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# Education Policy Post-Secondary Program

*Education department*

The mission of the Abenaki Council of Odanak (ACO) consists in ensuring the representation of members of the Abenaki Community of Odanak and promoting the preservation of their identity, culture and quality of life.

To do so, the Council seeks to provide quality services for youth, elders and for the entire community, according to the Band's resources.

The Council is committed to transparency and equity in its decisions, while supporting individual and collective autonomy to ensure the Band's future.

*Revised in November 2022*

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## 1. OBJECTIVES SOUGHT BY THE ABENAKI COUNCIL OF ODANAK

- Promote, within the budget limits available and the established rules, the increase of the education level of Odanak Band members.
- Ensure that Odanak Band students receive the educational services to which they are entitled, while adopting measures that promote educational success and prevent school dropout.
- Promote educational assistance for students pursuing their studies on a continuous basis.
- Facilitate the return to school for adults, subject to available funds.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for financial assistance to post-secondary education, students must meet **all** the following criteria:

- Be a status member registered on the Odanak Band list\*;
- Be a resident of Canada, for at least one year (having resided in Canada for twelve consecutive months), from the date of receipt of the application for assistance. Proof of residency must be provided with the application;
- Be enrolled in a college or university program with the objective of obtaining a degree;
- File an application for assistance with the Department of Education. The application must be complete and compliant, and filed within the required timeline (**see Annex 1 for deadlines**) for each academic semester.

\*For students who obtain Indian status during the academic year, assistance will commence on the date of official registration on the Indian Register with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). Therefore, assistance is not retroactive to the date of status for allowances, book fees and tuition fees. It is essential that the application for assistance be completed during the current semester in order to receive financial assistance.

## 3. CHOICE OF AN EDUCATION INSTITUTION

To be eligible for financial assistance purposes, the institution must be public and recognized by the Quebec Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Education from another Canadian province, as applicable. Financial assistance for a private institution is accepted if the same or similar program is not available at a public institution. Students choosing a private institution for a program offered at a public institution shall cover the difference between the public and private institution fees.

## 4. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – FULL-TIME STUDENT

Financial assistance for students enrolled full-time includes:

- Tuition fees
  - Costs for books
  - Monthly living allowances
- Validation of full-time status is based on the educational institution's criteria.
  - Only courses included in the program of study are recognized to be considered full-time.

### *4.1 Tuition fees*

#### College

For students attending college in Québec, fees are reimbursed to students on presentation of supporting documents/original receipts.

For students attending college in a province other than Quebec, fees are transferred directly to the college for each semester. The officer in charge obtains the invoices from each college.

#### University

For all students, fees are transferred directly to the university for each semester. The officer in charge obtains the invoices from each university.

- Admission fees are reimbursed on presentation of supporting documents (maximum reimbursement for two admissions).

### *4.2 Costs for books*

A fixed amount for the purchase of books is paid to students for each semester eligible for financial assistance. The amount is determined by the Abenaki Council of Odanak (ACO) annually. If the cost for the mandatory books exceeds the allocated fixed amount, they will be reimbursed upon presentation of supporting documents (course outlines and payment receipts).

Mandatory books for courses included in a graduate program are reimbursed as follows:

- 4 courses or more: the fixed amount will be paid
- 3 courses or less: the reimbursement is paid upon presentation of supporting documents (course outline(s) and payment receipt(s)).

However, no amount is paid for the purchase of books during the thesis writing period for graduate programs.

Students whose record is not complete by the deadline will receive the amount for the purchase of books at the end of the semester's 2<sup>nd</sup> month or the following month if the delay persists.

### ***4.3 Living allowances***

The allowances granted to students as well as the terms of payment are determined annually by the ACO (see Annex 2 for the amounts and payment dates).

Funds permitting, living allowances are indexed to the cost of living as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year during the school attendance period. Allowances are transferred monthly to the student's bank account at the end of each month, for the month that the student attended school which just ended.

For students commencing their post-secondary programs in August or January, living allowances are calculated as follows:

- Less than 5 days (inclusive) of classes, an allowance of 25% is paid;
- Between 5 and 15 days (inclusive) of classes, an allowance of 75% is paid.
- Beyond 15 days of classes, the allowance is paid at 100%.

This last modality does not apply to full-time students who continue their studies during the summer (May, June, July, August).

If the last month of study of the school year or the last month of the completed program includes only 15 days of school or less, living allowances are paid at 25% if there are less than 5 days (inclusive) of classes, and 75% if there are between 5 and 15 days (inclusive) of classes. If there are more than 15 days of classes, the allowance is paid at 100%.

### ***4.4 Documents to be provided***

To qualify for financial assistance for the post-secondary program, you are responsible for meeting the documentary requirements which are divided into two main categories:

- First category of required documents: documents relating to the *application for assistance* (see Annex 3)
- Second category of required documents: *follow-up* documents (see Annex 3)

Students unable to provide the documents by the scheduled dates must contact the education officer to explain the situation. The reasons provided must be verifiable.

## 4.5 Sanctions

Sanctions are applicable to students in the following two situations:

- For each incomplete *application for financial assistance* submitted or which fails to meet the deadline.
- For each incomplete *follow-up* document submitted or which fails to meet the deadline.

These sanctions postpone the transfer of the living allowance to the month following the month of allowance eligibility.

For students completing their college or university programs, the last transcript must be sent within a maximum of three (3) months. After this period, the student will receive a letter to claim the reimbursement of the tuition fees for their last semester.

## 4.6 Drop-out or fail

Dropping all or part of a course may affect your financial assistance. It is your obligation to inform your financial assistance officer as soon as possible.

- **Partial drop-out:** If you drop courses but maintain full-time status, you will continue to receive your allowances. If you drop courses, but do not maintain full-time status, you will be eligible only under the terms outlined in Section 5 (Financial assistance for part-time students) and your living allowance payments will be discontinued beginning the month following such a situation. If you drop your course(s) prior to your institution's tuition reimbursement deadline, you will not be required to reimburse the ACO any fees. However, if you drop your course(s) after the deadline and you are part-time, you will be required to reimburse the ACO 25% of your tuition fees in the month following the partial drop-out.
- **Total drop-out:** if you drop-out of your semester completely, you are no longer eligible for financial assistance from the ACO. Your living allowance payments will be discontinued beginning the month after your total drop-out. If you drop your courses prior to your institution's tuition reimbursement deadline, you will not be required to reimburse any fees. However, if you drop-out after this deadline, you will be required to reimburse the ACO the total tuition fee amount for the said semester in the month following the total drop-out.

Students who fail two semesters during their program of study will have their living allowance reduced in full the following semester.

An incomplete notation on the transcript is considered a failure.

Failures and partial or total drop-outs will be counted against the total number of semesters eligible for financial assistance (see Section 4.8 - Duration of assistance).

An ACO committee composed of the College Education Officer, the University Education Officer and a senior administration representative will review the various situations related to drop-outs and failures and a notice of decision will be forwarded to the student concerned.

#### *4.7 Number of eligible degrees*

Living allowances are transferred for a single degree per education level, unless a career change or academic reorientation is approved and recommended by a professional counselor. Otherwise, students who enroll in another degree of the same level will only be eligible to tuition and costs for books.



#### *4.8 Duration of assistance*

The Abenaki Council of Odanak (ACO) grants living allowances to eligible students in accordance with Section 2.1 as follows:

##### College level studies:

Attestation of collegial studies (ACS)	The ACO grants a living allowance for the normal duration for graduation
Pre-university programs; DCS 2-year general program (4 semesters)	The ACO grants a living allowance for one additional semester for students who do not complete their program within the prescribed schedule
Technical programs; DCS 3-year technical program (6 semesters)	The ACO grants a living allowance for two additional semesters for students who do not complete their program within the prescribed schedule

##### University level studies:

Undergraduate studies; Certificate	The ACO grants a living allowance for the normal duration for graduation
Undergraduate studies; Bachelor's	The ACO grants a living allowance for two additional semesters for students who do not complete their program within the prescribed schedule
Graduate studies: DESS, Master's and doctoral degrees	The ACO may grant a living allowance for one additional semester in exceptional circumstances

Note: All completed semesters for a given level are included in the calculation of the granted semesters (e.g. in the case of a program change, semesters already completed are included).

#### *4.9 Allowances with dependent children*

Only children under the age of eighteen (18) are considered dependent children;

Students requesting an allowance for dependent children must provide a copy of the birth certificate and proof that the child or

children are under the applicant's care. In the case of joint custody, the student is only eligible to half of the living allowance supplement based on the number of dependent children.

## 5. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – PART-TIME STUDENT

Financial assistance for students includes:

- Tuition fees
- Costs for books

### *5.1 Tuition fees*

#### College

For students attending college in Québec, fees are reimbursed to students on presentation of supporting documents/original receipts.

For students attending college in a province other than Quebec, fees are transferred directly to the college for each semester. The officer in charge obtains the invoices from each college.

#### University

For all students, fees are transferred directly to the university for each semester. The officer in charge obtains the invoices from each university.

- Admission fees are reimbursed on presentation of supporting documents (maximum reimbursement for two admissions).

## 5.2 *Costs for books*

Only mandatory books are reimbursed, on presentation of supporting documents (course outlines and payment receipts).

## 5.3 *Documents to be provided*

To qualify for financial assistance for the post-secondary program, you are responsible for meeting the documentary requirements which are divided into two main categories:

- First category of required documents: documents relating to the *application for assistance* (see Annex 3)
- Second category of required documents: *follow-up* documents (see Annex 3)

Students unable to provide the documents by the scheduled dates must contact the education officer in order to explain the situation. The reasons provided must be verifiable.

## 5.4 *Sanctions*

There are no reimbursements for books when an application for financial assistance is incomplete or filed after the deadline.

## 5.5 *Drop-out or fail*

Dropping all or part of a course may affect your financial assistance. It is your obligation to inform your financial assistance officer as soon as possible.

- **Partial drop-out:** If you drop your course(s) prior to your institution's tuition reimbursement deadline, you will not be required to reimburse the ACO any fees. However, if you drop your course(s) after the deadline and you are part-time, you will be required to reimburse the ACO 25% of your tuition fees in the month following the partial drop-out.
- **Total drop-out:** If you completely drop-out of your semester prior to your institution's tuition reimbursement deadline, you will not be required to reimburse any fees. However, if you drop-out after the deadline, you will be required to reimburse the ACO the full tuition for that semester within one month of dropping out completely.

In the event a course has not been completed successfully, students are responsible for demonstrating that they have done all the work

and exams required in the course outline in order to avoid having to reimburse the tuition paid by the ACO for the said semester.

An incomplete notation on the transcript is considered a failure.

An ACO committee composed of the College Education Officer, the University Education Officer and a senior administration representative will review the various situations related to drop-outs and failures and a notice of decision will be forwarded to the student concerned.

## **6. MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE**

A maximum of \$53,000 per academic year is allocated for financial assistance for education unless an approval from the ACO has been received.

## **7. STUDENT MONITORING**

The individual responsible for education monitors the progress of each post-secondary student enrolled in an academic program. A confidential file is kept for each student.

## **8. STUDENT DEBT**

Students owing money to the ACO will be obligated to reach a reimbursement agreement with the department in question. If the debt exceeds \$5,000, students must reimburse the difference between the debt and the amount of \$5,000 prior to reaching a reimbursement agreement. The minimum payment on a reimbursement agreement represents 10% of the living allowance. If no reimbursement agreement is reached and respected, the student will not be eligible for various financial assistance provided by the Department of Education.

## **9. SPECIAL ASSISTANCE MEASURES**

Upon request, the cost for hiring a career counselor (member of the order) may be incurred if the institution does not already offer this service.

## **10. REQUEST FOR REVIEW**

Should a student not agree with a decision made under this program, the student can file a request for review in writing (form available at the ACO), stating the reason for the request within 30 days after receiving the notice of decision or amendment.

## *II.* IMPORTANT

Anyone who makes a false statement and/or commits fraud must repay the overpayments and shall be deemed ineligible for education services for a period of 3 years.

Considering the importance of the amounts granted to students pursuing their post-secondary education, the Abenaki Council of Odanak requires them to follow the instructions given by the education service. Students must provide all documents required in the application for financial assistance within the prescribed time. Failure to meet the prescribed rules shall lead to the termination of the assistance provided by the Council and the reimbursement of overpayments, where applicable.

Applications for financial assistance not compliant with this policy's parameters will be referred to the Abenaki Council of Odanak.

## *12.* CONTACTS

Education officer – college level:

Ms. Ann Landry

Email: [alandry@caodanak.com](mailto:alandry@caodanak.com)

Tel: 1 888-568-2810, ext 3031

Education officer – university level:

Ms. Nathalie Cardin

Email: [ncardin@caodanak.com](mailto:ncardin@caodanak.com)

Tel: 1 888-568-2810, ext 3030

## ANNEX 1

### Deadlines for providing mandatory documents

***SANCTIONS WILL APPLY FOR ANY FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE DOCUMENTS WITHIN THE DATES INDICATED.***

<b>FALL SEMESTER</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>
Documents relating to the application for financial assistance (First category of required documents)	June 20
Transcript and schedule (Second category of required documents)	August 20
Students enrolled in a summer semester: transcript	September 10

<b>WINTER SEMESTER</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>
Documents relating to the application for financial assistance (First category of required documents)	November 20
Transcript and schedule (Second category of required documents)	February 10

<b>SUMMER SEMESTER</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>
Documents relating to the application for financial assistance (First category of required documents)	April 20
Transcript and schedule (Second category of required documents)	June 10

## ANNEX 2

### 2023-2024 ALLOWANCES:

- Student without dependent children: \$1 015
- Student with 1 dependent child: \$1,566
- Student with 2 dependent children: \$1,808
- Student with 3 dependent children: \$2,035
- Fixed amount for college books: \$612
  
- Fixed amount for university books: \$750 (3 courses or less: graduate or post-graduate: on proof of purchase)

### 2023-2024 DEPOSIT DATES:

#### 2023 FALL SEMESTER

##### STUDENTS BEGINNING IN AUGUST

DESCRIPTION	DEPOSIT DATES
August allowance + books	August 31
September allowance	September 29
October allowance	October 31
November allowance	November 30
December allowance	December 29

##### STUDENTS BEGINNING IN SEPTEMBER

DESCRIPTION	DEPOSIT DATES
September allowance + books	September 29
October allowance	October 31
November allowance	November 30
December allowance	December 29

#### 2024 WINTER SEMESTER

DESCRIPTION	DEPOSIT DATES
January allowance + books	January 31
February allowance	February 29
March allowance	March 29
April allowance	April 30
May allowance	May 31 for students finishing in May

#### 2024 SUMMER SEMESTER

##### STUDENTS BEGINNING IN MAY

DESCRIPTION	DEPOSIT DATES
May allowance + books	May 31
June allowance	June 28
July allowance	July 31
August allowance	August 30

##### STUDENTS BEGINNING IN JUNE

DESCRIPTION	DEPOSIT DATES
June allowance + books	June 28
July allowance	July 31
August allowance	August 30

### ANNEX 3

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE: First category of required documents	
FIRST APPLICATION	CONTINUING STUDIES
Application for financial assistance (to be completed for each semester)	Application for financial assistance (to be completed for each semester)
Contract (to be completed for each semester)	Contract (to be completed for each semester)
Procurement or power of attorney (to be completed for each semester)	Procurement or power of attorney (to be completed for each semester)
*Registration confirmation letter (to be provided for each semester)	* Registration confirmation letter (to be provided for each semester)
Program description	Program description (if change of program)
Action plan	Action plan (if change of program)
Copy of Certificate of Indian Status (or letter from ISC)	Specimen cheque (if change in bank account)
Specimen cheque (first application)	
Copy of children's birth certificate (full-time students with dependent children)	
In the case of separation, copy of child custody court judgment (full-time students)	

\* **Registration confirmation letter:** document issued by the institution's registrar's office or the student's portal and must contain the following information: program title, full-time or part time status, semester start and end dates.

FOLLOW-UP DOCUMENTS: Second category of required documents
Transcript from previous semester (to be provided for each semester)
Schedule or course selection (to be provided for each semester)
Final transcript (maximum 3 months after graduation)



## **ANNEX 4**

### **NON-ADMISSIBLE EXPENSES**

- Medical and dental insurance fees;
- Donations;
- Late fees;
- Cancellation fees;
- Cost of materials;
- Parking fees;
- Public transport fees;
- Residence expenses;
- Fees that students can waive.

It will be your responsibility to cover or cancel these charges with your institution in accordance with the applicable procedures.

For more information, do not hesitate to contact the finance department of your educational institution.