

M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department

Post Secondary Education Policy



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Amendments

Under the direction of Chief & Council, amendments may be made at any time to the Post Secondary Education Policy. Notice of changes will be given to everyone as soon as possible.

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1.0 General Information

The M'Chigeeng First Nation Post Secondary Educational Support Program is designed to provide registered M'Chigeeng First Nation members the financial support to allow them to pursue a college or university education.

Post Secondary Education means a program of studies, offered by a post secondary institution (college or university) for which the completion of secondary school (OSSD) studies or its equivalent is a prerequisite. Students with basic level/workplace stream education (OSSD) or (OSSC) may be considered for admission on an individual basis through a special needs program at the institution of their choice.

If you do not have an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or its equivalent, you may apply as a mature student. All mature student applications are considered individually, pre-testing may be required by the institution to determine readiness for post secondary studies.

The M'Chigeeng First Nation Post Secondary Educational Support Program is administered by the M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department.

Individuals who gain Indian status by virtue of the 1985 revision of the Indian Act (Bill C-31) are provided financial support on the same basis as other post secondary students.

The program provides financial support and counseling to individuals who have been accepted into an accredited Post Secondary Institution; however, due to limited funding within the post secondary educational support program, all decisions will be made based on the policy, priority listing and availability of funds.

To ensure the effectiveness of this policy, policy changes are necessary, and every attempt is made to notify the individual/applicant and membership of changes, however, it is ultimately the responsibility of the individual/applicant and membership to ask for current information and/or clarification regarding post secondary education assistance.

In the event that individuals are not sponsored, they may access the Ontario Student Assistance program (OSAP) to finance their educational endeavors; the repayment of the OSAP loan becomes the responsibility of the individual. **The M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department does not provide reimbursement for OSAP loans.**

2.0 Eligibility for Support

To be eligible for support:

- The applicant must be a registered M'Chigeeng First Nation Band Member under the Indian Act or the Membership Code. Bill C-31 students must provide a letter of reinstatement from the Department of Indian Affairs.
- Applicants who transfer from other First Nations must provide a letter from their previous First Nation and official documentation from the post secondary institution verifying their sponsorship and academic history. This letter will determine their place on the priority list.
- The program of studies must be recognized as a full post secondary program by the accredited institution.

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- The applicant must meet the entrance requirements for the College or University of their choice.
- Applicants (full or part time) must have completed and submitted all the required post secondary forms to the Education Office by the deadline date each year.
- Applicants who have a debt with M'Chigeeng First Nation must make payment arrangements to repay their debt at the student rate of deduction (5%).
- Applicants deferred from the previous year must reapply for funding to keep their application active. If they do not reapply by the deadline date, the Education Department will consider them no longer interested.
- **All continuing students must re-apply each year** and submit their official transcripts from the previous academic year in order to process their request for continued sponsorship.
- All students must maintain the institution's minimum average for funding to continue.
- The applicant must arrange a personal interview with the Post Secondary Counselor upon notification of approval for funding.

3.0 How to Apply

The Applications for Educational Assistance are available at the M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department

Full and Part time students must complete an Application for Educational Assistance form and return it to the M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department by the deadline (March 30th), along with the required documentation requested in the Application for Educational Assistance package.

All enrolment periods, Summer, September, or January of the fiscal year for which you are applying must meet the March 30th deadline.

It is the applicant's responsibility to apply to the appropriate Application Centre by their deadline and ensure the application is complete. Applications are now paperless, and applicant will be required to complete the entire application on-line.

- Ontario College Application Services (OCAS)
ONTARIOCOLLEGES.CA
60 Corporate Court, Guelph, ON N1G 5J3
Telephone: 519-763-4725 or 1-888-892-2228
- Ontario University Application Centre (OUAC) www.ouac.on.ca/105/
170 Research Lane, Guelph, ON Canada N1G 5E2
Telephone: (519) 823-1940
Email: request@ouac.on.ca

If you require assistance with your application for funding or application to the college/university, contact the M'Chigeeng First nation Education Department.

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4.0 Deadline Dates

- a) The deadline date to submit the entire application for educational assistance package/forms is **March 30th each year**.
- b) Applicants who apply on or before this date will be considered on an equal basis within the student priority levels.
- c) Applications received after the deadline will be placed on a waiting list. The possibility of funding when placed on the waiting list will depend solely on the availability of funds. Failure to apply by deadlines will result in the student being required to reapply by March 30th of the following year. Approval for sponsorship will depend on prioritized criteria and funding availability.

5.0 Programs Eligible for Funding

An eligible post secondary program must be offered by a Canadian post secondary public institution and have secondary school completion or equivalent as a prerequisite for admission into the program. The program of studies must be a credit for a certificate, diploma, undergraduate or graduate degree. Programs, example: pre-law, pre-health, pre-trades, less than one academic year which are prerequisites to post secondary programs of at least one academic year in duration are included, as well as an educational institution with or delivering accredited post secondary programs by arrangement with a Canadian public post secondary institution.

Apprenticeships are included.

Programs offered by private post secondary institutions will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Additional qualifications for practicing professionals will be reviewed on an individual basis.

6.0 Programs Not Eligible for Funding

The following programs will not be funded:

- a) Career/College Exploration
- b) General Interest Courses
- c) University of College entrance programs that result in secondary school credits.
- d) Vocational Training includes training for entry skills and knowledge required to enter an occupation.
- e) Skills Upgrading

* Individuals may apply to other sources such as the Ontario Student Assistance Program. Individuals may also apply to the M'Chigeeng First Nation Local Delivery Mechanism (LDM) Department for the vocational training, skills training and apprenticeships under the Purchase of Training program. Consideration may be given to cost sharing with other sources.

* Individuals may apply for the Access Program through the Ontario Basic Skills Program (Levels I-IV - Upgrading)

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7.0 Priority Criteria

All applications (full or part time) must be approved according to the prioritized criteria and according to funding availability. Due to the number of applications for funding, not all those who apply can be funded.

PRIORITY 1 - Continuing Students / High School Graduates / First Time Applicants

- 1a) **Continuing Students:** Students who are presently enrolled as full time and are resuming their full-time studies after an academic break (May-August).
- 1b) **High School Graduates:** Students who graduated in June of the current year and granted an Ontario Secondary School Graduation Diploma.
 - i) Students with an average of 65% or better in their final year of secondary studies (Grade12) will be considered Priority One (1) with no probation.
 - ii) Students with less than a 65% average will be placed on probation for the first academic year.
- 1c) **First Time Applicants:** Applicants who have **not** been previously sponsored for full-time studies.

To retain P1 status, P1 students who find they have enrolled in a program or field that they find unsuitable should withdraw immediately (prior to 2nd semester) and notify the Post Secondary Counselor. Notifying the Education Department beyond the first semester/term will result in beginning the application process from the beginning.

PRIORITY 2 - Returning Students / Previously Sponsored Students

Returning students are students who were previously sponsored to attend college or university on a full-time basis. The following is the prioritized criteria for approval of funding:

- 2a) Applicants on the waiting list. Applicants who were not funded the previous year.
- 2b) Previously sponsored and were successful and resuming studies in the same or related field.
- 2c) Students sponsored by other sources and successfully completed a semester/year and did not apply the previous year.
- 2d) Previously sponsored and officially withdrew.
- 2e) Did not officially withdraw - quit.
- 2f) Sponsorship was terminated or student were exited from the program.
- 2g) Applicants who are considering a second field of study.
- 2h) Sponsored for more than 5 full academic years and has no diploma or degree.

8.0 Interview Testing

In the event the college or university requires mandatory testing or an interview, the M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department will cover the expense for **one** (1) interview or test per educational assistance application. All supporting documentation must accompany the request.

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9.0 OCAS (Ontario College Application Services) and OUAC (Ontario University Application Centre) Fees.

The payment of the OCAS and OUAC fees are the responsibility of the applicant. M'CHIGEENG FIRST NATION EDUCATION DEPARTMENT will reimburse only for the first OCAS/OUAC fee, upon the submission of the receipt. Any additional application or transfer fees beyond the initial payment will be the responsibility of the applicant.

OCAS and OUAC fees are paid ONE (1) TIME for each individual per educational assistance application.

10.0 Limits of Support: Full-Time Students

Full-time students are as defined by the post secondary institution. Academic year is as defined by the post secondary institution but will not be less than eight (8) months duration, usually covers the period September to April. Semester refers to a part of the academic year as defined by the post secondary institution. Semesters usually cover the periods from September to December, January to April, and May to August.

Assistance may be provided at the three (3) levels of Post Secondary Education

Level One: Community College:

One (1) Year Program - Certificate
Maximum 1 Academic Year (two semesters)

Two (2) Year Program- Diploma
Maximum 2 Academic Years (four semesters)

Three (3) Year Program-Diploma
Maximum 3 Academic Years (six semesters)

Note: For levels one and two, assistance may be extended up to one semester/term if sufficient and justifiable reasons and evidence merits such consideration, including an approval in writing from the institution's Dean or Head of the Department.

Level Two: Undergraduate University Degree

Three (3) academic years- undergraduate
Four (4) years – Honors' degree

Level Three: Post Graduate

Advances and Professional degree programs
Example: M.D., dentistry, CGA

Note: Level three includes assistance for advanced studies and an additional degree programs which has an undergraduate degree as a prerequisite.

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Master's and Doctoral Programs

- Masters program - maximum 2 years (24 months) or as directly specified by the post secondary institution in which the student is enrolled. Documentation from the institution, outlining the length of the program and costs must accompany the application for educational assistance.

-Doctoral program- maximum – 5 years (60 months) or as directly specified by the post secondary institution in which the student is enrolled. Documentation from the institution, outlining the length of the program and costs must accompany the application for educational assistance.

There is thirty-six month (36) month interval before you are eligible to apply for educational assistance for a second diploma or degree.

If a student changes levels or changes programs within a level, the months/academic years used for each program are applied in calculating the limits of support per level. Additional months may be granted if sufficient and justifiable reasons and evidence merits such consideration. Should a student require additional months to complete a program, continued financial support will be determined academic history, length to complete program and funding availability.

11.0 Financial Support - Full Time Students

Full-time students are as defined by the post-secondary institution. Full-time students receive a training allowance to cover normal daily living expenses such as: food, local travel, lodging, recreation etc. Students are expected to budget their allowance so that their money lasts for the whole month. No advances will be issued.

Income earned or support provided by a student's spouse is considered in computing the education financial support.

Allowances paid to students vary according to the number of student's dependents and whether it is necessary for the student to live away from home to attend University or College.

University students may apply for funding as a full-time student for a summer session **if the student will complete (graduate)** as a result of the full-time summer courses, otherwise sponsorship will resume in September.

College and University students who require less than a full-time course load to graduate in an academic year will be sponsored as part-time students. Students will not be allowed to add courses in order to make it a full course load for full-time sponsorship purposes.

College students who are enrolled in a program where the semesters run consecutively into the summer months will be sponsored as full-time students.

11.1 Special Needs

Special needs students must request approval for reduced course loads. Documentation required consists of:

- a) Assessment Report
- b) Documentation regarding recommended course load from the Special Needs Office of the institution

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11.2 Maximum Living & Rental Allowance Rates

September to April			
Description	Living Allowance (8 months)	Rental Allowance (8 months)	Total Monthly Sponsorship
Single Student	\$1200/mth	\$400/mth	\$1,600.00
Student living with dependent spouse	\$1200/mth	\$400/mth	\$1,600.00
Student with 1 (child) dependent	\$1366/mth	\$470/mth	\$1,836.00
Student with 2 (child) dependents	\$1434/mth	\$470/mth	\$1,904.00
Student with 3 (child) dependents	\$1482/mth	\$470/mth	\$1,952.00
Student with 4 or more (child) dep.	\$1550/mth	\$470/mth	\$2,020.00

NOTE: If some program dates are different, monthly sponsorship will be adjusted accordingly.

Dependent - Child Care

September to April		
Description	Child Care (8 months)	Total Sponsorship
One child under 6 years	\$500.00 month	\$4,000.00
Two or more children under 6 years	\$550.00 month	\$ 4,400.00

Married students living with an employed spouse do not receive rental allowance but may be entitled to childcare allowance.

Proof of dependents will be required and proof that children are living with the parent.

Students with children under six (6) years of age are eligible for childcare. Childcare will not be provided for children under six (6) if they are registered full time in school.

Students who choose to leave children with family will be considered single students.

12.0 Residence Fees

Residences require that the fees for the entire academic year be paid in full before moving into residence. Mandatory meal plans may accompany the residence fees. Students opting to live in residence must make financial arrangements for monthly deductions from their student allowance to reimburse the M'CHIGEENG FIRST NATION EDUCATION DEPARTMENT for the total residence/meal plan fees. The total fees must be paid within the academic year they reside in residence.

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13.0 Book Allowance

Full-time students will receive the basic amount of \$600.00. Should the cost of books exceed the basic amount issued, the difference will be reimbursed provided original receipts are submitted to the Education Office.

Reimbursement for books and supplies purchased will only be considered if receipts are submitted prior to March 31st of the fiscal year.

Students in a semester program will receive \$600.00 at the start of each semester for book allowance to cover costs of textbooks and supplies.

Stationary supplies are not included. Examples: binders, pens/pencils, notebooks. Purchases of stationary items are the responsibility of the student.

13.1 Special Equipment/Supplies

Students who enter a program that requires specific equipment/supplies may receive assistance for these items. Verification that equipment is mandatory is required from the program coordinator of the academic institution. The cost of the equipment should be included. The supplies/equipment will become the property of the student upon successful completion of the program.

Should the student withdraw, quit, or change programs, they are expected to return the supplies/equipment to the M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department or repay for the purchase of the equipment/supplies. Failure to do so will result in a debt owed to the M'Chigeeng First Nation.

14.0 Tuition: Full Time Students

Tuition support includes other compulsory student fees.

Request for the fees for applications, tutorials, initial professional certification, and registration may be submitted with supporting documentation.

Tuition fees are approved after the Counselor has received a copy of the student's acceptance letter. This arrangement will be made between the Education Department and the institution.

Normally, the institution is requested by letter to send an invoice to the Education Office before tuition and registration fees can be paid.

Reimbursements will occur during the first semester. Late registration charges will be the responsibility of the students. Late registration will be deducted from the monthly student allowance if they are applied to the tuition invoice.

Students who wish to study abroad and exceed the post secondary funding allowed per student must make a special request. The study abroad program must be affiliated with the student's program in Canada.

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Students who have to repeat a course, must pay the tuition fee. They can seek reimbursement when they successfully complete the course. Students must provide an official grade report.

Students who wish to repeat a course for a third time or to obtain a better mark will be responsible for their own costs.

14.1 Tuition: Part Time Students

Part time students are as defined by the post-secondary institution. Part time college students may take 1-2 courses per semester and a university student may take 1-2 full courses (12 credits) in one (1) academic year.

Credit courses offered by a Canadian public college or university during the school year are considered part-time. A person may elect to work toward a certificate, diploma, or degree on a part-time basis.

Registration for part time courses may require admission to a program. Students should consult the continuing education dept of the institution of their choice for detailed information. Fees are paid on a course-by-course basis and full payment/or sponsorship letter is required at the time of registration. Courses are offered via distance education, on-campus, independent learning, or internet delivery.

Students are responsible for their registration and meeting deadlines. Students with prior approval will be reimbursed if they pay their tuition fees at the time of registration. In the event a student withdraws after the institution deadline, the tuition and book allowance paid by MFN must be reimbursed or it is considered a debt owed to M'CHIGEENG FIRST NATION EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Each fiscal year, a specific amount of the total post secondary budget will be allocated for part-time studies. When the limit has been reached, applicants will need to re-apply the following fiscal year.

Part-time students will be eligible for:

- i) Total cost of tuition
- ii) Books are \$80.00 per course. Receipts are required to show a need beyond the base rate.
- iii) Request for travel assistance will be reviewed and granted on a financial basis.

Students who have to repeat a course, must pay the tuition fee. They can seek reimbursement when they successfully complete the course. Students must provide an official grade report.

Students who are employed full time and wish to use their annual leave to attend a full credit course/program for a short period will continue to be eligible for the post secondary allowances.

Partial Sponsorship:

M'CHIGEENG FIRST NATION EDUCATION DEPARTMENT may consider applications requesting partial funds or cost sharing with another organization.

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15.0 Travel: Full Time Students

Two (2) return trips are allowed under this program in a given year, but it is the student's responsibility to apply for this need.

The following rates will apply:

- a) Actual bus fare cost to the destination of the college/university, (receipts must be submitted to the M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department); or
- b) Private vehicle usage will be given the following rates:

Private Vehicle Rates (.44/km)		
M'Chigeeng to ...	One Way	Return
Little Current		\$20.00
Espanola		\$40.00
Sudbury - (152 km one way)	\$66.88	\$133.76
North Bay - (279 km one way)	\$122.76	\$245.52
Sault Ste. Marie - (319 km one way)	\$140.36	\$280.72
Barrie - (434 km one way)	\$190.96	\$381.92
Toronto - (542 km one way)	\$238.48	\$476.96
Niagara Falls - (643 km one way)	\$282.92	\$565.84
Kitchener - (599 km one way)	\$263.66	\$527.12
Ottawa - (636 km one way)	\$279.84	\$559.68
Thunder Bay - (1014 km one way)	\$446.16	\$892.32
London - (686 km one way)	\$301.84	\$603.68
Peterborough - (540 km one way)	\$237.60	\$475.20
Kingston - (776 km one way)	\$341.44	\$682.88
Hamilton - (582 km one way)	\$256.08	\$512.16
Sarnia - (785 km one way)	\$345.40	\$690.80

16.0 Special Program Requirements

Special accommodations may be provided only if it is a program requirement. Special requests for additional funding should be submitted well in advance along with supporting documentation.

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17.0 Compassionate/Bereavement

In case of serious illness or death within the immediate family, compassionate travel will be provided to students.

NOTE: Immediate family for this policy shall mean spouse, children, parents, grandparents, sisters, or brothers.

18.0 Student Responsibilities

- a) Students are required to attend classes. An honor system will be encouraged but should students' academic performance and other variables indicate otherwise, and then the Counselor will implement a more rigid accountability system.
- b) If you withdraw from the program of study, you must complete the necessary withdrawal forms with the institution and immediately notify the M'Chigeeng Post Secondary Counselor.
- c) Any funds received after withdrawal or termination from full-time studies must be returned to the Education Office. Failure to return funds will jeopardize future sponsorship.
- d) If the college exits or suspends you from your program, sponsorship terminates.
- e) If a university suspends or expels you from a program, sponsorship terminates.
- f) You must provide the Post Secondary Counselor with evidence of academic performance on request. Your support will be terminated if you are negligent with this request. **If you obtain zero credits, sponsorship terminates.**
- g) Students are responsible for satisfying the academic requirements specified by the school or as outlined under probation.
- h) Students must notify the Post Secondary Counselor when they go on placement and must provide a letter stating whether the placement is paid or unpaid. If it is a paid placement, the student will not be eligible for the post-secondary monthly allowance.

19.0 Probation Policy

All students must maintain the minimum standard, as set by the post secondary institution:

Each student's progress will be reviewed at the end of the college semester or university year. A student will be placed on probation; if the student is not maintaining the academic standard.

The student will be required to enter into an educational plan//agreement with the M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Dept. during the probationary period.

Secondary school students graduating with an average of less than 65% will automatically be placed on academic probation for the first semester.

Failure to maintain the minimum standard will result in termination of sponsorship.

Probation will be lifted upon satisfactory academic performance.

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19.1 Partial or Total Loss of Financial Support

If progress does not improve to the minimum standard during the probationary period, the student will be required to withdraw from their program. Students will be eligible for sponsorship after one academic year. Once the student becomes eligible for sponsorship, it is the student's responsibility to apply as per section 2.0.

A student returning after one academic year will be on probation during the first semester.

Any request for extensions to a student's probation must be presented to the Post Secondary Counselor by the student. This will also apply to students who do not complete their program within the time frame outlined by the institution.

20.0 Graduate Incentive Award

Students graduating may apply for a graduate incentive award. Students qualifying for this award **must apply and meet the following criteria:**

- Have graduated from a course of study (section 10.0)
- Been funded by M'Chigeeng First Nation Education Department
- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0/70% or better to qualify for the incentive
- Complete the Graduate Incentive Application available at the Education Office.
- Accompany the application with the official transcript indicating graduation/completion of program.

The applications must be submitted no later than July 30th. Absolutely no late submissions will be considered.

*** Graduation Incentive Awards are subject to availability of funds within the Post Secondary Program***

21.0 Appeal Process

There is no appeal against the denial of educational assistance due to lack of availability of post secondary funding.

Where a student is convinced that the M'Chigeeng First Nation Post Secondary Policy have not been fairly applied to his/her situation, the applicant may appeal the decision. The appeal must be submitted in writing citing the appropriate section that was not properly applied. The written appeal will then be forwarded to the Education Committee within 30 (thirty) days of the date of denial.

The Education Committee will review the appeal. The student will be notified in writing of the decision with respect to the appeal by Chief and Council.

The decision of the M'Chigeeng First Nation Chief and Council will be final.

In the event the student still finds the Education Committee decision unsatisfactory, the appeal can then be forwarded to Chief and Council.