

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Statutory Authority: 14 Delaware Code, Sections 122(b)(8), 181(15), 183, 3402(c), and 3439(a)
(14 **Del.C.** §§ 122(b)(8), 181(15), 183, 3402(c), & 3439(a))
14 **DE Admin. Code** 1217

FINAL

ORDER

1217 Mental Health Services Scholarship

I. SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION SUBMITTED

Pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §122(b)(8), the Secretary of Education seeks the consent of the State Board of Education to amend 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1217 Mental Health Services Scholarship. This regulation is being amended to reinstate the definition of Free Application for Federal Student Aid ("FAFSA") in Section 2.0, reinstate the requirement that applicants complete the FAFSA for the school year in which the scholarship is sought by the application deadline in subsection 4.2.2, and reinstate the information that Delaware Higher Education Office will consider to determine an applicant's financial need for the scholarship's purpose in subsection 5.2. The proposed changes are a result of the U.S. Department of Education's release of the 2025-2026 FAFSA application which is fully operational, and students can successfully submit their FAFSA. Other grammatical changes were made to comply with the *Delaware Administrative Code Drafting and Style Manual*.

This regulation was originally published on March 1, 2025. It was also presented to the State Board of Education at its March meeting for information. No comments were received.

II. FINDINGS OF FACTS

The Secretary of Education finds that it is appropriate to amend 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1217 Mental Health Services Scholarship. This regulation is being amended to reinstate the definition of Free Application for Federal Student Aid ("FAFSA") in Section 2.0, reinstate the requirement that applicants complete the FAFSA for the school year in which the scholarship is sought by the application deadline in subsection 4.2.2, and reinstate the information that Delaware Higher Education Office will consider to determine an applicant's financial need for the scholarship's purpose in subsection 5.2. The proposed changes are a result of the U.S. Department of Education's release of the 2025-2026 FAFSA application which is fully operational, and students can successfully submit their FAFSA. Other grammatical changes were made to comply with the *Delaware Administrative Code Drafting and Style Manual*.

III. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT ON ACHIEVEMENT OF THE STATE'S GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION TARGETS AND RESILIENCY TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The Secretary of Education has reviewed the proposed regulation as required by 29 **Del.C.** §10118(b)(3) and has determined that any assessment of the impact of the proposed regulation is not practical.

IV. DECISION TO AMEND THE REGULATION

For the foregoing reasons, the Secretary concludes that it is appropriate to amend 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1217 Mental Health Services Scholarship. Therefore, pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §§ 122(b)(8), 181(15), 183, 3402(c), and 3439(a), 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1217 Mental Health Services Scholarship attached hereto as *Exhibit "A"* is hereby amended. Pursuant to the provision of 14 **Del.C.** §122(e), 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1217 Mental Health Services Scholarship as amended will be in effect for a period of five years from the effective date of this order as set forth in Section VI. below.

V. TEXT AND CITATION

The text of 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1217 Mental Health Services Scholarship amended hereby shall be in the form attached hereto as *Exhibit "A"*, and said regulation shall be cited as 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1217 Mental Health Services Scholarship in the *Administrative Code of Regulations* for the Department of Education.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE OF ORDER

The actions hereinabove referred to were taken by the Secretary pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §§ 122(b)(8), 181(15), 183, 3402(c)

and 3439(a), on May 15, 2025. The effective date of this Order shall be ten days from the date this Order is published in the Register of Regulations.

IT IS SO ORDERED the 15th day of May 2025.

Department of Education
Cynthia Marten, Secretary of Education

Approved this 15th day of May 2025

State Board of Education

/s/ Shawn Brittingham, President	/s/ Rajalakshmi Lodhavia
/s/ Deborah Stevens, Vice President	/s/ Rev. Provey Powell, Jr.
/s/ Meredith L. Griffin, Jr.	/s/ James L. Simmons III

***Please note: Electronic signatures ("/s/") were accepted pursuant to 6 Del.C. §12A-107(d).**

1217 Mental Health Services Scholarship

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to provide the eligibility criteria, application requirements, and award process for the Mental Health Services Scholarship Program pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §3439(a).

2.0 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this regulation, shall have the following meaning:

"Award" means a scholarship awarded under the Mental Health Services Scholarship Program.

"Delaware Higher Education Office" or "DHEO" means the Department of Education's office which administers specific programs related to higher education, including, ~~but not limited to,~~ student financial assistance programs.

"Free Application for Federal Student Aid" or "FAFSA" means the data supplied in connection with the federal government's application for federal financial aid.

"Full-time student" means a graduate student enrolled in 9 or more credit hours.

"High need field" means 1 of the specific fields identified as an area of need in Delaware by the committee established pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §3416(b).

"~~Student Account Access Site~~ account access site" means the webpage on the DHEO's website where students can access scholarship opportunities.

28 DE Reg. 131 (08/01/24)

3.0 Eligibility

3.1 In order to be eligible for an award under the Mental Health Services Scholarship Program, an applicant shall meet the requirements of subsections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2.

3.1.1 The applicant shall be enrolled as a full-time student in a master's degree program in a Delaware postsecondary institution that will lead to certification as a school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker in a Delaware public school.

3.1.2 The applicant shall meet the definition of residency as defined in 14 **Del.C.** §3402(f).

4.0 Application Requirements

4.1 The application acceptance and submission period for the Mental Health Services Scholarship Program shall be posted on the DHEO's website by December 1 of each calendar year.

4.1.1 Applications shall not be accepted outside of the posted application acceptance period under any circumstances.

4.1.2 Incomplete applications shall not be accepted or processed.

4.2 In order for an application to be considered complete, an applicant shall fulfill ~~the requirement in subsection 4.2.4~~ all of the requirements in subsections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2.

- 4.2.1 The applicant shall complete an online application through the ~~Student Account Access Site~~ student account access site by the last date of the application acceptance period.
- 4.2.1.1 Applicants may update their enrollment information on the ~~Student Account Access Site~~ student account access site through the last date of the application acceptance period.
- 4.2.1.2 A first time applicant must establish an account and provide the applicant's valid email address and permanent mailing address before being permitted to submit the information required in subsection 4.2 of this regulation.
- 4.2.2 ~~Reserved.~~ The applicant shall complete the FAFSA for the school year in which the scholarship is sought by the application deadline.

28 DE Reg. 131 (08/01/24)

5.0 Awards

- 5.1 DHEO determines the number and amount of awards to be given annually. The number and amount of awards each year will vary and is based on and subject to the General Assembly appropriating funds for the Mental Health Services Scholarship Program.
- 5.2 To determine an applicant's financial need for the purpose of the Mental Health Services Scholarship, DHEO will ~~consider the expense of attending the applicant's college or university and the applicant's eligibility for state or private grant assistance.~~ consider:
- 5.2.1 The applicant's student aid index, which is the number that is calculated using the financial information an applicant provides on the applicant's FAFSA to determine the applicant's eligibility for federal student aid;
- 5.2.2 The expense of attending the applicant's college or university; and
- 5.2.3 The applicant's eligibility for Pell grants and other federal, state, or private grant assistance.
- 5.3 An award shall be used for, and not in excess of, tuition, mandatory fees, room, board, books, and other direct and indirect educational expenses.
- 5.4 An award is renewable for up to 1 year.
- 5.5 To be eligible to renew an award, a student shall update the student's enrollment information on the ~~Student Account Access Site~~ student account access site; continue to be enrolled in a master's degree program in a Delaware postsecondary institution that will lead to certification as a school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker in a Delaware public school; maintain satisfactory academic progress by successfully completing coursework according to the standards of the college or university in which the student is enrolled; and continue to be eligible receive financial aid.
- 5.6 A student shall not receive more than 2 annual awards.

28 DE Reg. 131 (08/01/24)

6.0 Award Payment

- 6.1 Award payments shall be disbursed directly to the student's college or university only.
- 6.2 If a student withdraws from school or otherwise does not qualify for full payment at the end of the add/drop period for a semester, DHEO will apply the refund policies set forth in 14 **Del.C.** §3402(k). For the purpose of this regulation, semester means a half-year term in a school or college, typically lasting 15 to 18 weeks.

26 DE Reg. 1060 (06/01/23)

28 DE Reg. 131 (08/01/24)

28 DE Reg. 879 (06/01/25) (Final)