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§ 170-20.5-185 Appeal

Subchapter Authority: 10 CMC § 2201 et seq. (but see Commission Comment)


Commission Comment: 1 CMC § 5101 creates offices of the mayors within the Commonwealth government, composed of the duly-elected mayors of Saipan, Rota, Tinian and Aguiguan and the Northern Islands. The mayors are authorized to promulgate regulations on local matters as provided by law. See 1 CMC § 5106(e).

Tinian Local Law 5-2 (effective August 8, 1986), codified at 10 CMC § 2201 et seq., the “Tinian Municipal Scholarship Act of 1986,” created the Municipal Scholarship Board within the Office of the Mayor and authorized it to grant scholarship assistance. It authorized the Board to prescribe by regulation procedures to govern meetings, but did not expressly authorize the Board to promulgate regulations on other topics.

§ 170-20.5-101 Purpose

The Municipal Scholarship Board (Board) was established by the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Act of 1986 (10 CMC § 2201 et seq.,) to implement the Tinian Scholarship Fund.


§ 170-20.5-105 Definitions

(a) “Applicant”: A person who has applied for educational financial assistance from the
Municipal Scholarship Board under any of the available Board-approved and funded programs.

(b) “Continuing Student Applicant:” An applicant who is applying for continued financial assistance from the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board and is currently enrolled and receiving financial assistance from the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Fund.

(c) “Cumulative Grade Point Average:” The grade point average for all terms combined.

(d) “Degree Scholarship Program:” The scholarship program for educational financial assistance in attaining a degree in a field of study prioritized for funding by the Board but shall not include programs leading to a degree in theology, divinity, or religious studies. The degree shall be awarded by an institution accredited by a governmentally recognized organization responsible for accrediting institutions of higher learning in the country where the institution is located in (comparable to the United States Western Association of Schools and Colleges).

(e) “Full time status:” Full time status in an undergraduate program as defined by the institution attended by recipient but shall not be less than the equivalent of 12 credits per enrollment period (either semester or quarter), or, in exceptional circumstances, as determined by the institution and by the Board on a case-by-case basis. Full time status in a graduate program is as determined by the institution the recipient is enrolled in. Repeated courses, below college-level courses (remedial), or audit courses shall not be counted towards fulfillment of the full-time status. However, during the student’s first year of attendance, below college-level courses may be counted towards full-time status for the initial semester/quarter only. Full time status during the summer term will be as determined by the institution.

(f) “Grade Point Average:” The average obtained by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the total number of credits attempted in a term.

(g) “Municipal Scholarship Board” (“Board”): The Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board created by the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Act of 1986 (10 CMC § 2202).

(h) “New Student Applicant:” An applicant who is applying for financial assistance from the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board for the first time or has not applied and received assistance during the preceding term. A Tinian Municipal Scholarship recipient who has not attended school for six or more consecutive months immediately prior to application will be considered a New Student Applicant.

(i) “Online Student:” An applicant who physically resides on Tinian and is attending an accredited online institution in a field of study prioritized for funding by the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board.

(j) “Permanent resident of Tinian:” A person who is registered to vote in the Second Senatorial District, and who is physically present or domiciled on Tinian for at least two years prior to the application date and has the intent to reside permanently on Tinian. A person who is present in the municipality for the sole purpose of employment or education shall not be
considered a permanent resident. Residency may be proven by a physical presence on Tinian, maintenance of a physical address on Tinian for the requisite period, and registered to vote in the Second Senatorial District. Minor applicants who graduate before turning 18 years old will be exempt from the registered voter requirement until the applicant turns 18 at which time applicant must comply with this section.

(k) “Prioritized Field of Study:” The fields of study that have been determined by the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board to be needed to meet the workforce (human resources) needs of Tinian and will, therefore, be funded.

(l) “Recipient:” An approved applicant who receives educational financial assistance from the Municipal Scholarship Fund under anyone of its available programs.

(m) “Scholarship Assistance Probation:” A student whose term grade point average is below 2.25 will be placed on scholarship assistance probation and must earn at least a minimum term grade point average of 2.25 in the subsequent term in order to continue receiving scholarship assistance.

(n) “Scholarship Assistance Suspension:” A student whose cumulative grade point average is below 2.25 will placed on scholarship assistance suspension and will not receive any scholarship assistance until his/her cumulative grade point average is at least 2.25.

(o) “Term grade point average:” Grade point average for a particular enrollment period, either quarter or semester.

(p) “Tinian Scholarship Fund:” The funds, including grants, donations, gifts, and bequest, including appropriations received by the Municipal Scholarship Board which are available for disposition by the Board.

(q) “Trade School/Vocational/Certification Program:” The scholarship program for educational financial assistance in attaining a certification in a field of study prioritized for funding by the Board. The institution awarding such certification shall be accredited by the United States or CNMI government, or by governmentally recognized organization responsible for accrediting institutions of higher learning in the country where the institution is located in (comparable to the United States Western Association of Colleges and Schools). The Board may waive such accreditation if it determines that such training and certification is critical in meeting the workforce needs of Tinian and conforms to the policies, purpose, and mission of the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board.

(r) “Training Assistance Program:” The scholarship program for educational financial aid for government employees in attending a short-term job-related training program, which may include non-degree certification programs and on-line courses, in a field of study prioritized for funding by the Board, and which is related to the professional development or improvement of the applicant’s performance in such government employment.
§ 170-20.5-110 Funding for the Municipal Scholarship Fund

Funds for the Municipal Scholarship Fund are made available from the following sources:

(a) Gambling revenue taxes appropriated under the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Act of 1989 for the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Fund Program.

(b) Proceeds from the sale of slaughter permits collected pursuant to 10 CMC § 2115, Tinian Cattle Act, and deposited into the Tinian Scholarship Fund/Slaughter Fees Account.

(c) Private donations to the Municipal Scholarship Fund.

(d) Bequest to the Municipal Scholarship Fund.

(e) Funds collected through fundraising activities of the Board.

(f) Other sources as provided by law.


Commission Comment: The Commission inserted a period at the end of subsection (e) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(g).

§ 170-20.5-115 Policy of the Municipal Scholarship Fund Regarding Educational Financial Assistance Awards

It is the policy of the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board that all financial assistance awarded to a recipient from the Municipal Scholarship Fund under any of its programs are to be repaid upon completion or termination of such assistance unless the recipient returns to Tinian within six months of such completion or termination to accept employment for the same length of time that recipient received such assistance, or elects to repay all funds instead of returning to Tinian within said period to accept such employment for the requisite length of time stated herein.


Commission Comment: The Commission struck the figure “6” pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(e).

§ 170-20.5-120 General Eligibility Criteria for All Municipal Scholarship Fund Assistance
In order for an applicant to be eligible for educational financial assistance from the Municipal Scholarship Fund under any of its programs, the applicant must be:

(a) A permanent resident of the Municipality of Tinian, as defined by these regulations. A person who resides on Tinian for the sole purpose of employment or education shall not be considered a permanent resident. Residency may be proven by the following:
   (1) A physical presence on Tinian for at least two years prior to the application date;
   (2) Maintenance of a physical address on Tinian for the requisite period; and
   (3) Registered to vote in the Second Senatorial District, unless the person is under the age of eighteen.

(b) Must demonstrate a financial need for such scholarship assistance. In the case of an applicant attending college, university, or online towards a degree, financial need may be evidenced by a completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In other cases, such as the Trade School/Vocational/Certification Program or the Training Assistance Program, financial need may be evidenced by an applicant’s financial statement which shall reflect the applicant’s income and cost of attendance.

(c) Must be willing to return to Tinian upon completion or termination of studies as evidenced by an executed agreement to return to Tinian within six (6) months of completion or termination of studies to accept employment on Tinian for the same length of time as educational assistance awarded or agree to repay all assistance received in the event that recipient does not return to Tinian.

(d) Must be pursuing a field of study prioritized and approved by Board.

(e) Must be accepted and enrolled full-time in an accredited institution as defined herein. Applicant must also submit proof indicating such accreditation when requested by the Board.

(f) Must maintain at least a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.25. A student whose term grade point average is less than 2.25 will be placed on scholarship assistance probation status (probation) for the subsequent term. A student placed on probation must receive at least a minimum term grade point average of at least 2.25 in order to continue receiving scholarship assistance. A student whose cumulative grade point average is below 2.25 will be placed on scholarship assistance suspension and will not receive scholarship assistance until the cumulative grade point average is at least a 2.25.


Commission Comment: The Commission struck the figure “6” from subsection (c) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(e).

§ 170-20.5-125 Additional Eligibility Requirements for the Degree Scholarship Program

In addition to the general eligibility requirements stated in section 170-20.5-120, an applicant for the assistance under the Degree Scholarship Program must also meet the following requirements:
(a) Be pursuing a degree in a field of study approved by Board and included in the prioritized field of study as established by the Board.

(b) Have and maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.25 on a scale of 4.0.

(c) Execute an agreement to return to Tinian within six months of completion or termination of studies and accept employment on Tinian for the same amount of time as educational assistance awarded or to repay all assistance awarded in the event that applicant does not return to Tinian and accepts such employment for said period.


Commission Comment: The Commission substituted section numbers pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(d). The Commission struck the figure “6” from subsection (c) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(e). The Commission corrected the capitalization of the words “general eligibility requirements” in the initial paragraph pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(f).

§ 170-20.5-130 Documents Required for the Degree Scholarship Program

(a) Official high school transcript.

(b) Letter of acceptance from accredited college or university; such letter shall include the area of study the applicant will be pursuing. If an applicant has been attending an institution before applying for assistance from the Board, the applicant may submit proof of attendance, schedule of classes and transcript from the institution in lieu of a letter of acceptance.

(c) Proof of residency for the two years before the date of application, as required by section 170-20.5-120(a), such as CNMI voter registration, or other documents deemed acceptable by the Board to establish residency.

(d) Copy of institution’s cost of attendance.

(e) Proof of need for educational financial assistance; such proofs shall include an income and expense statement of applicant.

(f) Financial statement of applicant. If the applicant is under the age of 20 years, claimed as a dependent on his/her parent(s) income tax return, or living with his or her parents, applicant shall submit financial statement of parent(s).

(g) Executed agreement in accordance with section 170-20.5-125(c) above.


Commission Comment: The Commission substituted section numbers pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(d). The Commission corrected the capitalization of the words “voter registration” in subsection (c), “institution’s cost of attendance” in subsection (d), and “income and expense statement” in subsection (e) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(f). The Commission inserted a comma after the word “classes” in subsection (b) and a period at the end of subsection (d) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(g).
§ 170-20.5-135 Procedure for the Review of Degree Scholarship Applications

(a) Applications for educational financial assistance from the Municipal Scholarship Fund shall be submitted on the prescribed application form. Any fraudulent information given or misrepresentation shall render the entire application void and legal actions may be taken to recover such funds given based on such fraudulent information or misrepresentation.

(b)(1) Applications for scholarships under the Degree Scholarship Program must be postmarked or received by the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Office no later than July 31st for the award period beginning in the fall semester/quarter and supporting documents must be postmarked or received no later than August 15th.

(2) New applications for scholarships under the Degree Scholarship Program beginning in spring semester and winter/spring quarters must be postmarked or received by the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Office no later than December 15th for the award period beginning in the spring semester or winter/spring quarters and supporting documents must be postmarked or received no later than December 31st.

(3) For continuing students (students who were awarded beginning in fall semester/quarter), all documents required in order to continue receiving assistance, such as transcripts, schedule of classes and executed agreement, must be postmarked or received by the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board no later than December 31st.

(4) Incomplete applications will not be reviewed or processed by the Board. It is the obligation of the applicant to ensure completeness of the application submitted or documents required.

(c) The Board shall review within 30 days all applications for the Degree Scholarship Program received by the deadline and promptly inform each applicant of the status of such application.

(d) Scholarship awards shall be made no later than September 30 of each year unless such funds are unavailable due to budgetary constraints.


Commission Comment: The paragraphs of subsection (b) were undesignated in the original regulation. The Commission designated them as subsections (b)(1) through (b)(4) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(a). The Commission corrected the capitalization of the words “fall semester/quarter” in subsections (b)(1) and (b)(3) and “spring semester” and “winter/spring quarters” in subsection (b)(2) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(f).

§ 170-20.5-140 Terms and Conditions of Award and Continued Assistance under the Scholarship Program

A recipient of an educational financial assistance under the Degree Scholarship Program must fulfill the following terms and conditions of award:

(a) Must be enrolled full-time in a course of study approved by the Municipal Scholarship
Board.

(b) Must be enrolled in an accredited college or institution that is recognized and accredited by an accrediting body in the country where the institution of higher learning is located. Applicant must submit an acceptance/enrollment letter, and accreditation information if required by the Board.

(c) Must maintain at least a cumulative grade point average of 2.25 on a scale of 4.0.

(d) Must not be under academic probation or suspension by the institution.

(e) Must execute a contract to agree to return to Tinian within six months of completion of studies and accept employment on Tinian for the same amount of time as educational assistance received or to repay all assistance received in the event that applicant does not return to Tinian and accepts such employment for said period.

(f) Must not be receiving assistance in excess of one year beyond the expected completion period as determined by the institution in accordance with its program description and requirements, i.e. expected date of graduation.


§ 170-20.5-145 Additional Eligibility Requirements for the Trade School/Vocational/Certification Assistance Program

In addition to the General Eligibility Criteria stated in section 170-20.5-120, an applicant for the assistance under the Trade School/Vocational/Certification Assistance Program must also submit the following documents:

(a) Proof of financial assistance need.

(b) Acceptance letter (or other documentation) from the institution/program indicating that the applicant has been accepted into the program applied for and the completion period for such training.

(c) Documentation relating to the description of the training, costs involved, approval from supervisor to attend such training (if employed), and other documentation as may be required by the Board in order to establish legitimacy of such training.


Commission Comment: The Commission substituted section numbers pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(d). The Commission corrected the capitalization of the words “general eligibility criteria” in the initial paragraph pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(f).

§ 170-20.5-150 Procedure for the Review of Trade/Vocational School/Certification
Assistance Applications

(a) Applications for the trade/vocational school/certification assistance program shall be submitted on the prescribed application form approved by the Board.

(b) Completed applications and supporting documents for the trade/vocational school/certification assistance program shall be postmarked or received by the Municipal Scholarship Board no later than sixty days from the commencement of said program. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed or processed by the Board. It is the obligation of the applicant to ensure completeness of the application submitted.

(c) The Board shall review all applications for the trade/vocational school/certification program within thirty days from receipt of said application and shall inform applicant of said decision of the board no later than two weeks from receipt of said application.

(d) Any fraudulent information given or misrepresentation shall render the entire application void and legal actions may be taken to recover such funds given based on such fraudulent information or misrepresentation.


Commission Comment: The Commission struck the figures “60” from subsection (b) and “30” from subsection (c) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(e). The Commission corrected the capitalization of the words “trade/vocational school/certification” in subsections (a), (b), and (c) and “program” in subsection (c) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(f).

§ 170-20.5-155 Additional Eligibility Requirements for the Training Assistance Program

In addition to the general eligibility criteria stated in section 170-20.5-120, an applicant for the assistance under the training assistance program must also:

(a) Be employed in the government in the field that training is being sought.

(b) Submit proof of financial assistance need.

(c) Submit documentation relating to the description of the training, costs involved, approval from supervisor to attend such training, justification from supervisor that such training is essential to applicant’s current government position, and other documentation as may be required by the Board in order to establish legitimacy of such training.


Commission Comment: The Commission substituted section numbers pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(d). The Commission corrected the capitalization of the words “general eligibility criteria” and “training assistance program” in the initial paragraph pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(f). The Commission inserted a comma after the word “position” in subsection (c) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(g).
§ 170-20.5-160 Procedure for the Review of Training Assistance Applications

(a) Applications for the training assistance program shall be submitted on the prescribed application form approved by the Board.

(b) Completed applications and supporting documents for the training assistance program shall be postmarked or received by the Municipal Scholarship Board no later than thirty days from the commencement of said program. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed or processed by the Board and shall be returned to applicant along with explanations of the deficiencies of such application. It is the obligation of the applicant to ensure completeness of the application submitted.

(c) The Board shall review all applications for the training assistance program within one week from receipt of said application and shall inform applicant of said decision of the board no later than two weeks from receipt of said application.

(d) Any fraudulent information given or misrepresentation shall render the entire application void and legal actions may be taken to recover such funds given based on such fraudulent information or misrepresentation.


Commission Comment: The Commission struck the figure “30” from subsection (b) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(e). The Commission corrected the capitalization of the words “training assistance program” in subsection (c) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(f).

§ 170-20.5-165 Repayment

(a) In accordance with the policy herein stated in section 170-20.5-115, all financial assistance awarded to a recipient from the Municipal Scholarship Fund under any of its programs are to be repaid upon completion or termination of the program for which financial assistance was being received unless:

(1) The recipient returns to Tinian within six months of such completion or termination to accept employment for the same length of time that recipient received such assistance, but not to exceed a maximum period of five years, or

(1) Elects to repay all funds instead of returning to Tinian within said period to accept such employment for the requisite length of time stated herein.

(b) Any recipient who willfully fails to complete a program for which recipient received financial assistance shall be required to repay all moneys received in accordance with the terms and conditions herein stated in this section unless recipient re-enrolls within one year of such termination.

(c) Any recipient, who willfully fails to return to Tinian within six months of completion or termination of the program for which financial assistance was awarded and willfully refuses to accept employment on Tinian, shall be liable for the entire amount of assistance awarded to be
payable in such terms and conditions as shall ensure that all financial assistance received is paid off within a period not to exceed five years from the completion or termination date and based on installment amounts as per the repayment schedule approved by the Board.

(d) In lieu of returning to Tinian to accept employment, a recipient may agree to repay the entire amount of financial assistance awarded in accordance with such terms and conditions of repayment as agreed upon by recipient and the Board but such terms shall not exceed a maximum repayment period of five years, inclusive of all administrative costs, penalties, and interest accrued and statutorily authorized and in accordance with the repayment schedule as approved by the Board. The Board may also approve other terms and means of repayment of the assistance received based on the Municipality’s need for such services at a fair market value and as agreed upon by the Board and the recipient; however, such repayment shall not be more than fifty percent of the total amount of assistance received.

(e) In the event that recipient does not complete the required period of employment on Tinian, (i.e. to be employed on Tinian for the same length of time as recipient received assistance but not more than five years), recipient shall repay the total scholarship awarded less the prorated credit equivalent to twenty percent of the total award for every year worked and said balance shall be due immediately.

(f) If legal proceedings are taken to recover such moneys from a recipient, recipient shall pay all reasonable attorney’s fees and costs associated with such recovery of moneys from recipient.


Commission Comment: The Commission substituted section numbers pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(d). The Commission struck the figures “6” and “5” from subsection (a)(1), “6” and “5” from subsection (c), and “5” and “20%” from subsection (e) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(e). The Commission corrected the capitalization of the word “section” in subsection (b) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(f).

§ 170-20.5-170 Establishment of Priorities for Fields of Study

In order to establish priorities for the fields of study that the Board will fund, the Board shall:

(a) Within thirty days of the adoption of these regulations, the Board shall meet to determine the priorities of fields of study for which educational financial assistance will be made available. Beginning from two years after said initial establishment of priorities of fields of study, the Board shall meet in January of every odd-numbered year to set such priorities for fields of study that the Board will fund.

(b) In determining the priorities, the Board shall form a sub-committee which shall include, but is not limited to, governmental agencies, the Tinian leadership (comprising of the Mayor’s Office, Tinian Legislative Delegation, and the Municipal Council), various governmental departments, educational leaders and policy makers (such as school principals, Northern Marianas College staff, Tinian representatives to the CNMI State Board of Education and Board
of Regents), and private sector (including the Tinian Chamber of Commerce) to determine the workforce needs of the Tinian community.

(c) The Board shall consider the findings of such sub-committee and shall establish such priorities and determine how such priorities will be funded.

(d) Prior to its adoption, the Board shall publish such established priorities in the Commonwealth Register, in accordance with the CNMI Administrative Procedures Act, for public comment. The Board may also solicit community input through public hearings and other means.

(e) The Board shall establish the funding levels for each prioritized fields of study, either as a set funding level for each field or as a percentage of the total funds available for the Municipal Scholarship Fund Program.


Commission Comment: The Commission struck the figure “30” from subsection (a) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(e).

§ 170-20.5-175 Advertisement of Availability of Scholarships

The Board shall advertise the availability of scholarship funds to the Tinian community by advertising in anyone or a combination of the following methods:

(a) Posting announcement of such availability in prominent locations around the community.

(b) Issuance of a memorandum to all governmental offices.

(c) Providing a website or a link to a Tinian website.

(d) Posting advertisements in a local newspaper.


§ 170-20.5-180 Issuance of Annual Report

As required by the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Act, 10 CMC § 2201 et seq., the Board shall:

(a) Issue an annual report no later than January 31st of each calendar year to the following entities:
   (1) The Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan,
   (2) The Tinian Joint Legislative Delegation, and

(b) Such annual report shall include the following items:
   (1) The period of the report;
(2) Regulations and policies adopted by the Board;
(3) The amounts of funds for each of the programs and the sources of such funds;
(4) Educational priorities set by the Board for the period;
(5) An analysis of the total educational assistance funds expended in each of the priorities of study through the various assistance programs offered;
(6) A listing of all recipients of educational assistance funds from the Scholarship Fund and indicating the following:
   (i) The degree, certification, or training program being pursued by the recipient.
   (ii) The total length of time assistance was received.
   (iii) The institution attended by recipient.
   (iv) The employing governmental agency/department of the recipient, if applicable.
   (v) The length and location of the training.
   (vi) The total educational assistance funds received by each recipient.
   (6) Such other non-confidential information that the Board determines to be important or necessary for public dissemination.

(c) Such annual report shall be made available to the public through a website or by a public announcement of the availability of such report.


Commission Comment: The Commission corrected the capitalization of the word “report” in subsection (b)(1) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(f). The Commission corrected the period at the end of subsection (b)(5) to a semicolon pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(g).

§ 170-20.5-185 Appeal

(a) An action of the Board may be appealed in writing and received by the Chairman of the Board within thirty days from the final action of the Board.

(b) Such appeal shall be heard and decided in accordance with applicable CNMI law and the CNMI Administrative Procedure Act (1 CMC § 9101 et seq.).


Commission Comment: The Commission corrected the spelling of the word “Procedure” in subsection (b) pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(g).