



**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY STATEMENT**

**Policy Title:** Tuition Assistance Benefit

**APS Number:** 5024

**APS Functional Area:** **HUMAN RESOURCES**

<b>Brief Description:</b>	Tuition Assistance Benefit for CU Employees and Dependents
<b>Effective:</b>	July 1, 2024
<b>Approved by:</b>	President Todd Saliman
<b>Responsible University Officer:</b>	Chief Human Resources Officer and Vice President of Employee Services
<b>Responsible Office:</b>	Employee Services
<b>Policy Contact:</b>	Chief Human Resources Officer and Vice President of Employee Services
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Tuition Assistance Benefit, August 1, 2022
<b>Last Reviewed/Updated:</b>	July 1, 2024
<b>Applies to:</b>	Faculty and staff

**Reason for Policy:** The purpose of this Administrative Policy Statement (APS) is to establish the scope of the University of Colorado’s Educational Assistance Program and describe the taxability of educational assistance provided under this program. The university has a Section 127 Educational Assistance Plan established pursuant to Section 127 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. This Internal Revenue Code provision currently allows employers to exclude educational assistance provided to employees from their wages, up to a federally mandated limit. Additionally, Section 117 of the Internal Revenue Code allows the university to exclude undergraduate-level tuition assistance for employees of the university and their dependents.

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The University of Colorado offers a Tuition Assistance Benefit (TAB) on a nondiscriminatory basis to eligible university employees and their eligible dependents. TAB can only be provided in the form of a tuition benefit applied to the student tuition accounts. Employees or dependents cannot choose to receive cash in place of TAB. Employees and dependents are responsible for paying all other required campus-specific fees and other related educational costs.

**II. POLICY STATEMENT**

Tuition Assistance Benefit (TAB) is available to employees who meet the eligibility requirements as identified in section II.A.

- The academic year begins with the fall term and ends with the summer term (Fall-Summer).
- Employees and dependents may register during the normal designated registration period.
- Employee must submit a new TAB application each semester according to campus deadlines.
- Each semester, the employee will submit an application for each employee and employee’s dependent(s) who will be utilizing the benefit.
  - Employee Note: Employees can apply the TAB to a different campus of enrollment at the beginning of a new semester; however, employees cannot be concurrently enrolled in two separate campuses during the same semester.

- Dependent Note: The dependent option and campus, elected initially at the beginning of the academic year will remain in effect for the entire academic year and is applicable to all dependents of an employee. Dependents must use the same Option A-Home Campus or Option B-Other Campus for the entirety of the academic year (Fall-Summer) – see section II.E.
- Taxation
  - Employee is not taxed for any TAB amount when taking undergraduate courses.
  - Employee is not taxed for any TAB amount when a dependent takes undergraduate courses unless the dependent is a domestic partner or a child of a domestic partner.
  - Employee is taxed for any TAB amount above the \$5,250 threshold when taking graduate courses.
  - Employee is taxed for the total amount of TAB when a dependent takes graduate courses.

To qualify for the benefit either for the employee’s own use or for a dependent’s use, an employee, and where applicable, the employee’s dependent, must satisfy the following criteria:

#### A. Employee Eligibility

1. The employee must be in: a) a regular (non-temporary) position; b) a benefits-eligible job code; and c) an appointment of 20 hours (50% FTE) or more per week. Review the “TAB” column for eligibility as published in the [Benefit Eligibility Matrix](#).
2. If an employee has multiple regular (non-temporary) appointments that collectively equal 20 hours (50% FTE) or more in a benefits-eligible job code, they will be combined to determine eligibility.
3. The employee must be in an active appointment and have an effective date (per NOTE below) for benefits at the time of the published campus deadline, per the TAB website, for the semester in which the benefit is being applied.

NOTE: Effective date for benefits eligibility is the first of the month if the employee is hired on the first day of the month. If hired after the first day of the month, benefits eligibility begins the first day of the following month.

4. Being on FMLA/FAMLI documented leave or sabbatical does not preclude eligibility for the benefit.

#### B. Dependent Eligibility

Each campus has established specific rules governing operation of the dependent TAB, as specified in section II.E. The following requirements apply, however, to all eligible dependents seeking to use TAB.

1. [Dependent eligibility verification](#) is required, for each individual dependent, as it is required for other employee benefits permitting dependent coverage.
2. The following relationships are eligible for TAB although they are not, by IRS definition, eligible dependents. The monetary value of such tuition benefit will be subject to [income taxation](#):
  - a. Domestic partner or civil union partner who are not legally married;
  - b. A dependent child of a domestic partner or civil union partner to whom you are not legally married; and
  - c. An employee’s dependent child who is not eligible to be claimed as a dependent on the employee’s Federal Form 1040 US Individual Income Tax Return.

#### C. University Criteria for Eligible Employees

1. Twelve (12) credits are available each academic year (Fall-Summer) to be applied against tuition costs at any CU campus for allowable undergraduate or graduate credit-granting courses, complying with restrictions set within the course requirements.

2. Employees may register and wait-list during the normal designated registration period for undergraduate or graduate credit-granting courses and can register prior to submitting the TAB application.
3. The twelve credits can be used in one semester or split among semesters during the same academic year, which begins with the fall semester.
4. Supervisor approval is not required to take a course. Supervisor approval for class attendance during normal work hours is required as for any absence reason but does not require separate documentation.
5. The benefit may not be applied to any course that is auxiliary funded, such as Continuing Education, Extended Studies, the Executive MBA program, the One Year MBA program or CU Boulder's Part-Time Evening MBA program or programs offered through Coursera. Course eligibility is administered at the campuses. Any exceptions will be communicated and administered by the campus.
6. The benefit may not be applied to study abroad or audited courses.
7. Each year a select number of Boulder campus and System employees are eligible to use their twelve-credit tuition assistance benefits for an employee development opportunity available through the Boulder campus Department of Human Resources and the Lockheed Martin Engineering Management Program (EMP), Leadership and Management Graduate Certificate.
8. The amount of TAB received is considered financial assistance and may impact financial aid eligibility.
9. For undergraduate Colorado residents, each registering student must apply and authorize the College Opportunity Fund (COF). TAB only applies to the net tuition after COF. The students are responsible to pay the difference if COF is not applied for or exhausted.
10. Only Nursing, Public Health, and Graduate School courses (exceptions are listed on the Employee Services TAB website) on the Anschutz Medical Campus are eligible for the benefit.
11. The TAB application must be completed and submitted to Employee Services by the campus of registration's TAB application deadline as published on the website.

D. University Criteria for Eligible Dependents

1. Eligible employees may give their TAB to an eligible dependent or split it between eligible dependents.
  - a. Each dependent of a Boulder campus or System Administration employee is allowed to use the full entitlement at the Boulder campus, regardless of number of dependents or usage by the employee also at the Boulder campus. If using the Boulder dependent tuition discount, neither the employee nor any other dependents may use the tuition benefit on another campus at the same time.
2. If an employee and spouse are both eligible employees of the university, they must follow the rules under 'University Criteria for Eligible Employees' in section II.C. Employees married to each other cannot be considered as dependents of each other for purposes of TAB.
3. Two options are available for TAB enrollment, Option A-Home Campus or Option B-Other Campus. The employee must pick one option per dependent. Option A and B cannot be used by the same dependent at the same time nor in the same academic year. For specific campus rules under Options A and B, refer to section II.E.
4. Dependent(s) may register during the normal designated registration date period for undergraduate or graduate credit-granting courses.
5. The amount of TAB received is considered financial assistance and may impact financial aid eligibility.
6. The dependent(s) seeking to use the benefit must satisfy applicable admissions requirements prior to registration deadlines.

7. For undergraduate Colorado residents, each registering student must apply and authorize for the College Opportunity Fund (COF). The tuition benefit only applies to the net tuition after COF. The students are responsible to pay the difference if COF is not applied for or exhausted.
8. The benefit may not be applied to any course that is auxiliary funded, such as Continuing Education, Extended Studies, the mini-MBA, the Executive MBA program, the One Year MBA program or CU Boulder's Part-Time Evening MBA program or programs offered through Coursera. Course eligibility is administered at the campuses. Any exceptions will be communicated and administered by the campus.
9. The benefit may not be applied to study abroad or audits.

E. Campus Criteria for Eligible Dependents

1. Option A – Home Campus: Eligible dependents are required to take classes on the employee's campus of employment.
2. Option B – Other Campus: Eligible dependents can attend classes on any CU campus other than the employee's campus of employment.

**OPTION A – Home Campus**

CU Anschutz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 credits for undergraduate or graduate credit-granting courses.</li> <li>• Limited to eligible courses offered by CU Anschutz and CU Denver Campuses. Options available under Anschutz are limited to Nursing, Public Health, and Graduate School courses; exceptions are listed on the <a href="#">Employee Services Tuition Assistance website</a>.</li> <li>• If both parents/partners are employed at CU in eligible appointments, the dependent(s) may waive up to a combined maximum of 24 credit hours per academic year (Fall-Summer).</li> </ul>
CU Boulder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40% tuition benefit for undergraduate or graduate credit granting courses.</li> <li>• Limited to eligible courses offered by CU Boulder.</li> <li>• Each dependent of the employee is entitled to receive the 40% tuition benefit. If both parents are employed at CU Boulder and/or System, each of the dependents are eligible for 80%.</li> </ul>
CU Colorado Springs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 credits for undergraduate or graduate credit-granting courses.</li> <li>• Limited to eligible courses offered by CU Colorado Springs.</li> <li>• If both parents/partners are employed at CU in eligible appointments, the dependent(s) may waive up to a combined maximum of 24 credit hours per academic year (Fall-Summer).</li> </ul>
CU Denver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 credits for undergraduate or graduate credit-granting courses.</li> <li>• Limited to eligible courses offered by CU Anschutz and CU Denver Campuses. Options available under Anschutz are limited to Nursing, Public Health, and Graduate School courses; exceptions are listed on the <a href="#">Employee Services Tuition Assistance website</a>.</li> <li>• If both parents/partners are employed at CU in eligible appointments, the dependent(s) may waive up to a combined maximum of 24 credit hours per academic year (Fall-Summer).</li> </ul>
System Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The system administration follows the campus rules where classes are being taken.</li> <li>• May use any of the campus options. Any campus of registration is considered the dependent's Option A-Home Campus.</li> <li>• May enroll in eligible courses on any campus.</li> </ul>

**OPTION B – Other Campus**

All Campuses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligible dependents receive \$270 per credit hour for a maximum of twelve (12) credits (\$3240) per academic year.</li> <li>• Eligible Dependents may register during the normal designated registration date for undergraduate credit-granting courses.</li> <li>• Graduate courses are not eligible.</li> </ul>

- If both parents are eligible employees of the university, the dependent(s) may receive \$270 per credit hour for a combined maximum of 24 credit hours per academic year. Eligible dependents may enroll for courses on any campus.
- Twelve (12) credits can be used in one semester or split amongst semesters during the same academic year which begins with the fall semester.

NOTE: If an employee has a dependent enrolled at their campus of employment and a secondary eligible employee is employed at another campus and applying the TAB to the same dependent, the Option A-Home Campus from the campus of enrollment must be applied first to the dependent's tuition. Then, Option B-Other Campus from the secondary parent can be applied to the dependent's tuition.

### III. APPEALS

Employee Services is responsible for determining eligibility and administering Tuition Assistance Benefit (TAB) per this APS as written above. However, there may be occasions when employees feel they have grounds to appeal Employee Services' policy determination, specific to campus registration and application requirements.

If an employee does not agree with Employee Services' policy determination and has documented information supporting extenuating circumstances or events out of the employee's control, the employee may choose to appeal to the campus of enrollment's CFO.

### IV. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, FORMS, GUIDELINES AND OTHER RESOURCES

- A. [Appeals Process](#)
- B. [Appeals Form](#)
- C. [Tuition Assistance Resources](#)
- D. [Classified Staff Tuition Reimbursement Program](#)

### V. HISTORY

- Adopted: July 1, 2007 - APS Education Assistance Program.
- Revised: September 1, 2008; March 8, 2012 - APS Tuition Assistance Benefit (replaces APS Education Assistance Program); January 17, 2013; July 1, 2013; July 1, 2014; October 2015 (Updated section II.C.2 a-b to reflect changes to benefits eligibility pursuant to Supreme Court ruling on same sex marriage); July 11, 2016; August 1, 2017; February 8, 2018 (updated to reflect changes made per Regent Resolution, Change in Dependent Eligibility); January 1, 2021; July 1, 2021 (to allow employees to wait list classes and register prior to the first day of class in some circumstances – these new provisions are effective at the beginning of the 2021-22 academic year); September 2, 2021 (minor updates related to the Equal Pay Act approved and made retroactive to January 1, 2021); June 16, 2022 (added appeals process specific to campus registration and application requirements or for extenuating circumstances or events out of the employee's control and made retroactive to January 1, 2022). August 1, 2022 (new provision effective at the beginning of the 2022-23 academic year allowing Denver campus undergraduates to register seven (7) days prior to the first day of class); July 31, 2023 (non-substantive updates made to clarify course eligibility); July 1, 2024 – increased from 9 to 12 credits (increased tuition discount from 30% to 40% for Boulder dependents) and allow registration during normal registration periods.
- Last Reviewed: July 1, 2024.