

**RULES
OF
THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE COLLEGE SAVINGS TRUST FUND PROGRAM**

**CHAPTER 1700-05-03
COLLEGE SAVINGS INCENTIVE PLAN**

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1700-05-03-.01 IN GENERAL.

- (1) Purpose. The purpose of these rules is to establish and implement the college savings incentive plan or plans for the benefit of low-income individuals using funds from the Small and Minority-Owned Business Assistance Program pursuant to Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts. The public act authorizes the Board of Trustees of the College Savings Trust Fund Program to promulgate rules relative to the implementation and administration of incentive plan or plans.
- (2) Definitions. For purposes of these rules:
 - (a) "Academic term" means the school segment consisting of a single semester, quarter, term or equivalent.
 - (b) "Account" means the record that contains the amount of contributions, other than Matching contributions, deposited and maintained by the Purchaser on behalf of a Beneficiary under a Contract, plus the earnings or losses incurred thereon, including any Withdrawals made from the Account.
 - (c) "Beneficiary" means an individual designated under a Contract as the individual entitled to apply contributions and earnings accrued under the Contract as well as Matching contributions to the payment of that individual's undergraduate, graduate and professional Qualified higher education expenses as defined in this chapter.
 - (d) "Board" has the same meaning as given in T.C.A. § 49-7-802(2).
 - (e) "Contract" means an Educational savings plan tuition contract entered into pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-7-808 by the Board and a Purchaser with an Eligible college savings program to provide for the payment of Qualified higher education expenses as defined in this chapter.
 - (f) "Educational savings plan" means a plan which permits individuals, associations, contributions and trusts to make contributions to an account that is established by a Purchaser for a designated Beneficiary.
 - (g) "Eligible college savings program" means any college savings program established pursuant to § 529 of the Internal Revenue Code with which the Board has contracted to provide similar benefits for Tennessee residents, or any § 529 college savings program established by the State of Tennessee.

(Rule 1700-05-03-.01, continued)

- (h) “Eligible educational institution” means an institution of postsecondary education as defined in § 529 of the Internal Revenue Code.
- (i) “Fiscal year” means the period beginning on July 1 of each year and ending on June 30 of the next following year.
- (j) “Household” means a group of individuals who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption and who share a residence.
- (k) “Legally incompetent” means that an individual has been declared incompetent by a court of law. An individual shall not be considered to be Legally incompetent unless proof thereof is furnished in such form and manner as the Board may require.
- (l) “Matching contribution” means the amount that is deposited by the Board into the Matching contribution account for each Beneficiary after all eligibility requirements for participation in the Matching grant incentive program have been satisfied pursuant to Rule 1700-05-03-.02.
- (m) “Matching contribution account” means the record that contains the Matching contributions deposited and maintained by the Board in a Beneficiary’s Account, plus the earnings or losses incurred thereon, including any Withdrawals made from the Matching contribution account, subject to the restrictions on the use of funds in the Matching contribution account contained in these rules.
- (n) “Matching grant incentive program” means the educational incentive program established pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-7-808(d) in which matching funds are contributed by the Board to Purchasers on behalf of Beneficiaries based on income levels for the Purchaser’s Household and the amount of the Purchaser’s contributions for the payment of the Beneficiary’s Qualified higher education expenses.
- (o) “Member of the family” means the mother, father or ancestor of either, stepmother, stepfather, siblings of either the mother or father of the Beneficiary, or such other person as may be defined as a “Member of the family” of the Beneficiary under the sections of the Internal Revenue Code that are applicable to the eligible college savings program.
- (p) “Minimum contribution” means the amount that must have been contributed to the Account of a Beneficiary during the Qualifying period as determined pursuant to Rule 1700-05-03-.07 in order to be eligible for the Matching contribution.
- (q) “Permanent disability” means the inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment that can be expected to result in death or is anticipated to last for a continued or indefinite duration. An individual shall not be considered to have a Permanent disability unless proof is furnished of the existence of the disability from a health care professional in such form and manner as the Board may require. The Board must approve any finding of a Permanent disability.
- (r) “Purchaser” means an individual who enters into a Contract for the creation and deposit of contributions to an Account and Matching contribution account on behalf of a Beneficiary, or in the case of the Purchaser’s death or legal incompetence, the Purchaser’s appointee.

(Rule 1700-05-03-.01, continued)

- (s) "Purchaser's appointee" means the person who is named in the Contract by the Purchaser to exercise the rights of the Purchaser under the Contract if the Purchaser dies or becomes Legally incompetent.
- (t) "Qualified higher education expenses" has the same meaning as given under § 529 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations promulgated thereunder.
- (u) "Qualifying period" means the time period as set by the Board each year during which a Purchaser must meet the conditions set forth in these rules in order to be eligible for a Matching contribution, including the time period during which a Purchaser must file an application for the Matching contribution.
- (v) "Redemption value" means the current cash value of an Account attributable to the sum of the principal invested through Purchaser contributions and the earnings or losses incurred thereon.
- (w) "State" means the State of Tennessee.
- (x) "Tennessee resident" means a person who has a continuous physical presence and maintenance of a dwelling place within the State of Tennessee for at least twelve (12) months immediately prior to entering into a Contract, provided that absence from the State for short periods of time may not affect the establishment of a residence. The effect of absences from the State for short periods of time will be determined on a case-by-case basis. A minor child shall be deemed a Tennessee resident if the child's legal guardian or noncustodial parent is a resident of Tennessee. Military or diplomatic personnel whose home of record is Tennessee shall also be deemed Tennessee residents for purposes of these rules.
- (y) "Withdrawal" means a disbursement of funds from the Account or the Matching contribution account that is directed by the Purchaser to be paid to the Purchaser, Beneficiary, or Eligible educational institution.

Authority: Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts codified in T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805, 49-7-808(d), and 65-5-113(c). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011. Repeal and new rule filed April 11, 2014; effective September 28, 2014. Amendments filed February 13, 2025; effective May 14, 2025.

1700-05-03-.02 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.

- (1) The Purchaser must file an application for the Matching contribution in accordance with Rule 1700-05-03-.03 during the applicable Qualifying period.
- (2) The Purchaser must have an Account with the Eligible college savings program pursuant to the rules contained in Chapter 1700-05-04 Educational Savings Plan for the Beneficiary listed on the application at the end of the Qualifying period and on the date the Matching contribution is deposited into the Matching contribution account.
- (3) An amount equal to or greater than the Minimum contribution established in Rule 1700-05-03-.07 must have been contributed to the Account during the Qualifying period.
- (4) The Purchaser and the Beneficiary of the Account must be Tennessee residents at the time the application is filed with the Board.
- (5) The Beneficiary must be less than age fifteen (15) at the time the application is filed with the Board;

(Rule 1700-05-03-.02, continued)

- (6) The Purchaser must be a Member of the family of the Beneficiary.
- (7) In addition to the eligibility requirements contained in paragraphs (1) through (6) of this rule, Purchasers who are applying to participate in the Matching grant incentive program are required to meet the income limits established by the Board for the Purchaser's Household in order to receive the matching contribution. In addition, the Purchaser shall not be claimed as a dependent on someone else's income tax return. The Board shall establish the income limits based on income standards that may be amended from time to time, including, but not limited to the following:
 - (a) Federal poverty guidelines;
 - (b) Federal poverty thresholds;
 - (c) Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines for free and reduced meals; and/or
 - (d) Federal Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines.
- (8) The Board shall consider factors in determining which standard will be used to establish the income limits for eligibility in the Matching grant incentive program, which include, but are not limited to, any or all of the following:
 - (a) The amount of fund appropriations;
 - (b) The number of program Purchasers; and/or
 - (c) The anticipated participation level in the program.

Authority: Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts codified in T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805, 49-7-808(d), and 65-5-113(c). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011. Repeal and new rule filed April 11, 2014; effective September 28, 2014. Amendment filed April 17, 2017; effective July 16, 2017. Amendments filed February 13, 2025; effective May 14, 2025.

1700-05-03-.03 APPLICATION FOR MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.

- (1) A Purchaser must file an application for the Matching contribution on a form as prescribed by the Board. The application must include the following information:
 - (a) The name and address of the Beneficiary;
 - (b) The name and address of the Purchaser;
 - (c) The relationship of the Purchaser to the Beneficiary;
 - (d) The sex and date of birth of the Beneficiary;
 - (e) The Purchaser's Household income;
 - (f) Authorization from the Purchaser for the Board to verify with the Eligible college savings program that all the requirements set forth in these rules have been met for purposes of qualifying for the Matching contribution; and
 - (g) Such other information as the Board may require.

(Rule 1700-05-03-.03, continued)

- (2) The application must be filed with the Board during the applicable Qualifying period and will be processed on a first come, first serve basis based on the amount of funds appropriated by the General Assembly.
- (3) In addition to the application requirements contained in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this rule, a Purchaser who is applying to participate in the Matching grant incentive program to receive the Matching contribution shall authorize the Board to obtain and confirm certain income eligibility data and provide the Board with either of the following for the period of time annually determined by the Board, not to exceed the five (5) years immediately preceding the Qualifying period:
 - (a) A copy of the federal income tax returns for the Purchaser and for each individual residing in the Purchaser's Household who is required to file an income tax return; or
 - (b) Information that would allow the Board to verify that the Purchaser is receiving or has received benefits through one (1) or more of the following programs, including, but not limited to:
 1. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF);
 2. State Medicaid;
 3. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); or
 4. Any such similar program or programs approved by the Board demonstrating that the Purchaser meets the income limits and standards established by the Board.
 - (c) The Purchaser shall also provide the Board with the following:
 1. Authorizations executed by the Purchaser and the members of the Purchaser's Household allowing the Board to verify the federal adjusted gross income for the Purchaser and all individuals residing in that Household; and
 2. Any such other documentation requested by the Board.
- (4) Subsequent to a Purchaser's initial application to participate in the Matching grant incentive program, and for each subsequent Qualifying period, the Purchaser shall reapply to participate in the Matching grant incentive program by submitting an application and providing the information requested in paragraph (3) of this rule to the Board to ensure the Purchaser's continued eligibility to participate in this program. In the event that the Purchaser becomes ineligible to continue participating in the Matching grant incentive program and to continue receiving the Matching contribution for any Beneficiary accounts, the Purchaser shall be able to continue making contributions to the Purchaser's § 529 college savings account but will not receive the Matching contribution for that year or any other subsequent year that the Purchaser does not qualify.

Authority: Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts codified in T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805, 49-7-805(4), 49-7-805(16), 49-7-808(d), 65-5-113, and 65-5-113(c). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011. Amendments filed April 11, 2014; effective September 28, 2014. Amendments filed February 13, 2025; effective May 14, 2025.

1700-05-03-.04 REJECTION OF APPLICATION OR FORFEITURE OF MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.

- (1) **Rejection of Application.** An application for a Matching contribution will be rejected by the Board if any of the following occurs:

(Rule 1700-05-03-.04, continued)

- (a) The Purchaser fails to provide all the information required in Rule 1700-05-03-.03;
 - (b) The Purchaser fails to meet the eligibility requirements to participate in the Matching grant incentive program as provided in Rule 1700-05-03-.02;
 - (c) The Purchaser makes a misrepresentation in the application for the Matching contributions; or
 - (d) The requisite Minimum contribution was not made to the Account during the Qualifying period.
- (2) Forfeiture of Matching Contribution. If, at any time, the Board determines that a Purchaser made a misrepresentation in an application for a Matching contribution that resulted in a Matching contribution being made to an Account, the Matching contribution will be forfeited and returned to the Board.
- (3) Applications Made in Subsequent Qualifying Periods. Rejection of an application for a Matching contribution shall not preclude the Purchaser from reapplying for a Matching contribution in subsequent Qualifying periods, provided the Purchaser completes a new application and files the same with the Board during the applicable Qualifying period. Notwithstanding this Rule, the Board may, at its discretion, reject any application made by a Purchaser who was found to have made a misrepresentation on an application submitted by the Purchaser in a previous year.

Authority: Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts codified in T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805, 49-7-805(4), 49-7-805(16), 49-7-808(d), and 65-5-113(c). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011. Amendment filed April 11, 2014; effective September 28, 2014.

1700-05-03-.05 INELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.

- (1) For the first fiscal year that the Matching grant incentive program is in operation, the following individuals shall not be eligible to receive Matching contributions as either a Purchaser or a Beneficiary: Tennessee Department of Treasury employees; members of the Board, or an immediate family member of any of the foregoing. For purposes of this rule, an "immediate family member" means a parent, spouse, sibling, child, stepchild or grandchild. For each subsequent fiscal year, the Board shall determine whether the total amount of money available for the fiscal year will be sufficient to allow the individuals listed in this rule to receive a Matching contribution.

Authority: Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts codified in T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805, 49-7-808(d), and 65-5-113(c). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011. Repeal and new rule filed April 11, 2014; effective September 28, 2014.

1700-05-03-.06 PURCHASERS AND BENEFICIARIES.

- (1) A Purchaser may only have one (1) Beneficiary on each Account.
- (2) A Purchaser may not have more than one (1) Account in the same Beneficiary's name.
- (3) A Beneficiary who has been designated as a Beneficiary on more than one (1) Account by two (2) or more different Purchasers shall only be eligible for one (1) Matching Contribution during each Qualifying period and shall not be eligible to receive another Beneficiary's Matching contributions through a change in Beneficiary.
- (4) A Purchaser may change a Beneficiary on an Account in accordance with the requirements contained in Tenn. Comp. R & Regs. 1700-05-04-.05(2) and (4). A Purchaser may request a

(Rule 1700-05-03-.06, continued)

one-time change of the Beneficiary on the Matching contribution account to a new Beneficiary meeting the residency, age, and familial requirements contained in Rule 1700-05-03-.02, unless the new Beneficiary already has an existing Matching contribution account. A Purchaser may change the Beneficiary on a Matching contribution account by submitting a request for a change to the Board on a form prescribed by the Board. The new Beneficiary on a Matching contribution account will receive the Matching contributions that were in a previous Beneficiary's name.

- (5) A Purchaser may not remove his or her name from a Matching contribution account and substitute it with another Purchaser's name; however, a Purchaser's name may be removed from a Matching contribution account upon the Purchaser's death, divorce, or Permanent disability.

Authority: Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts codified in T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805, 49-7-808(d), and 65-5-113(c). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011. Repeal and new rule filed April 11, 2014; effective September 28, 2014. Amendments filed February 13, 2025; effective May 14, 2025.

1700-05-03-.07 AMOUNT OF MINIMUM AND MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.

- (1) For the first Fiscal year that the Matching grant incentive program is in operation, the Minimum contribution for participation in the Matching grant incentive program made by the Purchaser shall be twenty-five dollars (\$25.00), and the Matching contribution shall be four (4) times the Minimum contribution, up to a maximum Matching contribution of five hundred dollars (\$500.00). The maximum contribution that can be made by a Purchaser in order to receive the maximum Matching contribution shall be one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$125.00); however, the Purchaser is not prohibited from contributing more to his or her Eligible college savings plan Account without the expectation of receiving a higher Matching contribution. For each subsequent year or a portion of the year that the Matching grant incentive program is in operation, the Board may either set the Minimum and Matching contribution or delegate the responsibility of establishing the Minimum and Matching contributions to the State Treasurer. The Minimum or Matching contributions may be established or amended at any time, and may be established for any duration of time deemed necessary by either the Board or the State Treasurer. The Matching contribution amount for the Matching grant incentive program shall be determined either by the Board or the State Treasurer based upon the amount appropriated in that year's general appropriations act for the purposes set forth in these rules, the number of program Participants, and the anticipated level of participation in the program.

Authority: Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts codified in T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805, 49-7-808(d), and 65-5-113(c). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011. Repeal and new rule filed April 11, 2014; effective September 28, 2014.

1700-05-03-.08 CONTRIBUTIONS AND WITHDRAWALS.

- (1) Contributions.
 - (a) Purchaser contributions to the Matching grant incentive program shall be made in accordance with Rule 1700-05-04-.04 by those Purchasers who qualify for participation in the program for a Beneficiary or Beneficiaries. Purchaser contributions will be subject to the limitations established in Rule 1700-05-04-.04.
 - (b) Matching contributions shall be made by the Board for each Beneficiary but shall be maintained in a Matching contribution account separate from the Account that contains the Purchaser's contributions.

(Rule 1700-05-03-.08, continued)

(2) Withdrawals.

- (a) Eligibility, Written Request, Amount and Timing of Withdrawals. A Purchaser may request a Withdrawal from the Account and Matching contribution account if the contributions and Matching contributions have been on deposit for a period of time consistent with the deposit period contained in Tenn. Comp. R & Regs. 1700-05-04-.06(1). The Purchaser's Withdrawal of contributions and Matching contributions are subject to the requirements contained in Rule 1700-05-04-.06(1), (2) and (3).
- (b) Withdrawals for Qualified Higher Education Expenses. The Purchaser may use either Purchaser contributions or the Matching contributions to pay for Qualified higher education expenses by directing payment to the Purchaser, the Beneficiary, or an Eligible educational institution as an advance payment or as reimbursement for Qualified higher education expenses. Third party documentation to substantiate the request may be required unless otherwise provided for in § 529 of the Internal Revenue Code or the regulations promulgated thereunder.
- (c) Withdrawals for Non-Qualified Higher Education Expenses. The Purchaser may only use Account contributions, and not Matching contributions, to pay for non-Qualified higher education expenses, provided that the Account contributions have been on deposit in the Account for a period of time consistent with the deposit period contained in Tenn. Comp. R & Regs. 1700-05-04-.06(1). Such a Withdrawal may be made without causing termination of the Contract and without requiring the Purchaser to establish that the withdrawal of the Account contributions will be used for Qualified higher education expenses. The earnings portion of withdrawals made for non-Qualified higher education expenses could be subject to federal taxation as prescribed under the sections of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations promulgated thereunder that are applicable to the program.
- (d) Scholarship Refund. A Purchaser may request a Withdrawal of all or a portion of the Account contributions as a scholarship refund in accordance with the requirements contained in Tenn. Comp. R & Regs. 1700-05-04-.06(4)(c). A Purchaser may not request a Withdrawal of all or a portion of the Matching contribution account as a scholarship refund.
- (e) Contract Termination and Refund. A Purchaser may terminate a Contract for an Account as provided in Rule 1700-05-04-.06(4)(a)–(f) and receive a refund in accordance with Rule 1700-05-04-.06(4)(a)–(f). In the event that a Contract for an Account is terminated due to the Permanent disability or death of the Beneficiary, the Matching contributions will revert back to the Board. In the event the Contract for an Account is terminated for any other reason or purpose other than Permanent disability or death of the Beneficiary, Matching contributions may be used for Qualified higher education expenses, unless the Matching contribution account is inactive in accordance with subparagraph (g) of this rule.
- (f) Rollovers out of the Program. The Purchaser may rollover all or a portion of the Redemption Value of the Account to an account established for another Beneficiary under the qualified tuition program established under § 529 of the Internal Revenue Code by making a rollover request to the Board on such forms as may be prescribed by the Board. If the rollover is for the benefit of another Beneficiary, the Beneficiary to whose Account the funds are being transferred must be a Member of the family of the original Beneficiary. Any rollover under this Rule shall be administered in accordance with the applicable rollover provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. Any rollover made under this paragraph shall be equal to the amount requested, not to exceed the Redemption Value of the Account and any applicable fees charged by the Board. The

(Rule 1700-05-03-.08, continued)

Redemption value of the Account shall be determined as of the date the rollover is made. Rollover of any funds in the Matching contribution account is not permitted.

(g) Inactivity and Return of Matching contributions. Matching contributions will be returned to the Board if:

1. A period of ten (10) consecutive years passes with no contributions or Withdrawals having been made to or from a Beneficiary's Matching contribution account or with no correspondence from the Purchaser or Beneficiary. The ten (10)-year period shall not commence any earlier than the year the Beneficiary becomes eighteen (18) years of age; or
2. The Purchaser voluntarily sends the Matching contributions back to the State at any time prior to the expiration of the ten (10)-year period contained in this subparagraph.

Authority: Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts codified in T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805, 49-7-808(d), 49-7-811, 49-7-812, and 65-5-113(c). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011. Repeal and new rule filed April 11, 2014; effective September 28, 2014. Amendments filed February 13, 2025; effective May 14, 2025.

1700-05-03-.09 NO GUARANTEE OF A MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.

- (1) Notwithstanding any provision of these rules to the contrary, neither the State, the Board, the Matching grant incentive program, nor the Eligible college savings program guarantees that any Beneficiary will receive a Matching contribution. The availability or the amount of the Matching contributions authorized by these rules are subject to the appropriation of funds in each year's general appropriations act for the purposes set forth in these rules.

Authority: Chapter 359 of the 2013 Public Acts codified in T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805, 49-7-805(4), 49-7-805(16), 49-7-808(d), and 65-5-113(c). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011. Amendment filed April 11, 2014; effective September 28, 2014.

1700-05-03-.10 EXTENT OF AVAILABLE FUNDS.

- (1) In the event the Board receives more eligible applications for the Matching contribution than the amount of money appropriated by the General Assembly during a given Qualifying period, the Board will award the Matching contribution to the first eligible applicants to apply until the available funds have been exhausted.
- (2) In the event excess appropriations remain in any given fiscal year after providing the Matching contributions to all eligible applicants, the excess funds will be transferred to the educational services plan established in Chapter 1700-05-01 of the Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Tennessee, unless the General Assembly otherwise directs.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-7-805(4) and 49-7-805(16). **Administrative History:** Original rule filed October 1, 2010; effective March 31, 2011.