

## Tuition Waiver Frequently Asked Questions for Students

### What is a tuition waiver?

Beginning with Vancouver Island University in 2013, 11 colleges and universities in B.C. began offering supports to youth from foster care – whether by eliminating tuition fees or providing special bursaries to help with tuition costs. Universities and colleges set their own criteria for accepting which youth from care were eligible.

In September 2017, a Provincial Tuition Waiver Program was implemented to include all public colleges and universities in B.C., and to include more youth from care. Eligible youth from care will now receive free tuition at any public post-secondary institution in B.C.

### Am I eligible for a tuition waiver?

To be eligible for a tuition waiver, you must have:

- Been in foster care for at least two years. This includes youth who were on a Voluntary Care Agreement, a Special Needs Agreement, a Temporary Custody Order, or a Continuing Custody Order

*Or*

- Lived with a family member (other than a parent) or another adult for at least two years, as part of an agreement or custody order with the Ministry of Children and Family Development or a Delegated Aboriginal Agency. This includes youth who lived with family or another adult on an Extended Family Plan, a Temporary Custody Order, or a Permanent Transfer of Custody

*Or*

- Been on a Youth Agreement for at least two years.

In addition to meeting one of the above requirements, you must also:

- Be between 19 and 26 years old
- Attend a public post-secondary institution in British Columbia. This includes:

Capilano University  
Emily Carr University of Art and Design  
Kwantlen Polytechnic University  
Royal Roads University  
Simon Fraser University  
Thompson Rivers University  
University of British Columbia  
University of the Fraser Valley  
University of Northern British Columbia  
University of Victoria  
Vancouver Island University  
British Columbia Institute of Technology  
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

Camosun College  
College of New Caledonia  
College of the Rockies  
Douglas College  
Langara College  
North Island College  
Northern Lights College  
Northwest Community College  
Okanagan College  
Selkirk College  
Vancouver Community College  
Justice Institute of British Columbia  
Native Education Centre

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### How do I sign up?

Tell the Financial Aid office at your school that you might be eligible for a tuition waiver as a former youth in care. The school will provide you with a consent form for the Ministry of Children and Family Development to confirm your history as a youth from care.

### My school isn't on the list — why not?

At this time, only public post-secondary schools in British Columbia are included. If you are attending another school, you may qualify for assistance through the Youth Education Assistance Fund (YEAF), Agreements with Young Adults (AYA), scholarships or bursaries, or student loan programs. Check [www.AgedOut.com/education](http://www.AgedOut.com/education) for more information about other resources.

### I was in care, but not with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Am I eligible?

To be eligible for a tuition waiver, you had to have been in care in British Columbia with a child welfare agency in the province. If you are Indigenous, that may mean you were involved with a Delegated Aboriginal Agency, including:

Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society (formerly Xyolhemeylh Child and Family Services)	Knucwentwecw Society
Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child and Family Services	Kmumut Lelum Child and Family Services
Lalum'utul' Smun'eem Child and Family Services	Haida Child and Family Services Society
Metis Family Services (also known as La Societe de les Enfants Michif)	Nlha'7kapmx Child and Family Services Society
Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council Usma Family and Child Services	Scw'exmx Child and Family Services Society
Secwepemc Child and Family Services Agency	Nisga'a Child and Family Services
Ayas Men Men Child and Family Services	Carrier Sekani Family Services
Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society (VACFSS)	Gitx̱san Child and Family Services Society
Nezul Be Hunuyeh Child and Family Services Society	Nil/tu,o Child and Family Services Society
Northwest Inter-Nation Family and Community Services Society	Denisiqi Services Society
K'wak'walat'si ('Namgis) Child and Family Services	Heiltsuk Kaxla Society
Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services	

Youth who were in care with a Delegated Aboriginal Agency are eligible for a tuition waiver if they meet other criteria listed above.

In some cases, youth in foster care in other provinces come to B.C. to live closer to extended family members or for other reasons. These youth remain in the care of their home province and are not eligible for tuition waivers in B.C.

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### **I was in care, but not for a continuous two years. Am I eligible?**

All experiences in care, in a youth agreement or in the custody of family members as part of an agreement or order with the Ministry of Children and Family Development or a Delegated Aboriginal Agency, may be combined to meet eligibility requirements. For example, a youth who was in care four different times for six months each may be eligible, as all four periods add up to a total of two years in care. Similarly, a youth may be eligible if he or she was in care for one year, and then was in a transfer of custody for another year.

### **I was in care, but I was adopted. Am I eligible?**

Youth who were adopted are eligible as long as they meet the other eligibility criteria, including being in care for at least two years.

### **What post-secondary programs are included under a tuition waiver?**

Any program at any public post-secondary institution (listed above) is eligible for a tuition waiver. This includes certificate programs, diplomas, and bachelor's degrees. This also includes general study courses that are not specific to a degree program, such as taking a general mix of classes across the Arts, Sciences, or other fields.

### **What if I change programs?**

No problem! Any program at any public post-secondary institution (listed above) is eligible.

### **What expenses does a tuition waiver cover?**

A tuition waiver covers the tuition that is normally charged by a college or university. Other school-related expenses, such as books or dormitory fees, must be paid by the student. As a former youth in care, you may be eligible for additional supports to help you to cover these expenses, including the Youth Educational Assistance Fund (YEAFF) or Agreements with Young Adults (AYA). Eligibility for these programs varies; check out [www.AgedOut.com/education](http://www.AgedOut.com/education) for more information.

### **Can I get a tuition waiver while I am on an AYA or a YEAFF?**

Yes! If you are eligible for all three programs, you may receive funding through Agreements with Young Adults (AYA), Youth Educational Assistance Fund (YEAFF) and a tuition waiver. However, each program has different requirements so check out [www.AgedOut.com/education](http://www.AgedOut.com/education) for more information.

### **Do I have to pay this money back?**

No! This is not a loan program.

### **How long can I receive a tuition waiver?**

You can receive a tuition waiver for every semester you are enrolled in a public post-secondary institution until your 27<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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**When does the tuition waiver program start?**

The tuition waiver program started in September 2017.

**But I have already paid my tuition for this semester! Can I be reimbursed?**

All tuition fees paid for the fall 2017 semester will be reimbursed to eligible students. Connect with the Financial Aid department at your school for more information.

**I was told that I was not eligible, but I think I should be. Who can I contact for more information?**

Decisions may be made on a case-by-case basis in extenuating circumstances. To have your case heard, please contact the System Navigator with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training at [tuitionwaiver@gov.bc.ca](mailto:tuitionwaiver@gov.bc.ca)