Optometry Grant Loan Program
~ Administrative Policies and Procedures ~

Governing Language

2012 Act of the Assembly, Chapter 3, Item 144

d. Out of this appropriation, $20,000 the second year from the general fund is designated to provide grants of up to $5,000 per year for Virginia students who attend schools and colleges of optometry. Each student receiving a grant shall agree to set up practice in the Commonwealth for a period of not less than two years upon completion of instruction.

Approved schools

Colleges and universities fully accredited by the American Optometric Association, Accreditation Council on Optometric Education and located within the continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii.

As of March 2013, these institutions include the following: http://www.aoa.org/x12702.xml

- Ferris State University Michigan College of Optometry
- Illinois College of Optometry
- Indiana University School of Optometry
- New England College of Optometry
- Northeastern State University College of Optometry
- NOVA Southeastern University College of Optometry
- The Ohio State University College of Optometry
- Pacific University College of Optometry
- Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University
- Southern California College of Optometry
- Southern College of Optometry
- State University of New York State College of Optometry
- University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry
- University of California, Berkeley College of Optometry
- University of Houston College of Optometry
- University of Missouri, St. Louis College of Optometry

Approved programs

Only programs leading directly to a career in optometry, such as the Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) degree.

Student eligibility

The eligible student must:

- be a Virginia domicile for at least one full year,
- enroll full-time in an approved Optometry program at a qualified institution, and
- sign the Optometry Promissory Note.

Student application process

The applicant must submit a:

- completed Optometry Application,
- completed Optometry Grant Loan Promissory Note, and
- letter of acceptance to an approved Optometry program at an approved institution for the term the award is to be received.

Award amount

$5,000, unless otherwise authorized by law, awarded in a single disbursement.

Award reductions
The program award, when combined with other gift assistance, cannot exceed the student's financial need (annualized Cost of Attendance, as determined by the institution, less annualized gift assistance.)

Renewability
Renewal students must submit a:

- letter requesting renewal award,
- a completed Optometry Grant Loan Promissory Note, and
- verification of continued enrollment into an approved degree program.

Renewal students are prioritized if an application packet is submitted by June 1 prior to the academic year for which the award is sought.

Awards may be renewed for up to two years. A student may receive an award for no more than the number of years required to complete the degree program.

Process

1. The student submits the initial or renewal application packet to SCHEV.
2. SCHEV:
   a. Reviews the application and determines eligibility.
   b. Contacts institution to verify enrollment as of the end of the term's drop/add date,
   c. Disburses funds to the institution approximately four weeks into the term.
3. The institution applies the funds to the student's account.
4. Funds are first applied to institutional direct charges, such as tuition, fees, room and board.
5. Disbursements made by the institution to the student, if applicable, are subject to the institutional policy.

Student Withdrawal
If the student withdraws after the census date, the award will be fully refundable back to SCHEV.

Post Enrollment Process
Student repayment and work requirements are detailed within the Optometry Grant Loan Promissory Note.