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Adult Vocational Training (A.V.T.) Program Policies

Enrolled members of the Native Village of Kotzebue – Kotzebue I.R.A. (K.I.R.A.) currently residing in Kotzebue are eligible to apply for a grant to assist with the associated costs in attending an accredited vocational technical institution to gain the skills and training necessary to secure employment.

The K.I.R.A. Adult Vocational Training Program is dependent upon the annual Federal budget process. Thus, the amount of finances available for this program varies with appropriations made by the U.S. Congress.

The K. I.R.A. is not obligated to provide financial assistance for every applicant.

ELIGIBILITY

Per 25 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 27

- o The applicant must be a resident of Kotzebue for at least thirty-one (31) days previous to submission of an A.V.T. application.
- o The applicant must be at least eighteen (18) years of age or obtain guardian or parental authorization to apply for an A.V.T. grant.
- o The applicant must be unemployed, underemployed, or need training to obtain reasonable employment and intend to accept full-time employment upon completion of A.V.T. services.
- o The applicant must document financial need. The applicable federal rules and regulations provide the Education Coordinator with the authority to request and collect information necessary to document financial need. This includes but is not limited to: pay stubs and recent I.R.S. income tax reports.
- o The applicant must have a High School Diploma or G.E.D. or be in the process of earning one during the course of A.V.T.
- o The applicant must provide a copy of their Certificate of Indian Blood (C.I.B.), indicating at least one-quarter (☐) quantum Alaska Native or American Indian blood.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Step 1: The applicant must complete the application packet and submit all pertinent documents to the Education Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the completeness of the application packet and all pertinent documents.
- Step 2: The Education Coordinator will review all application packets and submit applicant information to the K.I.R.A. Education Committee.
- Step 3: The applicant will be notified, in writing, of approval or denial of their application. A copy of this letter will be retained in the applicant's file. Awards will be mailed certified return receipt to the Office of Financial Aid at the vocational institution where the student is enrolled.
- Step 4: Attendance records and progress reports shall be sent to the Education Coordinator for review during the course of recipient training.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All applications must be complete. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. All applications received less than ten (10) days time prior to the start of the program will be returned to the applicant unopened.

Applications may be submitted via facsimile less than ten days time prior to the start of the program, however original documents must be mailed. Late applications received less than ten days time prior to the start of the program will not be accepted. In certain instances, exceptions for late applications are accepted if the Education Coordinator is contacted before the deadline.

FIRST TIME APPLICANTS

Priority will be given to first time applicants per 25 (C.F.R.), Section 27.5 (e).

REPEAT APPLICANTS

Applications for repeat services will be placed on a lower priority than applications for initial services. Therefore, requests for repeat services will not be considered until applications for first time applicants have been served, per 25 C.F.R., Section 27.5 (e).

Length of apprenticeship or actual training in any field is limited to twenty-four (24) months for funding eligibility through the A.V.T. program. The exception to the aforementioned time frame applies to those applicants who partake in nurse training, and qualify for funding for thirty-six (36) months in actual classroom or practical work experience.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

All applicant files must contain the following documents:

- o Attendance records and progress reports from the vocational institution
- o Certification of discharge or release from active duty if applicant is a military service veteran DD-214
- o Completed A.V.T. application
- o Copy of Birth Certificate or other proof of identity
- o Financial Need Sheet signed by a financial aid officer at vocational institution
- o Letter of acceptance from vocational institution
- o Official transcript of school records or copy of High School Diploma or G.E.D.

- o Parental authorization if applicant is a minor and vocational training takes place out-of-state
- o Personal statement of future plans and goals
- o Records of all financial support provided to recipient from Employment Assistance (E.A.)
- o Two (2) letters of recommendation from individuals other than family members
- o Verification of basic eligibility for A.V.T. financial assistance
- o Verification of family status should applicant claim financial responsibility as head-of-household:
 - Copy of children's birth certificates
 - Copy of marriage license
 - Copy of most recent I.R.S. filed income tax forms
- o Any additional documentation pertinent to applicant's file

APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

All applicants must apply ten days prior to the beginning on the training program, to allow sufficient time for the applicant to fulfill all application requirements.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all documents are complete and submitted to the Education Coordinator at least ten days prior to the beginning of the training program.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to seek additional non-tribal funding from sources other than the K.I.R.A.

The applicant/recipient must comply with attendance/enrollment requirements, regulations, rules of their postsecondary educational institution, and satisfactorily complete all courses they choose to enroll.

EDUCATION COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Education Coordinator must be knowledgeable of all regulations pertaining to the Higher Education Program pursuant to 25 C.F.R., Section 27.

The Education Coordinator shall assist applicants in seeking additional sources of funding. This includes, but is not limited to: J.T.P.A., K.I.C., NANA, and others.

The Education Coordinator shall provide counseling and guidance for first time applicants when necessary.

The Education Coordinator will adhere to the annual A.V.T. program budget, dividing allocated monies in half, to allow for equal funding per six (6) month period.

The Education Coordinator shall apply all policies fairly with uniformity, approve or deny awards, and determine the amount of funding in accordance with the policies stated herein.

RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All recipients of A.V.T. awards will conduct themselves in a responsible manner while partaking in programs supported by A.V.T. funding. Should the recipient act or behave inappropriately, the following procedures will ensue.

- o A letter of reprimand will be sent from the Education Coordinator to a recipient upon each violation of poor attendance, inappropriate conduct, and/or unsatisfactory progress report. Financial assistance for the recipient will be relinquished upon three violations of poor attendance, inappropriate conduct, and/or unsatisfactory progress report violations. Recipients who are terminated will be classified as such should they choose to reapply for A.V.T. assistance.
- o Should alcohol or drug abuse interfere with training, the recipient will be given the opportunity to participate in a rehabilitation program.
- o The recipient may only receive financial assistance from one tribal entity. This means the recipient will be deemed ineligible to receive financial assistance from any other I.R.A. or Traditional Council should they receive financial assistance from the K.I.R.A.

VOCATIONAL INSTITUTION REQUIREMENTS

The following stipulate the requirements of a vocational institution.

- o A cooperative education course, with a combination of classroom theory with related practical job experience, is in place.
- o A vocational training course offered through and Indian Tribal government is in place. The aforementioned course need not be accredited, rather approved by the Area Director and demonstrate reasonable expectation of leading to employment.
- o The vocational institution is accredited by an authorized accrediting association.
- o The vocational institution is approved for training by an authorized state agency.
- o There is reasonable expectation of employment for graduates of the institution in their respective fields of training.

- o Training offered by a corporation or association, which has furnished such training to bona fide apprentices for at least one year preceding participation in this program; under the supervision of a state apprenticeship agency, state apprenticeship council, or the federal apprenticeship training services; or leads to an occupation which requires the use of skills that are usually learned through on-the-job training and employment which is based upon on-the-job training rather than upon such elements as length of service, normal turnover, personality, and other personal characteristics; or is identified expressively as apprenticeship training by the institution offering it.

GRIEVANCES

Each applicant has the right to dispute any decision made by the Education Committee or Education Coordinator.

The applicant must attempt to resolve the dispute by discussing the issue(s) with the Executive Director of the K.I.R.A. in person, in writing, or via teleconference. Should the dispute not be resolved, the applicant must request, in writing, a hearing before the K.I.R.A. Council.

The requested hearing shall take place at the next scheduled K.I.R.A. Council meeting. This hearing may be held in executive session at the request of the applicant, member(s) of the Council or any other relevant party. The decision rendered by the K.I.R.A. Council is final.