



TUITION WAIVER LAW

Free College Tuition for Former Foster Youth in New Mexico

WHAT IS THE TUITION WAIVER LAW?

The tuition waiver law (NMSA 21-1-4.7) took effect in New Mexico in 2014 and was expanded in 2019, giving transition-age foster youth access to free college tuition to pursue education and career goals. The waiver only covers tuition costs and some administrative fees, but it does NOT cover expenses such as lab fees, art fees, books, food, or housing.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Young people can take advantage of the tuition waiver law if they:

- Were in the legal custody of New Mexico's Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) or a New Mexico Indian Nation, Tribe or Pueblo or the United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs Division of Human Services, at any time on or after their 14th birthday, and
- Enroll in a school of higher education before their 25th birthday. A school of higher education includes any publicly funded and accredited state college or university or any of their branches, a community college, or a technical/vocational institute in New Mexico.

HOW DO I ACCESS THE TUITION WAIVER?

1. Request a tuition waiver letter: Contact CYFD or the relevant New Mexico Indian Nation, Tribe or Pueblo and request a tuition waiver letter that verifies that you were in CYFD or tribal custody. You can also contact Scott Patterson-Alatorre, CYFD Director of Family Services at 505-695-4626 or scott.patterson-alatorre@cyfd.nm.gov.
2. Give the tuition waiver letter to the school: A copy of the letter must be given to the Admissions and Financial Aid Departments of the school you plan to attend. If you transfer to a different college, university, or trade school, you must submit a new tuition waiver letter to the new school you are attending.

LEARN MORE

NMCAN
505-217-0220
info@nmcan.org
nmcan.org

New Mexico Higher Education Department
Financial Aid Division
800-279-9777
fin.aid@hed.nm.gov
hed.nm.gov