



Best Practices for Higher Education (State-Wide)

Title of Best Practice: Florida College System Homeless Exemption

Please provide the following information about the best practice.

What state has implemented this best practice?
Florida
Description of practice
<p>Identifies the following students as exempt from the payment of tuition and fees, including lab fees, at a school district that provides workforce education programs, Florida College system institution, or state university:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">A student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private shelter designed to provide temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.</p>
Citation of the law
Section 1009.25 (1)(f), Florida Statutes, <i>Fee exemptions</i>
How long has this practice been in place?
Since 2007
What have been the positive outcomes of this practice? What impact has it had on UHY?
The number of homeless exemptions provided in the Florida College system has steadily increased each year to almost five times the number of exemptions reported in 2008. There were 1,015 exemptions granted on the basis of section 1009.25 (1)(f), Florida Statutes, in the 2012-2013 school year.

What level of effort is required to implement this practice?
What level of effort is required to sustain this practice?
How is this practice funded?
How is this practice sustained?
<p>When homelessness is confirmed, the student completes the “Petition for Qualification of a Tuition/Fee Exemption Based on Homelessness” form. The student, with help from the enrollment management director, develops a timeline of circumstances leading up to the present situation of homelessness. All supporting documentation is helpful, including documentation of homelessness while enrolled in secondary education, which may be obtained from the district homeless liaison. The status of homelessness must be reviewed/re-approved each semester. A hold will be placed on students’ records preventing them from registering beyond the term in which the petition approval was granted.</p> <p>Students receiving this exemption should be encouraged to begin establishing ties to Florida, such as by obtaining a Florida ID and voter’s registration, in order to qualify for in-state tuition rates should their circumstances change.</p> <p>Students must lack adequate nighttime accommodations and must provide documentation that they have been using a homeless shelter or assistance for the homeless in order to be determined eligible. Students are ineligible to qualify for a homeless exemption if they have housing provided by a transition housing program.</p> <p><i>Note: College policies and procedures vary for determining eligibility for the homeless exemption. There have been a growing number of students seeking this exemption, so it is important for each college to have a written policy regarding eligibility that includes acceptable documentation.</i></p>
Who should be involved?
School social workers, homeless liaisons, guidance counselors, directors of federal programs, college recruiters, admissions officers, financial aid officers, parents
What have been the challenges to implementation? How have those challenges been addressed?
Related web links
Description of attached documents