community service after the deadline and will remain ineligible for TN Promise.
  - ii. If the appeal is approved, students will have one week from appeal approval to complete and submit 8 hours of community service, unless otherwise specified in the appeal approval.
  - iii. Should students fail to submit all required community service in the allotted time, they will remain ineligible for TN Promise.
- iv. Students who are unable to complete community service hours in person due to illness, injury, a documented disability and/or accommodation must file an appeal with tnAchieves prior to the community service deadline.
  - If the appeal is approved, the student will be allowed to complete 8 hours of virtual community service webinars.
- v. Documentation is required for any community service appeal submitted to tnAchieves.
- vi. Unless otherwise specified, an approved appeal only applies to the community service deadline being appealed. Any additional exceptions or accommodations for future terms must be appealed prior to each deadline.
- e. In the event that a post-secondary institution reverses a student's ineligibility certification after a community service deadline, an exception to the missed deadline may be considered by tnAchieves.
  - i. If granted, students will be contacted by tnAchieves. Community service must be completed and submitted in its entirety no later than two weeks from notification.
  - ii. Should students fail to submit all required community service in the allotted time, they will remain ineligible for TN Promise.

### **Other components:**

#### **1. Only a member of tnAchieves staff may determine a student's TN Promise eligibility.**

- a. Mentors are an extension of tnAchieves but are not tnAchieves staff members.
- b. tnAchieves mentors are volunteers and may lack adequate time to answer all questions; therefore, it is the student's responsibility to confirm eligibility with tnAchieves staff.

#### **2. TN Promise only funds last-dollar tuition and mandatory fees. It does not pay for books or other post-secondary expenses (e.g., application fee, program and class specific fees). TN Promise only covers fees required of all students.**

#### **3. A student cannot be mentored by a family member.**

#### **4. Mentors cannot choose students to mentor.**

- a. tnAchieves staff will randomly assign students to mentors.

#### **5. TN Promise follows the admissions requirements of the post-secondary institution.**

- a. TN Promise will fund learning support classes if the student fails to meet the ACT requirements for college-level coursework.

#### **6. Students are responsible for notifying tnAchieves staff when their contact information changes. Incorrect information does not preclude students from ineligibility.**

Should students fail to adhere to any/all policies, tnAchieves invokes the right to remove their eligibility. tnAchieves values honesty and integrity. A student who submits misinformation will immediately lose TN Promise eligibility. Be respectful in all correspondence and communication, including social media.

**Policies may be subject to change without notice.** It is a student's responsibility to refer to the policies as posted at tnAchieves.org for updates and changes to the TN Promise legislation.