

ROBERT C. BYRD HONORS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM INFORMATION & STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program is a federally funded program administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) that provides scholarships for up to four years of enrollment at any approved postsecondary institution in the United States to high school seniors with outstanding academic achievement.

A recipient may receive up to \$1,500 for each academic year, up to a maximum of four years of study. Scholarship payment is subject to the limits of available federal funding.

1st Time Applicants (initial award)

A qualified applicant shall:

1. be a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen;
2. be an Illinois resident;
3. become a high school graduate in the same high school year in which the scholarship information is submitted;
4. demonstrate outstanding achievement as measured by test scores and high school records or have passed a General Educational Development (GED) test in the same high school year in which s/he submits the scholarship application; and
5. be enrolled or accepted for enrollment on a full-time basis for the fall term following high school graduation as an undergraduate student at a postsecondary institution in the United States that is approved by the U.S. Department of Education to participate in federal student assistance programs. (The Byrd Scholarship may not be used for attendance at military service academies or foreign schools)

[Note: If you do not meet your college's enrollment requirements for fall and spring semesters (or fall, winter and spring quarters), your scholarship will be terminated unless a Postponement has been requested and granted. (See reverse)]

Renewal Recipients

A recipient will continue to be eligible if the college at which the student is enrolled certifies that the recipient is:

1. maintaining enrollment as a full-time student (see exceptions on the back of this form);
2. maintaining satisfactory academic progress as determined by the college;
3. not in default on any federal student loan nor owing repayment on any state or federal financial assistance grant;
4. not receiving federal financial aid in excess of the student's cost of attendance, as determined by the college; and
5. registered with the federal selective Service or exempt from Selective Service registration requirements.

ISAC will notify both 1st time and renewal Byrd scholars of their eligibility annually (by May 1st) by mailing them an *Eligibility Certification* form. Students are required to complete the *Eligibility Certification* form each year, certifying that they meet the eligibility requirements listed above.

If the *Eligibility Certification* form is not completed and returned to ISAC by the due date on the form, the scholarship may be forfeited.

If a scholar does not meet the requirements for continuing eligibility within an award year, scholarship funds will be suspended until the scholar demonstrates that s/he meets the eligibility requirements. The scholar is not eligible to receive scholarship funds during the period of suspension. If the suspension period exceeds 12 months, the scholar's eligibility will be terminated. If eligibility is reestablished within the 12-month period, scholarship funds will be disbursed only for remaining periods of eligibility. The funds not awarded during a period of suspension cannot be awarded to the scholar during a subsequent period of enrollment as an undergraduate student.

New and renewal Byrd scholars must be enrolled on a full-time basis. Exceptions to the full-time enrollment requirement are only for renewal recipients and include waiver and interruption. A request for a postponement (for 1st time applicants only), waiver or interruption must be indicated on the *Eligibility Certification* form or submitted in writing to ISAC by the scholar and must include the time period and reason. The college must verify the time period and reason for the request for a waiver or interruption.

Postponement: A 1st time applicant may postpone enrollment for a maximum of 12 months. The request for Postponement must be submitted to ISAC by completing the *Eligibility Certification* form.

Waiver for Full-Time Enrollment: After the first year of full-time study, if the renewal recipient has unusual circumstances, he/she may request a waiver of the full-time enrollment requirement for a maximum of 12 months by checking the applicable box on the *Eligibility Certification* form. The renewal recipient must continue to be enrolled on at least a half-time basis. If a waiver is granted, funds will be prorated based on the scholar's enrollment status. The circumstances under which an exception to the full-time enrollment may be granted include:

1. the recipient's employment hours will not permit additional course load;
2. medical problems will not permit full-time attendance *;
3. the recipient is in his/her last semester of school and additional course work is not required to complete the degree; or
4. the recipient must care for an immediate family member, due to their illness, which will not permit full-time attendance. *

*Requires certification by a sworn statement from a licensed physician

Interruption: A renewal recipient may interrupt his/her enrollment after the first year of full-time study for a maximum of 12 months. Reasons for interruption of studies may include: cooperative education, financial, medical or family reasons.

A Byrd scholar is not eligible to receive scholarship funds during the periods of postponement or interruption. The funds that would have been awarded to the scholar during that time period can be awarded to the scholar during a subsequent period of enrollment as an undergraduate student.

In the fall, the college will certify a scholar's enrollment status and eligibility. The scholarship will then be paid to the college on the scholar's behalf in one or two disbursements as requested by the financial aid office. The Byrd Scholarship will be reduced if, combined with other financial aid, it would exceed the cost of attendance at the college attended.

Upon receipt of the scholarship funds, the college must certify that the scholar continues to be enrolled full-time (unless a waiver has been granted). The college may then credit scholarship funds to the recipient's account. Depending on the college, students may be responsible for payment until the funds are received. Students should contact the financial aid office or business office to determine their college's policy. If the Byrd scholar withdraws from enrollment, the college shall return the amount of the scholarship to ISAC for the semester(s) or quarter(s) not attended.