

Employee Dependent Tuition Program

The Employee Dependent Tuition Program applies to dependents of currently Commonwealth of Virginia benefits-eligible faculty and staff of George Mason University.

George Mason University is offering the Mason Virginia Promise (MVP) grant for qualifying Mason employee dependents. Individuals must be current, active, benefit-eligible employees of George Mason University to qualify for this benefit. For special restrictions, please refer to Section II.B.

A. Benefit

1. **Maximum Allowable Benefits** – The tax dependents of the qualifying employee for up to 8 semesters for one undergraduate degree are eligible for this benefit. Each qualifying employee can “sponsor” only one dependent at a time. Other federal, state and institutional grants and scholarships will apply toward the tuition balance first. An MVP grant for any remaining eligible tuition and mandatory fees will be awarded for the dependents.
2. **Eligibility** – Eligibility under this benefit will commence upon employment and extend through the academic terms of the class(es) in which the dependent is enrolled. Benefits are awarded semester by semester. For an employee’s dependent to qualify for this grant, the following criteria must be present:
 - Undergraduate Student and Resident of Virginia that qualifies for in-state tuition rates
 - Tax dependent of a current Mason benefits-eligible employee
 - Eligible for Virginia State Grants and Federal Aid
 - Fulfill income eligibility of MVP grant
 - Have filed FAFSA or VASA by posted Financial Aid deadlines
 - Be enrolled full time at the end of the Drop (Freeze) period
3. **Costs** – In the event employment terminates, dependent eligibility continues through the academic year. In the event of dropped or withdrawn classes during tuition liability periods, the MVP Grant for Mason employee dependents will remain on accounts. While employee repayment of the benefit will not be required, the amount of tuition exempted will count towards semester and annual limits.

The amount cannot exceed the cost of in-state tuition plus mandatory student fees.
4. **Academic Requirements** – Dependents must meet the same academic requirements as any other student.
5. **IRS Tax Requirement** – Per the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Section 117(d)(1), undergraduate tuition benefits for employees or dependents of employees of educational institutions is excludable from income.

B. Restrictions

1. The dependent will not receive any special priority for registration, but will follow the priority of their academic category.

2. Dependent information must be entered into PatriotWeb and FAFSA must be filed by applicable Financial Aid deadlines to apply for the benefit.
3. Must apply before the start of the academic year and there will be no retroactive benefits applied to the student balances. Deadlines will be posted on the HR website each year.
4. Benefit is limited to undergraduate, degree seeking students that are Virginia Residents.
5. The benefit does not apply to orientation, new student, course materials, or special instructional fees such as individual vocal or instrumental instruction, or flight training, which must be paid by the student. Tuition for consortium courses that include foreign travel, and contract courses, are not eligible for exemption under this program. Global Education Office (Study Abroad) courses and trip fees are ineligible for tuition waivers under this program.

This benefit will not be granted in anticipation of future work, nor will it be granted retroactively. Additional questions should be directed to Human Resources and Office of Student Financial Aid.

C. Procedures

The Office of Student Accounts maintains procedures related to administration of this program. As part of those procedures:

1. Employees enter qualifying dependents into Patriot Web using the “Beneficiaries and Dependents Information” tab. Note: FAFSA must be on file.
2. Employee Dependent attribute is added to the student record.
3. Eligibility for the MVP grant is confirmed and appropriate award is administered by Financial Aid. Note: The amount of the award is determined by the parameters of the MVP Grant. The employee will not be notified of award, it will only post to the student record if determined to meet eligibility.

III. DEFINITIONS

Academic year: for purposes of this program, a given academic year is defined as beginning on the first day of the fall semester, and ending on the last day of the summer term.

Tax Dependent: Biological, adopted, stepchild, or foster child under the age of 24 who is under the care of the employee and claimed as a dependent on the employee’s tax return.

Full-time student: those students enrolled in 12 or more credits per semester.

Semester: for purposes of this program, a semester is defined by the [University Academic Calendar](#).

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice President for Enrollment Management and Vice President for Human Resources and Payroll and Faculty/Staff Life, in consultation with Financial Aid and Admissions, will administer the grant. Heads of Departments, Offices, and Activities will establish internal controls to confirm employee eligibility and assure that approved requests are within the scope of this program.