



**GRAND RONDE HOUSING DEPARTMENT**

28450 Tyee Road – Grand Ronde, Oregon 97347 – (503)879-2401 – Fax (503)879-5973 [www.grtha.org](http://www.grtha.org)

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**GRAND RONDE HOUSING DEPARTMENT**  
Student Rental Assistance Program Policy

**2020-2021 EDITION**

**Section 1: INTRODUCTION**

- A. General Purpose. To support low-income Tribal members attending post-secondary educational institutions by providing a rental stipend to assist them with their rental housing costs.
- B. Application of Policy. This policy is designed to serve as a manual for the Grand Ronde Housing Department (GRHD) staff to use in determining eligibility and compliance with program participation regulations.

**Section 2: TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- A. Confidentiality. GRHD staff will respect Applicants/Students by keeping all information about them in the strictest confidence and will not share information without consent.
- B. Annual Review. GRHD staff will bring this policy before the General Manager/Chief of Staff on an annual basis (generally by the end of August of each year) for review.
- C. Funding and Limitations. Student participation in the program is subject to funding availability. See Addendum for information on maximum time limits.
- D. Days. All references to days within this policy shall refer to calendar days.
- E. Submission of Required Documentation. Any documentation required by this policy may be submitted to GRHD either electronically or by hard copy (i.e., email, fax, postal service or personal delivery). GRHD recommends and prefers electronic submission of documents as opposed to postal service, to expedite processing. All documents (regardless of how a document is submitted) must be complete upon submission including any/all required signatures.

### Section 3: APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- A. Application. Students must complete and submit to GRHD a Student Rental Assistance Program Application (Exhibit A). New applications must be received at least thirty (30) days prior to the first day of school.
- B. Required Documentation to be Submitted with Application.
  - 1. Authorization for Release of Information (Exhibit B).
  - 2. Income verification documentation. See Section 4. B. *Income Requirements*.
  - 3. Tribal enrollment verification.
  - 4. Verification of enrollment in post-secondary institution (if already enrolled).
  - 5. Information necessary to demonstrate compliance with Livability Standards.
- C. Applications Received-Reviewed. Following receipt of the application, GRHD will confirm the eligibility of the applicant as set forth below.
- D. Timing of Submission. If the student is already renting a unit or is prepared to rent a unit, he/she should submit a completed Livability Standards form with required photos (see Section 5. B. below) and a copy of the signed rental agreement at the time of application so that unit eligibility can be determined in conjunction with applicant's eligibility. For school-provided on-campus housing, the applicant only needs to provide verification that they are living in the on-campus housing to meet the livability standards requirements. If the applicant is not at the point of renting a unit, the applicant may provide the livability standards information at a later date; however, no funds will be released until this material is received and reviewed by GRHD.

### Section 4: APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

- A. General Requirements.
  - 1. The student must be an enrolled member of the Grand Ronde Tribe.
  - 2. Any student receiving rental assistance through any other HUD-funded program is ineligible for GRHD's Student Rental Assistance Program.
    - a. *Exception*. Tribal member students who reside in family housing (Chxi Musum Illihi) (and are thus ineligible for HUD-funded Student Rental Assistance) may receive rental assistance from Tribal funds if the student is employed at least 20 hours a week.
  - 3. The student must not have any outstanding debts to GRHD, CTGR, or other public or Indian housing authority, and will not become eligible until such debts have been satisfied.
  - 4. The student must be within the allowable assistance timeframe (see Section 2-C above).
  - 5. The student must not have been previously terminated from this program due to non-compliance as described below (Section 8).

6. The student must be enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution within the United States with at least a half-time class load. Levels of enrollment, including half time, are defined in Section 6.B.1. A post-secondary educational institution is:
  - a. *Accredited Institutions.* Any institution that is accredited by one of the national or regional accrediting associations listed below and accepts Federal Student Aid (Title IV funding). Attending an Overseas school still must be done through one of these accredited institutions.
    - (1) American Medical Association, AMA (all medical students) <http://www.amaassn.org/>
    - (2) American Bar Association, ABA (all law students) <http://www.abanet.org/>
    - (3) Higher Learning Commission of Colleges and Schools, HLC (Formerly the North Central Association) <http://www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org/>
    - (4) Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, MSA <http://www.middlestates.org/>
    - (5) New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.-Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, NEASC-CIHE <http://www.neasc.org/>
    - (6) New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.-Commission on Technical and Career Institutions, NEASC-CTCI <http://www.neasc.org/ctci/ctci.htm>
    - (7) Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, NCCU (formerly Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges) <http://www.nwccu.org/>
    - (8) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/Commission on Colleges, SACS-CC <http://www.sacs.org/>
    - (9) Western Association of Schools and Colleges/Accrediting Commission, WASC <http://www.wascweb.org/>
  - b. *Other Institutions.* Proprietary institutions that do not meet the above criteria may be reviewed for consideration with a letter of explanation from the student. The appeal letter must express why there is no other institution they can attend that offers a similar program of study that is accredited by one of the above mentioned accrediting associations. Students must also provide verification of the institution's accrediting agency and the estimated school cost (tuition/fees & books/supplies) from the Financial Aid Office. Proprietary institutions will not automatically be eligible for funding.

B. Income Requirements. The student's household<sup>1</sup> income during attendance must be at or below 80% of the median income for the county or city in which the student resides (whichever is greater). GRHD uses HUD's annual income limits publication issued by the Office of Native American Programs to verify median income limits for areas throughout the United States. This document, *Income Limits under the Native American Housing*

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this policy, household member means: (i) first and second degree relations (mother, father, daughter, son, full sister, full brother, half sister, half brother, grandmother, grandfather, granddaughter, grandson, aunt, uncle, niece and nephew); (ii) equivalent who are related by marriage, domestic partnership or adoption; or (iii) people who are either married to each other or involved in a quasi-spousal relationship including unmarried parents of a child.

*Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996*, is published annually and is hereby incorporated into this Policy. Unless another income verification method is agreed to in writing by GRHD, GRHD shall use the information presented in the verified Student Aid Report (SAR) as part of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) process.

C. Alternate Eligibility (Tribally Funded)

1. Students between the ages of 18 and 23, who have answered "No" to all questions #45 thru 56 on the FAFSA SAR are "Dependent" by FAFSA and are therefore subject to scrutiny of their parent's income for determining income eligibility for federal grants.
2. For those students whose parent's income exceed the HUD income guidelines for eligibility, and therefore exclude the student from use of the GRTHA Student Rental Assistance Program, tribal funds may be used to assist those students (who otherwise would be eligible under all other guidelines of the SRA program) with their rent.
3. Students in the tribal funding pool will be subject to all the established rules of the Student Rental Assistance program.
4. If a student become eligible for HUD funding, GRHD staff will move them out of the Tribal funded program.

D. Acceptance Requirement. Student must be accepted for enrollment by a post-secondary institution and scheduled to start classes within six (6) months of the date the application is received. After six (6) months, the student will need to reapply.

D. Eligible Students. If approved, the student will need to demonstrate compliance with the Unit Eligibility requirements in Section 5, below.

E. Application Deadline. Students must submit a completed application packet to GRHD at least thirty (30) days before the beginning of the term/semester for which the student plans to attend and for which he/she wishes to receive rental assistance.

### **Section 5: UNIT ELIGIBILITY**

Following GRHD's receipt of the signed Livability Standards form, Rental Agreement and photos as requested, GRHD staff will confirm unit eligibility as set forth below.

A. General Requirements.

1. Students may not rent a unit from any family member.<sup>2</sup> This does not exclude students from co-renting a unit with a family member from a non-family member landlord, other than as noted in 5.A.2 below.
2. Students may not be residing with anyone who can declare them as a dependent on their federal income taxes.
3. The unit must be the student's primary residence while attending school.
4. The unit must be located in the United States (even if the student is temporarily abroad as part of an academic program).

B. Livability Standards.

1. *On-Campus Housing.* On-Campus Housing will be presumed to meet livability standards because it is GRHD's understanding that post-secondary institutions monitor the livability of their units. GRHD will not require photos of on campus units.
2. *Off-Campus Housing.* GRHD will use the Livability Standards form (Exhibit C) to confirm the livability of off-campus housing. Photos will be used to verify that the unit complies with the Livability Standards. Only developed or digital photos will be accepted.

C. Rental Agreement. The student must provide a rental agreement that lists the landlord, landlord's contact information, the rent amount, unit address, the rental period, the names of everyone living in the unit, signatures of all parties to the rental agreement, and any other general terms.

D. Unit Eligibility Issues. If there is an issue with the unit (such as a moldy bathroom or an inadequate rental agreement) GRHD will notify the student and work with him/her to resolve the issue. If the issue remains unresolved, the stipend will not be granted.

## Section 6: STIPEND

A. Stipends. Students will receive a stipend for months that they attend school. See Section 6. D below for treatment of breaks in schooling.

B. Stipend Amount. The student's level of enrollment as determined below (not necessarily the number of classes) determines the student's stipend amount.

1. *Credit Hours.* Students must meet the following minimum academic requirements:
  - a. Full Time – Students must earn twelve (12) credit hours for undergraduate students and 9 credit hours for graduate students, or meet full time status per college or university standard.
  - b. Part Time/Half Time – Students must earn at least six (6) credit hours.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this policy, family member means: (i) first and second degree relations (mother, father, daughter, son, full sister, full brother, half sister, half brother, grandmother, grandfather, granddaughter, grandson, aunt, uncle, niece and nephew);(ii) equivalent who are related by marriage, domestic partnership or adoption; or (iii) people who are either married to each other or involved in a quasi-spousal relationship including unmarried parents of a child.

- c. Other Measurements – Students attending a post-secondary institution that does not use credit hours or defines enrollment differently than set forth above will need to provide GRHD with the institution’s definition for enrollment and if applicable the institutions definition of unit/credit.
  - 2. *Stipend Amount*<sup>3</sup>
    - a. Half Time - \$250 per month (maximum).
    - b. Full Time - \$500 per month (maximum).
  - 3. *Excess of Rental Amount.* The stipend amount will not exceed the student’s proportionate share of the monthly rental amount for the unit.
- C. Payment of Stipend.
  - 1. Upon receipt of the signed Student Rental Assistance Acceptance Agreement (Exhibit D), GRHD will pay the stipend for the entire term.
    - a.
  - 2. For students participating in the SRA Program and living in GRHD housing, GRHD may deduct the monthly rent, and any associated utility or repair charges, due to GRHD from the student from the stipend. Any remaining stipend funds will be issued o the student.
  - 3. The first rental assistance stipend payment will be prorated. The proration will be paid based on the first day of class and will be calculated based on a thirty (30) day month.
  - 4. If completed documentation for the application is not received until after the first day of class, the proration will be based on date the final documents were received by GRHD, unless the student can demonstrate that the delay was caused solely by the school’s administrative processes.
  - 5. All subsequent stipend payments will be processed approximately one (1) week before the beginning of the following month to assure rent can be paid timely.
  - 6. If the payment is not received, the student should contact GRHD staff.
- D. Breaks in Schooling.
  - 1. If a student does not take a break between terms (such as summer break) they will be continuously assisted.
  - 2. If the student is on a break longer than six (6) weeks (such as summer break), the stipend will not be provided during the break.
  - 3. The first payment of the next enrolled term will be prorated as noted above (Section 6.C.3).
  - 4. Students must keep GRHD apprised of current contact information, including mailing address, while enrolled and during any breaks in schooling.

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<sup>3</sup> Effective for Fall term 2016.

## Section 7: PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

### A. Each Term.

1. *Enrollment.* Prior to the beginning of each term, the student must provide GRHD with enrollment verification, such as a copy of his/her enrollment form or class schedule. Enrollment verification must include the student's name, the name of the school, the date the term begins and ends as well as the number of credits the student is taking. If this information is not provided prior to the term, stipends will be prorated as set forth in Section 8.A.1.a. below.
2. *Grades.*
  - a. At the end of each term, the student must provide GRHD with documentation from the institution of his/her grades such as a transcript, grade report, progress report or equivalent.
  - b. The student must maintain passing grades each term with at least a 2.50 GPA, or equivalent, to remain eligible. If student does not maintain at least a 2.50 GPA or equivalent, see Section 8-C below.
  - c. If the student is involved in a grade dispute, he/she must still provide GRHD with documentation of initial grades. However, if the grade disputed has caused a GPA of less than 2.50, the student will be put on probation in accordance with Section 8-H below until the dispute is resolved and updated grades have been provided to GRHD.

- ### B. Recertification. In January of each year, the federal government begins accepting applications for financial aid. For each academic year, GRHD requires that students receiving funds submit the required FAFSA documentation and supply GRHD with the updated SAR.

### C. Changes While Receiving Assistance.

1. *Change in Level of Enrollment.* Students must notify GRHD within ten (10) days of any change in level of enrollment.
2. *Moving.*
  - a. Students that desire to move from an approved unit must receive approval from GRHD prior to the move if they wish to receive continuing assistance.
  - b. If a student chooses to move, it must be in accordance with the terms of their rental agreement. In addition:
    - (1) The student must inform GRHD of their plan to move and provide new unit eligibility documentation. The student may do so by email to [sra@grandronde.org](mailto:sra@grandronde.org).
    - (2) The student must provide GRHD with the Livability Standards form for the new unit as well as photographs (for off-campus housing).
    - (3) Upon receipt, GRHD may contact the current landlord to verify participant's compliance with rental agreement.
      - (a) If the student is found to have violated the rental agreement, see Section 8.H below.

- (b) If the student is found to have complied with the rental agreement, GRHD will confirm Unit Eligibility for prospective unit pursuant to Section 5 above.
  - (4) If prospective unit has unit eligibility issues, proceed in accordance with Section 5.D above.
3. *Change in Unit Resident Composition or Rental Agreement.* Students must notify GRHD within thirty (30) days of any change of the permanent residents living in the unit. Further, if there are any changes or amendments to the rental agreement a copy of the amendment or new rental agreement must be provided to GRHD within thirty (30) days of signing. If student fails to provide timely updates, it may impact his/her eligibility or stipend amount and the stipend may be terminated, suspended or prorated accordingly.

### **Section 8: NON-COMPLIANCE**

#### **A. Failure to Provide Documentation.**

##### **1. Term.**

a. Enrollment. The student will not receive assistance for a term until enrollment verification is received and processed by GRHD. If the documentation is not received prior to the beginning of term, stipends will be prorated to begin on the day GRHD received the documents.

##### **b. Grades.**

i. Students will be allowed one (1) month from the end of term to provide required documentation. Following the one (1) month period, the stipend amount will be suspended until documentation is received by GRHD and will be prorated from date of receipt.

ii. Should a student fail to provide the required documentation and student does not request a stipend for an upcoming term, the student will be required to payback any/all stipends received for that term.

2. *Recertification.* If the completed FAFSA documentation is not received prior to the recertification deadline, GRHD will send a reminder letter to the student and suspend stipend payments pending the receipt and processing of documentation. The stipend will be prorated upon the date of receipt of the annual documentation.

3. *Student Rental Assistance Acceptance Agreement.* If GRHD requires the student to sign a Student Rental Assistance Acceptance Agreement, the student must return the executed agreement within ten (10) days or the stipend will be suspended until the agreement is received by GRHD and will be prorated from the date of receipt.

#### **B. Change in Level of Enrollment.**

1. Students who do not notify GRHD of changes in level of enrollment within ten (10) days pursuant to Section 7.C.1 above will be required to repay the portion of the stipend that was provided in excess to the actual level of enrollment for that term.



- a. *Example.* If a student drops a class that results in a change from Full Time (\$500 max monthly stipend) to Half Time (\$250 max monthly stipend), and the student does not notify GRHD, the student will need to repay the amount of the difference in monthly stipends (to a maximum of \$250), for each month the incorrect stipend was provided due to the student's failure to timely notify GRHD.
    - b. *Example.* If a student in the situation above notifies GRHD within ten (10) days of the change in enrollment, the student's stipend will be modified the following month, and the student will not be required to repay any portion of the prior months' stipend.
  2. If the change in level of enrollment results in the student being ineligible for the stipend due to less than Half Time enrollment or results in a GPA of less than 2.50, the student will be put on probation pursuant to Section .-H below.
  3. This section does not apply to students enrolled in practicum or internship classes which frequently extend over a series of terms.
- C. Inadequate GPA. If a transcript/progress report shows a term GPA below 2.50, the student will be put on probation pursuant to Section 8.H below.
- D. Failure to Complete Term. Students that do not complete a term, or fall short of completed credits necessary to maintain their level of enrollment for the term, but are enrolled for the following term, will be put on probation pursuant to Section 8-H below. Students who do not complete a term, or fall short of the necessary credits to maintain their level of enrollment, and are not enrolled for the following term, are required to repay the entire amount of the stipend for that incomplete term.
- E. Drop-out of School.
1. Students that drop out and do not return the following term will be required to pay back the stipend paid to them for the term they did not complete, unless they can prove a hardship. The GRHD Department Manager will review all hardship requests.
  2. The student may reapply for Student Rental Assistance and the stipend may be reinstated after the student has demonstrated to GRHD compliance by completing one term in which the student has been self-sufficient, maintained a GPA of 2.50 or greater and is otherwise in compliance with the terms of this program.
- F. Unapproved Move (Failure to Provide Required Documents). If a student moves without following the process noted above (Section 7.C.2), his/her rental assistance stipend will be suspended, and he/ she may be required to pay back funds sent for the time he/she was not living in an approved rental unit.
1. If after review by GRHD the unit is found eligible, the stipend will be reinstated and prorated from the date eligibility was determined.
  2. If after review by GRHD the unit is found ineligible (see Section 5.D above), the stipend will be terminated and the student will be required to pay back any and all stipends received for the time the student was in non-compliance.

3. If a student does not notify GRHD, by email, of a move prior to the move, the student will lose one (1) month's rental assistance.
- G. Eviction. If a student is evicted, the rental assistance stipend will be terminated.
- H. Probation.
1. A student who is granted probation will have one (1) term to bring himself/herself into compliance. During the probationary term, the stipend will be provided. The Department Manager may grant probation for any violation of this policy during the grievance process, unless the student is already on probation.
  2. If during the probationary term the student has complied with the terms of this policy he/she will continue receiving the stipend and be removed from probation.
  3. If following the probationary term the student is still in non-compliance the rental assistance stipend will be terminated. The student may reapply for Student Rental Assistance and the stipend may be reinstated after the student has demonstrated to GRHD compliance by completing one (1) term in which the student has, without financial assistance from GRHD, maintained a GPA of 2.50 or greater and is otherwise in compliance with the terms of this program.
  4. If the GPA for the probationary term is .0 or equivalent, the student will be required to repay any and all stipends from the probationary term.
  5. If the student was put on probation for failing to complete a term, and they were enrolled in the next term and on probation pursuant to Section 8.D above, and they fail to complete the probationary term, the student will be required to repay any and all stipends from the first non-completed term and the non-completed probationary term.
- I. Repayment. Students that need to repay any stipend amount have the following options:
1. Draw from future stipend payments, if applicable.
  2. Pay the debt in full.
  3. Enter into a repayment plan with GRHD. If a student fails to comply with the terms of a repayment plan, GRHD will draw from future stipends until the balance is paid.
  4. Any unpaid and outstanding amounts will be considered debts to GRHD and will be processed in accordance with CTGR's Tribal Debt Collection Ordinance (which may affect the student's receipt of his/her per capita payments).
- J. Computation of Dates for Required Timelines. Several provisions of this Policy require action be taken within a certain deadline. Compliance with deadlines for the submission of documents will be calculated using the post-mark for traditionally mailed items, and the electronic date-stamp for electronically transmitted materials.

### Section 9: INCOME ABOVE MAXIMUM ALLOWED AMOUNT

Students whose stipend is suspended for exceeding the maximum allowable income upon an annual recertification may reapply for Student Rental Assistance if circumstances change and he/she regains eligibility.

### Section 10: GRIEVANCE

Applicant Rights to Appeal. An applicant/recipient who may be aggrieved by a decision of GRHD may request an informal grievance hearing in accordance with the Grievance Board's policy.

Requests should be addressed to the GRHD Department Manager and be mailed or hand delivered to the following address:

Grand Ronde Housing Department  
28450 Tyee Road  
Grand Ronde, OR 97347

### Section 11: FRAUD

- A. Students who submit fraudulent grade reports or other fraudulent information will be required to repay all funding disbursed for the fraudulent grading period, as well as any other grading period funded thereafter.
- B. Students who submit fraudulent grade reports will be ineligible for future GRHD Student Rental Assistance funding for **five (5) years** after the debt is resolved.
- C. Students may also be prevented from accessing other GRHD Programs after the debt is resolved.
- D. After students are again eligible to access the Student Rental Assistance Programs they will be required to submit **official transcripts** at the conclusion of each term in order to continue to receive funding.

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Signed and approved:



Name: Dave Fullerton

Title: General Manager

Date: 8.3.20

## Exhibits

- A. Application
- B. Authorization for Release of Information
- C. Livability Standards
- D. Student Rental Assistance Acceptance Agreement

### **Addendum - Maximum Time Limits Based on Education Department Policy**

1. Students who maintain the program academic requirements are eligible for funding up to the program maximum time limits as follows:
  - a. Vocational/Technical College/Institute or Community College - maximum of six (6) cumulative quarters (terms) or four (4) cumulative semesters.
  - b. College or University – maximum of twelve (12) cumulative quarters (terms) or eight (8) cumulative semesters.
  - c. Graduate School – maximum of six (6) cumulative quarters (terms) or four (4) cumulative semesters.
2. Students who are not able to complete their degree within the program maximum limit can submit a request to the GRHD Department Manager for an extension of funding. The request should include a copy of a degree evaluation that clearly shows how many credits and terms/semesters of funding are needed to complete the degree. The maximum length for an approved extension is 3 terms or 2 semesters. Students may only receive one extension of funding.
3. A recipient who has utilized the Full Time College Program funding to obtain a Vocational Degree or Certificate, Associate, Bachelor, or Graduate degree is not eligible to reapply for funding for a second degree of the same level except under the following circumstances or at the discretion of GRHD.
  - a. Forced career change due to company layoffs or closures.
  - b. Injury requiring a career change
  - c. Disability requiring a career change.
  - d. Second degree applicants will only be considered after first degree applicants have been funded.
4. A student who has received a certificate or two year Associate degree can access the Full Time College Program for additional funding towards a Bachelor Degree. Students who have received a Bachelor Degree can access the Full Time College Program for additional funding towards a Graduate Degree. No recipient may receive assistance for more than a total of seven years, which may be non-consecutive.