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**Subject: Refunds, Credits, and Reinstatement as a Result of Military Service**

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## 1. **Purpose**

This policy provides guidance for tuition relief, refund, and reinstatement of students whose service in the uniformed services has required their sudden withdrawal or prolonged absence from their enrollment. The policy is consistent with the [Code of Virginia \(§ 23-9.6:2\)](#), the corresponding [guidelines](#) of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, and Virginia Community College System (VCCS) [Policy 4.3.2.3](#) (Policy on Refunds, Credits, and Reinstatement as a Result of Military Service).

## 2. **Policy**

Tidewater Community College shall provide tuition relief, refund, and [reinstatement](#) of students whose [service in the uniformed services](#) has required their [sudden withdrawal](#) or prolonged absence from their enrollment as delineated below.

### 2.1. **Tuition and Required Fees**

Should a student be called to active duty (for National Guard or reservists) or be mobilized (active military) as described in the [Code of Virginia \(§ 23-9.6:2\)](#) and the State Council's Virginia Tuition Relief, Refund, and Reinstatement Guidelines, and he/she requests to be withdrawn from the college after the last day to drop classes with tuition refund for the term or semester in which he/she is enrolled, the student will be assigned a grade of "W." The student has the option of requesting a full refund of tuition and fees due to extenuating circumstances but will still be assigned a grade of "W."

Except in cases of third-party payment arrangements, the college shall provide, at the option of the student, for such refunds to be retained and to be applicable to tuition and fees charged in the semester or term in which the student returns to study.

For additional information on refunds of tuition and fees, refer to [TCC Policy 4202, Revenue Refunds](#).

### 2.2. **Deposited Funds**

A student who is called to active duty or mobilized shall be provided a refund of any funds held on deposit, such as any remaining balance on the student's StormCard. For additional information on refunds of StormCard balances, refer to [TCC Policy 4601, StormCard Auxiliary Services Functions](#).

### 2.3. **Textbooks and Course Materials**

In cases in which a student who is called to active duty or mobilized is awarded a refund of tuition and fees, the college shall encourage its bookstore vendor to provide refunds for the textbooks and course materials purchased for the courses from which withdrawn.

## **2.4. Academic Credits and Grades**

A student who is called to active duty or mobilized shall be afforded the opportunity to receive an incomplete grade ("I") until released from active duty (for National Guard or reservists) or mobilization (for active military personnel). All course requirements shall be completed within one year from the date of release from active duty or mobilization.

Such students shall be given the option of taking their examinations prior to regularly scheduled times as an exception to VCCS Policy 5.6.1.

Such students shall be counseled on the implications of their choices for any financial aid or Veterans Administration benefits they are receiving.

## **2.5. Reinstatement**

A student who is called to active duty or mobilized shall be entitled to reinstatement to the college without having to re-qualify for admission following the student's release or return from service in the uniformed services if:

- a. the student provides notice of intent to return to the college not later than three years after the completion of the period of service; and
- b. the student returns to the college after a cumulative absence of not more than five years.

A student returning to the college from active duty or mobilization in accordance with the provisions delineated above shall be afforded the opportunity for reinstatement in the same program of study in which he or she had been enrolled prior to withdrawal. Academic programs with specialized accreditation and selective admission shall establish criteria for reinstatement of such students that are consistent with any relevant standards of the respective accrediting agency. Such criteria shall be published in the program's handbook or other documents provided to students upon admission to the program.

A student who was admitted to a program but did not begin attendance because of service in the uniformed services shall be allowed to defer his or her enrollment in the program until reinstatement to the college as described above.

A student returning from active duty or mobilization shall be counseled to determine the impact of absence from the program on the ability to resume study and to advise the student of his or her options when a program is no longer available or suitable.

## **2.6. Permanent Change of Station Orders**

The policy delineated above and the associated procedures described below shall apply in the case of permanent change of station (PCS) orders that require the military member to be absent from the college for an extended period. In order to access the several exceptions to the college's normal policy provided in

this policy, the PCS orders must have been issued after the start of the semester or term and require execution prior to the end of that semester or term.

### **3. Responsibilities**

The Vice President for Student Affairs, in coordination with the vice presidents for Finance and Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer, shall develop and promulgate procedures to implement the policy delineated above.

The Executive Director of the Center for Military & Veterans Education shall ensure that the policy and associated procedures are well disseminated, carefully explained, and properly administered.

### **4. Procedures**

To access the several exceptions to the college's normal policy provided in this policy, a TCC student whose [service in the uniformed services](#) requires his/her [sudden withdrawal](#) or prolonged absence from his/her enrollment shall follow the procedures delineated below.

#### **4.1. Tuition & Fee Relief and Academic Grades & Credits**

A student who is called to active duty or mobilized shall contact any TCC Campus Dean of Student Services ("Dean") or the Director of Military Student Support Services ("Director") in the college's Center for Military & Veteran Education to obtain assistance with the processes of withdrawal from the college and tuition refund. The student shall provide the Dean or Director with his/her name, student identification number, and a copy of his/her military orders, deployment orders, or other documentation indicating he/she must leave the area or is otherwise unavailable to attend classes due to service in the uniformed services. The Dean or Director shall encourage the student to also consult with an advisor for the academic program to which he/she has been admitted as well as with a financial aid or Veterans Administration benefits advisor.

In consultation with the Dean or Director and after considering any implications of his/her choices for any financial aid or Veterans Administration benefits he/she is receiving and for reinstatement in the academic program to which he/she has been admitted, the student shall provide the Campus Dean of Student Services of the campus of record the documentation identified above and a signed statement electing one of the following options.

##### **4.1.1. Withdrawal from the College**

If after the semester/term add/drop period, the student will be withdrawn from all classes in which he/she is enrolled as of the issuance date of the call to active duty or mobilization orders. When this option is selected, a full credit of all tuition and fees, and any remaining StormCard balance, including a pro-rated credit for unused meal or child-minding plan(s) shall

be provided to the student in accordance with TCC Policies 4202 and 4601, respectively.

In the event that this option is selected, within six months of the beginning of the term in which withdrawn, the student shall provide a copy of the signed election statement and the document(s) previously provided to the Dean or Director to substantiate the call to active duty or mobilization to a campus Business Manager for processing of refunds in accordance with TCC Policies 4202 and 4601. For any course(s) in which the student is enrolled for which the tuition and fees are not paid by a third-party arrangement, the student shall indicate whether he/she desires that a refund of tuition and fees be awarded or that the refund be retained and applied to tuition and fees charged in the semester or term in which the student returns to the college.

Financial aid awards that were credited to the student's account will be recovered by the college in the amount of tuition & fees and any unused child-minding credit. Loans used to cover the remaining charges will be subject to normal repayment procedures. For a student receiving Title IV funds, financial aid recovery will be subject to requirements for return of Title IV funds to the federal government consistent with the provisions of the [Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students \(HEROES\) Act of 2003](#). The notation "Withdrew for military service [date]" will be added to the student's record in the Student Information System (SIS).

The Campus Dean of Student Services shall notify the bookstore manager of the student's withdrawal with tuition & fee refund and encourage a refund for any textbooks and course materials the student has purchased for the courses from which he/she has been withdrawn.

#### **4.1.2. Administrative Withdrawal without Tuition Refund**

For all classes in which enrolled, the student will be administratively withdrawn as of the issuance date of the call to active duty or mobilization orders and assigned a grade of "W" without a refund of tuition & fees. This option might best meet the needs of students who are leaving the college after receiving a financial aid refund check or direct deposit as a result of their financial aid.

Although no refund of tuition and fees will be awarded, the student may petition for a refund of any funds held on deposit in his/her StormCard account as delineated in 4.1.1 above.

The notation "Administratively withdrawn for military service [date]" will be added to the student's record in the Student Information System (SIS).

#### 4.1.3. Early Completion of Courses

A student who has completed 85 percent of the course requirements at the time of military activation and, notwithstanding certain exceptions noted below, who meets the requirements as determined and agreed upon by the class instructor and the student may receive full course credit. This level of course completion is consistent with the standard established in [TCC Policy 2106, Disposition of Classes for Emergency Shutdown of the College](#). No refund of tuition and fees shall be awarded in the case of early completion. The student may petition for a refund of any funds held on deposit in his/her StormCard account as delineated in 4.1.1 above.

The class instructor is responsible for determining what percentage of course requirements have been completed based on factors to include but not limited to contact time, examinations, projects, work experience and clinical experience. The awarding of full credit cannot be made where the incomplete requirements are essential components of the course or program required by law or regulatory bodies, required for competency in the work place, or required to complete licensure examinations.

If the instructor determines that completion of an examination is necessary to complete the course requirements, the student may elect to take the examination prior to its regularly scheduled time.

#### 4.1.4. Incomplete Grade

A student who has completed more than 50% of the course requirements may take a grade of "Incomplete" ("I") in some or all courses in which enrolled at the time of call to active duty or mobilization. No refund of tuition and fees shall be awarded for any course in which an "Incomplete" grade is taken. The student may petition for a refund of any funds held on deposit in his/her StormCard account as delineated in 4.1.1 above.

The provisions of VCCS [Policy 5.6.0](#) (Grading System for Credit Courses) for "Incomplete" grades shall apply except as noted below. The conditions for completing course work and receiving a regular grade shall be agreed to in writing between the student, the instructor, and the relevant academic dean. Consistent with VCCS [Policy 4.3.2.3](#) (Policy on Refunds, Credits, and Reinstatements as a Result of Military Service), all course requirements shall be completed within one year from the date of release from active duty or mobilization without paying any additional tuition and fees for the semester.

For a student receiving Title IV funds, financial aid recovery will be subject to requirements for return of Title IV funds to the federal government.

No notation is added to the student's SIS record, and the incomplete grades are changed to final grades when the coursework is completed.

## 4.2. Reinstatement

Regardless of the option selected above, the following provisions govern [reinstatement](#) to TCC upon return from [service in the uniformed services](#).

### 4.2.1. Eligibility

To establish eligibility for reinstatement to the college, the student must notify the Director of Military Student Support Services in the Center for Military & Veterans Education of his/her intent to return to the college not later than three (3) years from the completion of the period of service that caused his/her withdrawal. In doing so, the student shall provide the Director with suitable documentation of the date of completion (e.g., military orders, correspondence from command, etc.). The Director will annotate the student's SIS record with the date of completion of service and the date of notification of intent to return.

### 4.2.2. Return to the College

Having established eligibility in accordance with 4.2.1 above, a student who left in good standing may return to the college, without having to reapply for admission, if he/she enrolls after a cumulative absence from the college of not more than five (5) years.

A student who was on academic probation or suspension when he/she left the college for service in the uniformed services, and who has been absent for one semester but not more than five (5) years, must speak with a Campus Dean of Student Services prior to enrollment. Such review may result in denial of readmission or conditional re-entry.

A student without a declared academic program wishing to return to study should consult with an advisor to receive assistance in developing an academic plan.

Any tuition and fees left on deposit with the college at the time of the student's withdrawal shall be applied to the then-current tuition and fees in the first semester of enrollment after return to the college.

Exceptions to these time periods may be found in the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008.

### 4.2.3. Program Reinstatement

A student returning to the college in accordance with 4.2.2 above shall be afforded the opportunity for reinstatement in the same academic program (if available) in which he or she had been enrolled prior to withdrawal unless there are other encumbrances to his/her enrollment or when accreditation or other external policies impose time limits.

Throughout the process of reinstatement, the student shall have access to academic counseling to determine the impact of his/her absence from

the academic program to which he/she was previously admitted, to evaluate the ability to resume study, and to assess options when a program is no longer available or suitable. The course work taken prior to withdrawal must be reviewed by an academic advisor or the academic program head prior to the student's re-enrollment. This counseling is required to assure that the previously completed coursework is current and applicable to the major. The advisor or program head will assist the student in developing an appropriate academic plan for degree completion.

#### **4.3. Deferral of Enrollment**

A student who has been admitted to the college and/or to an academic program and called to active duty or mobilized before the last day to drop courses with tuition refund for the initial term of enrollment in the college or in that program's courses, shall be permitted to defer enrollment in the college or the program's courses under the same conditions delineated above for return to the college and/or program reinstatement. At the time of requesting deferred enrollment, the student must provide documentation of the call to active duty or mobilization and of the end of the period of service similar to that required in 4.1 and 4.2 above.

### **5. Definitions**

**Armed Forces:** the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

**Permanent Change of Station Orders:** direction issued by the military service to a member to report to a duty station other than the one to which currently assigned. The new duty station may or may not be located in a different geographical area.

**Reinstatement:** the readmittance and reenrollment of a student whose service in the uniformed services has caused his or her sudden withdrawal or prolonged absence from enrollment.

**Service in the uniformed services:** service (whether voluntary or involuntary) on active duty in the Armed Forces, including such service by a member of the National Guard or Reserve, for a period of more than 30 days under call or order to active duty of more than 30 days.

**Sudden withdrawal:** leaving an institution after a semester has begun or after the tuition and required fees for a term have already been billed to or paid by the student.

**Tuition:** the actual price of education charged to a student for the term in which service in the uniformed services caused his or her sudden withdrawal or prolonged absence from enrollment at a Virginia institution of higher education.

### **6. References**

[Code of Virginia § 23-9.6:2](#)

[Public Law 108-76 – Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students \(HEROES\) Act of 2003](#)

[TCC Policy 2106 – Disposition of Classes for Emergency Shutdown of the College](#)

[TCC Policy 4202 – Revenue Refunds](#)

[TCC Policy 4601 – StormCard Auxiliary Services Functions](#)

[U.S. Code Title 10 – Armed Forces](#)

[Virginia Tuition Relief, Refund, and Reinstatement Guidelines](#)

[VCCS Policy 4.3.2.3 – Policy on Refunds, Credits, and Reinstatement as a Result of Military Service](#)

[VCCS Policy 5.6.0 – Grading System for Credit Classes](#)

## **7. Review Periodicity and Responsibility**

The Vice President for Student Affairs shall review this policy annually on the anniversary of its approval and, if necessary, recommend revisions.

## **8. Effective Date and Approval**

This revision to the policy is effective upon its approval by the College President on May 5, 2016.

Policy Approved:

Procedure Developed:

Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.  
President

Michael D. Summers, Ed.D.  
Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

## **9. Review and Revision History**

The initial version of this policy was approved on September 13, 2012.

- Revision 1 updates the policy to conform to new language in VCCS Policy 4.3.2.2.a.  
Revision 1 also updates the titles of Vice Presidents cited in the policy and procedure.

Approved May 5, 2016 by President Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.