



**Financial Aid Policy and
Procedures Manual**

AY 2025-2026

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of Purpose

The Student Consumer Information and Policy and Procedures Manual describes Meridian Technology Center's administration of its student aid programs. The manual sets forth the institution's policies and goals in regard to student aid and describes the steps that must be taken to implement these policies. The manual is also intended to inform students of specific procedures that must be followed when applying for and receiving student aid.

1.2 Financial Aid References

The Financial Aid Office at Meridian Technology Center is located in the Career Planning Center in the main building. In addition to the Student Consumer Information and Policy and Procedures Manual, other regulations that affect Student Aid will be adhered to. These regulations and guides are located in the Financial Aid Office, or online, and include:

- Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook
- U. S. Department of Education Dear Colleague Letters
- OASFAA Newsletters
- SWASFAA Newsletters
- NASFAA Newsletters
- Financial Aid Legislation (Federal Registers)
- U. S. Department of Education Audit Guide
- Consumer Handbook/Policy and Procedure Manual

SECTION 2: PHILOSOPHY & POLICIES OF MERIDIAN TECHNOLOGY CENTER

2.1 Mission of Meridian Technology Center

Educate. Enrich Lives. Secure economic futures.

2.2 Accreditation

Meridian Technology Center is accredited by the following agencies:

US Department of Education

Oklahoma Department of Education

Oklahoma State Board of Career and Technology Education

State of Oklahoma Accrediting Agency

Oklahoma Board of Nursing/Practical Nursing Program (OBN)

Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH)

Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)

National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS)

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)

Association of General Contractors (AGC)

Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT)

Current or prospective students wishing to review documents describing the institution's accreditation, approval or licensing should submit a written request to the Superintendent. Within ten working days of submission of the request, documents will be made available to the student for inspection.

2.3 Equal Educational Opportunity

Meridian Technology Center does not discriminate on the basis of sex/gender, pregnancy, gender expression or identity, sexual orientation, genetic information, race, religion, color, age, national origin, disability, or veteran status in the operation of its education programs and activities, recruitment and admissions, or employment practices. In order to ensure against discrimination, established policies for recruitment and admission of students have been developed. They include, but are not limited to:

- 1) All students have access to and can participate in course offerings and extracurricular activities without regard to sex/gender, race, religion, color, age, national origin, disability, or disadvantage.
- 2) Pregnancy and disabilities related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability or physical condition.
- 3) Students in full-time programs are placed in training stations based solely upon the students' qualifications and abilities to perform the work.

A complete copy of Meridian Technology Center's Equal Educational Opportunity policy is included in the Meridian Technology Center Policy Manual.

Meridian Technology Center complies with Title I of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. Inquiries concerning application of this policy may be referred to Jeremy Zweiacker, Coordinator for Title VI, VII, IX/504/ADA, Meridian Technology Center.

2.4 Misrepresentation

Meridian Technology Center does not misrepresent the nature of its educational programs, financial charges or the employability of the institution's graduates. In addition, Meridian does not describe its participation in the Title IV Assistance Programs in a manner that suggests the approval or endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of the quality of its educational programs. Concerns regarding misrepresentation should be directed to Jeremy Zweiacker, Director of Operations and Planning. He can be reached at 405-344-3333.

2.5 Policy Notification

It is the policy of Meridian Technology Center to provide equal opportunities without regard to sex/gender, age, race, religion, color, national origin, disability, or veteran status in the operation of its educational services, recruitment, admissions, financial aids, or employment practices. Meridian Technology Center does not discriminate on the basis of sex/gender, age, race, religion, color, national origin, disability, or veteran status. Inquiries concerning application of this policy may be referred to the Coordinator for Title VI, VII, IX/504/ADA at Meridian Technology Center.

2.6 Release of Student Information/Family Educational Right & Privacy Act (FERPA)

Meridian Technology Center may provide directory information in accordance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The following items of information are considered "directory information" and can be released without consent or a record of disclosure.

1. The student's name;
2. The student's address;
3. The student's telephone listing;
4. The student's date and place of birth;
5. The student's dates of attendance;
6. The student's grade level (i.e., 11th, 12th grade, etc.);
7. The student's participation in officially recognized activities;
8. The student's degrees, honors and awards received;
9. The most recent educational agency or institution attended;
10. The student's photograph; and
11. The student's electronic mail address.

Students may withhold directory information by notifying the Career Planning Center, in writing within 10 calendar days after their first scheduled day of class of such election. All written request for non-disclosure will be honored for only one academic year.

2.6-1 Student Record Policies- Related to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that affords parents of minor students and “eligible students” over 18 years of age certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

- **The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 30 days from the day the technology center receives a request for access.**

ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS- Policy I-429-A1

All parents have access to their individual child's cumulative records upon receipt by the administrator in charge of daytime instruction or the administrator in charge of short-term adult programs of a "Record Inspection Request Form" at any time during normal school hours and within 30 days after receipt of such form providing said child is under 18 years of age.

Every student, 18 years of age or older, has access to his or her cumulative record upon receipt by the administrator in charge of daytime instruction or the administrator in charge of short-term adult programs of the "Request to View and Inspect Cumulative Data" and pursuant to the same conditions as indicated in the preceding paragraph.

All school officials, as designated by the Superintendent, shall have access to cumulative records, assuming each has a legitimate educational interest in observing such information. Any official not appearing on the "Designated Listing" must first secure permission of access from the Superintendent or designated official.

The following agencies have access to student records upon the conditions that the agency representative files a written request form with the administrator in charge of daytime instruction or with the administrator in charge of short-term adult programs, said form to be a permanent fixture within the student file, indicating specifically the legitimate educational or other interest the agency has in checking the information.

1. Officials of other schools in which the student intends to enroll, upon condition that a student's parents be notified of the transfer, receive a copy of the record if desired, and have an opportunity to challenge the content of the record. (See Challenge Procedure under "Student Records" policy.)
2. Authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States.
3. The Secretary of Education.
4. The Commissioner and Director of the National Institute of Education.

5. The Assistant Secretary of Education.
6. State education officials.
7. The administrative head of an educational agency.
8. Representatives from agencies in connection with a student application for or receipt of financial aid.

Except where collection of personally identifiable data is specifically authorized by federal law, any data so collected by the officials designated in the preceding paragraph shall not include information (including social security numbers) which would permit the personal identification of the students or their parents after the data so obtained have been collected.

Access to the cumulative record may be granted when a court order and/or a subpoena is presented to the Superintendent; but in this case, notice must be provided the parent, or student 18 or over, concurrently with the access granted.

Any other request for access not covered heretofore requires the written consent of the parent or student 18 or over. Further, upon receipt of notice of these provisions, the parent, or student 18 or over, may notify in writing the administrator in charge of daytime instructor, administrator in charge of short-term adult programs, or designated official a listing of any person or persons that they desire access be given or not given without further notice to the parent or student 18 or over. Such notice shall be filed in the student's cumulative record.

- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the technology center to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW,
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

- The right to request correction of the student's education records that the parent of a minor student or eligible student believes inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights.

Challenge Procedure- located in Policy I-428-A1- Student Records

In the event that the content of a student's school record is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, the parent of that

student (or student if he or she is over 18) shall have an opportunity for a hearing to consider the correction or deletion of any inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise inappropriate data. In order to request a hearing for such purpose, the parent (or student if he or she is over 18) shall submit a hearing request application on a form to be supplied by the school district. The hearing shall be conducted promptly by the administrator in charge of daytime instruction or the administrator in charge of short-term adult programs, and the decision communicated promptly in writing to the parent (or student if he or she is over 18). In the event the parent (or student if he or she is over 18) does not concur with the decision, the parent (or student if he or she is over 18) shall have a right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent. A parent (or student if he or she is over 18) desiring to appeal from the decision of the Superintendent shall notify him or her in writing of the desire to appeal within 10 days after receipt of the decision. The Superintendent shall forward all necessary documents in connection with the appeal to the Board of Education. Upon receipt of such documents, the Board shall notify the parent (or student if he or she is over 18) in writing of the time and place for the hearing of the appeal. Appeal hearings shall be held promptly. The Board shall render its decision in writing, and the decision shall be communicated to the parent (or student if he or she is over 18) and will be final.

- The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent (34 CFR § 99.31).

2.7 Crime Awareness and Campus Security

Crimes occurring on campus should be reported to one of the Directors of Instruction. One of the responsibilities of these individuals is to help law enforcement agencies in their investigations of campus crimes. Meridian Technology Center encourages all persons to report any criminal or suspicious activities to the Campus Crime Director. School officials will investigate all incidents.

The Campus Crime and Security Report is published and distributed to students enrolled in full-time programs annually. A copy is also available upon request to all students in full-time programs, staff, and prospective students in the Career Planning Center. This is also located on the consumer information page of the Meridian Website. <https://www.meridiantech.edu/admissions/consumer-information/>

Statistics can also be found on-line at <https://ope.ed.gov/campussafety/#/> . Click "Get Data for One School" and enter Meridian Technology Center as name of institution. These statistics are updated annually.

The Crime Awareness and Campus Security Policy can be found in the Meridian Technology Center Policy and Procedures, Section I-426-C1

2.8 Drug Awareness Education

Meridian Technology Center allows all students the opportunity to attend drug awareness programs held throughout the school year. These seminars are designed to inform students about the Board of Education's Drug-Free School and Campus Policy; to educate students about the dangers of drug abuse and to provide information about drug counseling and rehabilitation services. A copy of this policy is included in the Campus Security Report, available in the Career Planning Center.

2.9 Referral Agencies for Services, Support, and Dependency Rehabilitation

Refer to the Drug-Free School and Workplace Program information included in the Campus Security Report, which can be obtained in the Career Planning Center.

2.10 Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

The policy of Meridian Technology Center forbids discrimination against or harassment by any of its employees or students. This policy applies to all students and employees including non-employee volunteers whose work is subject to the control of school personnel. It is the express policy of the Meridian Technology Center Board of Education to encourage student victims of sexual harassment to come forward with such claims. This may be done through the Student Complaints and Grievances policy. A complete copy of the Board of Education policies on Sexual Harassment and Student Complaints and Grievances is available upon request from the Career Planning Center. A separate policy applying to the sexual harassment of employees has been developed.

Meridian Technology Centers will address all incidents of sex discrimination and sexual harassment reported to the technology center's Title IX Coordinator in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. The Title IX Coordinator, Jeremy Zweiacker is located at Meridian Technology Center, 1312 South Sangre Road, phone number 405-377-7500, or email titleIX@meridiantech.edu.

2.11 Completion Rate Disclosure

Completion Rate Disclosure information is available on the Consumer Information Page of the Meridian Website or through College Navigator at <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?id=365480#retgrad>

2.12 Voter Registration

Eligible students are encouraged to register to vote in their county. Voter registration applications are made available to students by request through the Career Planning Center. You may also apply online at https://www.ok.gov/elections/Voter_Info/Register_to_Vote/

2.13 Vaccinations

Meridian Technology Center does not have a vaccination policy. Secondary

students from partner schools are required to follow the vaccination policy of their respective school districts. Students enrolled in Health Career majors or any other career major that requires vaccinations will be required to follow those guidelines to participate in the major.

2.14 Constitution Day

Constitution Day shall, in accordance with federal law, be held each year on September 17. Meridian Technology shall hold an educational program on the United States Constitution on September 17 of each year for students served by the district in observation of Constitution Day. The adult career major counselor is in charge of the activities for this day. Please contact the Career Planning Center for further information.

SECTION 3: FINANCIAL AID PHILOSOPHY AND POLICIES

3.1 Philosophy of Financial Aid at Meridian Technology Center

It is the philosophy of Meridian Technology Center that no qualified student be denied the opportunity of attending school regardless of their financial situation. The purpose of the financial aid program at Meridian Technology Center is to provide financial assistance to students, who without aid would be unable to attend school. Financial assistance is offered in the form of grants and scholarships. Financial assistance is viewed only as supplementary. The student and the family of a student, when applicable, are expected to make a maximum effort to assist with educational expenses. It is the policy of Meridian Technology Center to award federal financial aid in accordance with federal regulations and guidelines pertaining to the type of assistance requested.

3.2 History of Financial Aid at Meridian Technology Center

Meridian Technology Center opened for classes in the fall of 1975. Meridian Technology Center began awarding Federal Title IV funds in the fall of 1991.

3.3 Financial Aid Policy Development Process

The Financial Aid Officer is responsible for initiating the development of financial aid policy at Meridian Technology Center in conjunction with the Superintendent, Chief Financial Officer, Counselors, and the Board of Education.

3.4 Financial Aid Review Committee

3.4-1 Composition

A Financial Aid Review Committee has been established consisting of the Director of Instruction for the applicable program, one Career Counselor, one instructor (other than the appellees), the Executive Director of the Career Planning Center, and one staff member not associated with full-time programs. In addition to these five voting members, the Financial Aid Officer sits on the committee as a non-voting member.

3.4-2 Responsibilities

The Review Committee has the responsibility to review appeals from

students not making satisfactory academic progress.

3.4-3 Procedure

Students who feel they should be granted an exemption from the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards set forth by Meridian Technology Center may file an appeal. The appeal should include the reasons for the unsatisfactory academic progress with documentation. The appeal will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Review Committee. The student will be notified of the decision of the committee in writing within ten working days of the decision. Only one appeal can be filed per student per Career Major. The Financial Aid Review Committee's decision is final.

SECTION 4: ADMINISTRATIVE & FINANCIAL AID ORGANIZATION AND OFFICE MANAGEMENT

4.1 Organizational Chart

A copy of the Organizational Chart for Meridian Technology Center is available from the Personnel Office.

4.2 Purpose of the Financial Aid Office

The purpose of the Financial Aid Office is: (1) to provide professional financial counseling to students and parents concerned with meeting the costs of education. The office shall help students seek, obtain, and make the best use of all financial resources available; (2) to administer Title IV Aid programs competently according to the institution's philosophy and policies as stated in Section 2 and federal regulations; and, (3) to maintain institutional records of assistance programs and students assisted.

4.3 Financial Aid Officer Job Description & Responsibilities

4.3-1 General Job Description

The primary responsibility for this position is to provide professional financial counseling to parents and students. The Financial Aid Officer is responsible for assembling and maintaining student aid records, assessing eligibility of applicants for aid, authorizing aid, completing federally mandated reports, and designing and implementing systems to accomplish these tasks. The officer is also responsible for the fiscal aspect of financial aid. This position requires knowledge of federal regulations, institutional policies and procedures, ability to deal with clients regarding sensitive policies and procedures, and ability to deal with constantly changing program regulations.

4.3-2 Specific Responsibilities:

Needs analysis

Record maintenance

Report student enrollment status and completion in Title IV eligible programs

Authorize and process PELL Awards and aid payments

Coordinate activities with other offices and agencies providing

financial assistance to students
Verify application data on selected applicants
Calculate student's award
Distribute and collect satisfactory academic progress reports
Revise Student Consumer Information and Policy and Procedures Manual as needed
Calculate amounts to be returned to Title IV programs when a student withdraws
Maintain current knowledge of relevant federal regulations.
Coordinate fiscal matters with Finance office, including cash requests, cash accountability, and cash disbursements
Invoice student-sponsoring agencies

4.4 Financial Aid Records Management

Location & Maintenance of Financial Aid Files & Records: All financial aid files and records are located and secured in the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Officer has the responsibility for maintaining these files and records.

4.5 Financial Aid Office Administration

4.5-1 Office Hours

The Financial Aid Officer is available to see students Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Appointments may be scheduled at other times by contacting the Financial Aid Office at (405) 377-3333.

4.5-2 Calendar of Financial Aid Activities

The Financial Aid Officer attends OASF AA meetings and conferences, SWASF AA conferences, U.S. Department of Education Federal Student Aid National Conferences, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education Financial Aid Meetings, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education meetings, Department of Education training sessions, some fiscal workshops, video conferences, and webinars as needed.

4.5-3 Distribution of Forms

The Financial Aid Officer has been designated as the employee responsible for distributing applications for FAFSA on the web at www.studentaid.gov, Annual Consumer Information Disclosures, Student Financial Aid Information Brochure, Satisfactory Academic Progress and Verification Worksheet forms, and other information to current and prospective students.

4.5-4 Public Web Site

The Web Site for Meridian Technology Center Financial Aid information is located at www.meridiantech.edu
Financial Aid Information: <https://www.meridiantech.edu/admissions/types-of-aid/>
Consumer Information: <https://www.meridiantech.edu/admissions/consumer-information/>

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SECTION 5: PARTICIPATION IN FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

5.1 Institutional and Program Eligibility

Documentation regarding Meridian Technology Center's eligibility for all aid assistance programs is located in the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Officer is responsible for the coordination of the program participation agreements.

5.2 Financial Assistance Available at Meridian Technology Center

The following programs of assistance are available at Meridian Technology Center:

5.2-1 Title IV Programs:

- PELL Grant
- Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant
- Oklahoma's Promise

5.2-2 Other Programs:

- Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency
- WIOA (Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act)
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Oklahoma Career Tech Foundation Scholarship
- Second Year Senior Tuition Waiver
- Next Step Scholarship
- Meridian Technology Center Foundation Scholarships
- Other external scholarships as eligibility is verified

5.3 General Student Eligibility Criteria for Federal Title IV Financial Aid

In general, a student is eligible to participate in federally funded programs if the student:

- ③ is a regular student, pursuing a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential;
 - ③ have a valid Social Security number (with the exception of students from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau);

- ③ is at least a half-time student according to the standards established at Meridian Technology Center;
- ③ is enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a post-secondary student who has a High-School Diploma, GED certificate, HiSet (High School Equivalency Test), TASC (Test Assessing Secondary Completion) or a Home School Certificate signed and dated showing completion of secondary schooling;
- ③ is a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen;
- ③ has financial need;
- ③ provide consent and approval to have your federal tax information transferred directly into your 2025-26 *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®) form, if you're applying for aid for July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026;

- ③ is academically qualified and is maintaining satisfactory academic progress in the course of study he/she is pursuing according to the standards of Meridian Technology Center;
- ③ is within the school's attendance policy;
- ③ does not owe a refund on a Title IV HEA Grant (PELL Grant, Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant) and/or is not in default on any Perkins Loan, GSL, or PLUS loan received for attendance at any institution as evidenced by a signed statement, and financial aid transcripts;
- ③ agrees to use any federal aid received solely for educational purposes as evidenced by a signed statement of educational purpose certification statement;
- ③ signs a statement of updated information certifying that certain items on the FAFSA/PELL Grant application are correct;
- ③ signs and submits any verification forms with required documentation;
- ③ beginning July 1, 2012 and beyond Federal Student Aid limits the duration of a student's lifetime eligibility to receive a Federal Pell Grant to six years or 600%

Students enrolled in elementary or secondary school are not eligible for aid from the Federal Student Aid programs.

5.4 Rights and Responsibilities of Student Aid Recipients

5.4-1 Fair Evaluation of Financial Need/Federal Needs Analysis Methodology

Meridian Technology Center utilizes the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The Student Aid Index is the standard number the FAFSA calculates and is used in determining financial need. To be eligible for PELL, a student must have a SAI of 7395 or less for 2025-2026.

Federal Needs Analysis Methodology is based on the following philosophies:

1. To the extent that they are able, parents have the primary responsibility to pay for their children's education.
2. Parents will, as they are able, contribute funds for their children's education.
3. Students, as well as their parents, have a responsibility to help pay for their education.
4. The family should be accepted in its present financial condition.
5. A needs analysis system must evaluate families in a consistent and equitable manner, while recognizing that special circumstances can and do alter a family's ability to contribute.

Briefly, for dependent students, three broad categories of family's resources are examined in need analysis. They are (1) parent's income (the available income concept); (2) parent's assets (the income supplement concept); and (3) student resources (including summer earnings, veteran's benefits, and other similar benefits). For independent students, income and assets are examined.

5.4-2 Confidentiality of Student Records

All information (written or oral) that a student and/or family reveal in the process of seeking assistance is confidential. Application materials become the property of Meridian Technology Center upon submission and are maintained in the student's file.

5.4-3 Student Inspection of File

A student is entitled to examine his/her file within ten (10) working days after a written request to do so is filed with the Financial Aid Office.

5.4-4 Honesty in Use of Financial Assistance and Reporting of Resources

Students receiving federal and institutional assistance will be required to sign a statement which certifies that funds awarded will be used solely for expenses connected with attendance at this institution. The statement also specifies that the applicant has given accurate and true information.

5.4-5 Verification and Updating of Information

All students are required to update key application data upon submission of their aid application. Selected students will be required to submit documentation to verify the accuracy of family financial information and other data. If a student is selected to verify application data, he/she will be informed in writing of the documentation requirements. Students who fail to complete verification will not receive assistance.

5.4-6 Good Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress

DEFINITION: In order to receive Title IV assistance, a student must be enrolled in and attending an approved career major at least half-time, make satisfactory academic progress, be within the approved attendance policy, be on schedule for completion, and be in good standing. Satisfactory Academic Progress means that a student is proceeding in a positive manner toward fulfilling certificate requirements in a normal length of time. Initially this means the student is admissible to an educational program as demonstrated by the student: the student has a High School Diploma or GED or a Home School Certificate. Later, this means that the student is performing well enough in terms of grades and the institution's satisfactory academic progress policy to continue enrollment.

“Satisfactory academic progress” means that the student is “on schedule” with a cumulative grade of at least a “C” or above, and is within the required attendance percentage for the payment period.

5.4-6(a) Transfer of Credit/Advance Standing

A student who withdraws from a program and reenters the same program after 180 days will be treated the same as a transfer student. The program hours will be reduced by the number of hours for which the student received credit. Therefore, the hours for which the student receives credit count as attempted and completed.

Meridian Technology Center personnel will review previous education and/or training documentation, to include military transcripts, and determine whether or not the student may receive advanced credit for previous education and/or training. If advanced credit is given, the total number of career major hours the student needs to complete is reduced by the number of credits awarded. Tuition may also be adjusted for certain career majors.

(Practical Nursing and Radiologic Technologist require some advance standing hours for new students. Therefore, no adjustment to those tuition costs will be made.)

5.4-6(b) “Good standing” means that the student is capable of enrollment or continued enrollment.

“On Schedule” means that the student is proceeding in a positive manner toward fulfilling certificate requirements in a normal length of time. This can be no longer than 150% of the program hours.

5.4-6(c) Students with no previous course work at Meridian Technology Center receive their first aid disbursement without any academic progress requirements. Enrollment only, is verified before the 1st disbursement, which is done by the Financial Aid Officer. At the end of their first payment period students must have made satisfactory academic progress in the first payment period in order to receive further assistance.

Satisfactory Academic Progress means:

1. **Qualitative Requirement (grade based):** Maintaining a cumulative grade of “C”; or 70% (2.0) grade point average or greater. A “Progress Report” will be sent to the instructor who will be asked to report the student’s academic status.
2. **Attendance:** Maintaining 90% attendance (no absence is considered excused for financial aid purposes) *, completing the program with at least 90% required attendance hours.
3. **Quantitative Requirement (time based):** Completing an acceptable percentage of the program’s scheduled objectives. The percentage is based upon curriculum clock hours completed to date / total clock hours of enrolled career major. As long as the student is making satisfactory academic progress within the payment period and striving to complete the program within 150% of the program hours, the student will be considered to be completing an acceptable percentage of the programs’ objectives. A grade of I is regarded as unsatisfactory academic progress for the purposes of Title IV assistance.

It is important to note that ALL STANDARDS must be met to be considered “making satisfactory academic progress”; and to continue to receive Title IV Assistance.

5.4-6(d) Satisfactory academic progress, for financial aid purposes, will be assessed at the end of each payment period to determine eligibility for the next payment period. The Progress Report is submitted to the instructor to check SAP; this progress report will be submitted before the next scheduled disbursement date. Eligible students will be issued Financial Aid at the next disbursement date scheduled in the Financial Aid Office (see 5.5-6 Method and Frequency of Distribution)

Note: Satisfactory academic progress for a student receiving “Oklahoma Promise Awards” will be checked prior to the award disbursement.

In some cases a student may have a disability, (hearing impairment, blindness, learning disability, ESL, etc.), and the instructor considers the student is making satisfactory academic progress based on the disability, and the instructor feels that extended training is necessary for the student to successfully complete the program. This student would be allowed longer than the standard length of time to complete the program and be considered making satisfactory academic progress based on extenuating circumstances. In other cases, a student may be allowed or may need to take longer than the average length of time to complete a particular program. Example: A student is enrolled in a 600-clock hour program and needs at least 100 more actual clock hours to successfully complete the program. The instructor indicates that the student is progressing toward successful completion of the program, and the student has acceptable attendance and grades; the student can be allowed to take an additional 100 clock hours to complete the program and still be considered making satisfactory academic progress. The student can take extra time to complete the program, however a clock hour is considered to have been completed not attempted and student can only receive payment for the program hours.

*Based on requirements of the U S Department of Education, a student must complete 90% of a Pell Grant payment period hours. If during any payment period a student is absent more than 10% of that payment period timeframe the student will be deemed as not meeting satisfactory academic progress

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE HERE THAT ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS ARE STRICTLY ENFORCED BY THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT SOME REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH BY THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE MAY BE MORE STRICT THAN SOME INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS.

FOR EXAMPLE: A student may make a cumulative grade of “D” and be allowed to continue training. For purposes of receiving financial aid, a student must have a cumulative grade of “C”, or higher to continue receiving financial assistance.

TO DETERMINE IF THE STUDENT MAINTAINS ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE, THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES WILL BE FOLLOWED:

a. **First Payment:** (New Students-students enrolled in a new career major) Students enrollment status will be checked and documented in the student’s file to ensure the student is enrolled and in attendance, in an approved career major on at least a half-time basis. If the student has met the initial entrance and eligibility standards, and all necessary documents for financial aid have been received, the student will receive the first payment on schedule.

b. **Subsequent Pay Periods:** (New Students) To determine the satisfactory academic progress for subsequent pay periods, an average cumulative grade of at least a “C” or above, will be documented using the progress report received for the previous payment period(s). If, for the previous payment period, the average cumulative grade is at least a “C” or above, the cumulative attendance is 90% or better, and the student is proceeding in a positive manner toward fulfilling certificate requirement within 150% of the enrolled career major hours satisfactory academic progress standards have been met, and the financial aid office will follow the procedures to disburse the second PELL grant disbursement.

c. **Continuing Students** (students continuing in the same program): Student’s enrollment status and progress will be checked and documented in his/her file to ensure that s/he is enrolled in an approved program on at least a half-time basis. **All payments for continuing students will be based on procedures outlined under “Subsequent Pay Periods”: (New Students).**

5.4-7 **Financial Aid Warning**

If it is determined that the student is not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress under “Subsequent Pay Periods”, the student is placed under Financial Aid Warning and informed by letter or e-mail. Warning status lasts for one payment period only. Once the student has successfully completed the payment period hours, the student will still be eligible for the Pell disbursement, but this will happen only once, there cannot be 2 consecutive “Financial Aid Warning” periods.

5.4-8 **Financial Aid Suspension**

Any student, who fails to make satisfactory academic progress (as defined above) will have their subsequent financial aid suspended. The student has the right to the appeal process if they have not met SAP.

5.4-9 **Financial Aid Appeal and Probation**

Students who fail to make satisfactory progress after the warning period lose their aid eligibility unless they successfully appeal and are placed on probation. All students who receive notification that aid has been suspended will receive written procedures to follow to appeal the decision of the Financial Aid Office. Request for an appeal must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office within 10 working days of being notified of the suspension of aid.

5.4-9(a) Appeal process: Students who are denied aid on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress have the right to appeal the aid denial. To appeal, a student must file a written appeal with the Financial Aid Officer within 10 working days of being notified of the suspension of aid. The appeal should include all appropriate and relevant documentation. The letter must include the reason for not making satisfactory academic progress. His/her appeal must explain why they failed to make satisfactory progress as a result of injury or illness, the death of a relative, or other extenuating circumstances. The appeal must explain why he/she failed to make satisfactory progress and what has changed in their situation that will allow them to make satisfactory

progress at the next evaluation. The appeal will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Review Committee. The student will either be denied aid on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress or aid will be reinstated and paid on the next Pell disbursement period. During the mitigation time the student is responsible for funding his/her own education and could be reimbursed for expenses if the appeal is approved. If a request for appeal is not made by the student, Financial Aid is canceled. Only one appeal can be filed per student per Career Major. The Financial Aid Review Committee's decision is final.

5.4-9 (b) Probation Process: If the Appeal Committee determines that the student will be able to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress by the end of the next payment period based on the changes the student has made and the student wins appeal, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation for the next payment period. The student will continue to receive financial aid.

If the student complies with the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements at the end of the payment period in which he/she was on "Financial Aid Probation" the student will continue receiving financial aid and will go back to being expected to comply with the normal SAP requirements for future payment periods.

5.4-9(c) Financial Aid Review Committee is comprised of the Director of Instruction for the applicable program, the Director of the Career Planning Center, a Career Counselor, one instructor (other than the appellee's, and one Meridian Technology Center employee who does not work with full-time programs.

5.5 PELL Grant Program

5.5-1 Purpose

The PELL Grant is a federally funded grant, which provides up to \$7,395 to post-secondary students who are enrolled at least half time. These grants do not have to be repaid as long as a student doesn't withdraw "too early" and completes at least 90% of program hours, according to federal regulations.

5.5-2 Eligibility Requirements

Students must meet the general eligibility requirements outlined in Section 5.3. In addition, this grant is restricted to students who have not earned a Bachelor's degree. Students may not receive a PELL Grant from more than one institution concurrently.

5.5-3 Application Procedures

Students may apply by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at www.studentaid.gov. A Pre-Application Worksheet and assistance in completing the forms may be obtained from the Financial Aid Office. Meridian Technology Center is set up to receive electronic transmission of the Student Aid Report. The electronic record is known as the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). Transmissions are usually received within 10 days of the date the FAFSA is processed by the Federal Student Aid

Programs Office. Meridian only receives ISIR's for students who indicated the Meridian code numbers of 012474 on the application. These reports include a summary of application information and the determination of the Student Aid Index. The Student Aid Index is the result of the computations involving the financial and non-financial data submitted on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The method of computing eligibility applies to all dependents and independent students uniformly. The specific computations involved in the calculation may be obtained by contacting the Financial Aid Office to determine if all application requirements have been met. If so, the Financial Aid Officer uses the Institutional Student Information Record information and the current Student Aid Index to determine the scheduled PELL Award and estimated disbursement. The student is notified through an award notification email. Two payment periods are scheduled for the PELL Grant to be disbursed per Academic year. Students whose programs will not be completed within the fiscal year (July 1-June 30) should consult with the Financial Aid Office to see if they will need to file two Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms in order to receive PELL Grant payments for their entire program.

5.5-4 Criteria for Selecting Recipients from Group of Eligible Applicants

All students who are eligible will receive a PELL Grant providing they have all the necessary documents and signatures.

5.5-5 Criteria for Determining Amount of Student Aid

PELL Grant amounts are based upon the following:

- Maximum Pell Grant amount per school year, determined by the US Department of Education
- Tuition and fee costs for program plus PELL Grant living allowances
- Enrollment status of student (full-time or half-time)
- Length of career major and length of time student is enrolled
- Student Aid Index calculated through FAFSA submission

5.5-6 Method and Frequency of Distribution

Each student will receive PELL Grant disbursements according to the following schedule:

Students receive their first payment (one-half of their award) approximately 2-4 weeks after their starting date or when all necessary paperwork has been submitted to the financial aid office. The remaining one-half or subsequent payment will be disbursed only when the student has completed the required hours and weeks in a payment period for which they have received payment. Due to several enrollment dates each year, the disbursement dates vary with each student.

A student is allowed to receive Federal Pell Grant funds for up to 150 percent of the student's Pell Grant Scheduled Award for an award year. This provision is effective beginning with the 2017-2018 award year.

Once tuition costs for that payment period have been paid, any Title IV credit balance disbursements are paid in the form of a check to the eligible recipient.

Disbursements are made on the 15th and 30th of each month. The exact disbursement date for each student will be determined in the Financial Aid Office. Changes may occur if processing times are delayed.

Students who are eligible for disbursements prior to three working days before the 15th will receive their disbursement on the 15th. Students who are eligible prior to three working days before the 30th will receive their disbursement on the 30th. For example, a student is eligible on January 7th they will receive their check on the 15th. If they are eligible on January 14th, they will receive their check on the 30th.

Disbursements will be paid based on the availability of funds from the U.S. Department of Education after all required information has been verified, a complete student file is established, and the recipient is attending class. Each recipient will receive a memo from the Financial Aid Office when disbursement to the student's account has occurred. Funds in excess of tuition and/or books/supplies previously deferred are paid in the form of a check to the eligible recipient. If there are excess funds, the student will be notified that these funds are available. After receiving notification, a recipient should take photo identification to the Bursar's window and sign to receive the refund check. If check is not claimed by the student within ten (10) days of disbursement, and the Financial Aid office or Bursar has not been contacted by the student, the check will be mailed to the students address on file.

5.5-7 Cross-Over Payment Policy

In the event of a crossover payment, we will use the current year's FAFSA to calculate payments; but reserve the right to use upcoming year's FAFSA, on a case by case basis, for the benefit of the student.

5.5-8 Availability of Books

Meridian Technology Center does not have a book store. Therefore, students will be required to purchase all consumable supplies off campus. Books are provided for classroom use for all career majors except Practical Nursing, Radiologic Technology and Health Informatics. Students in Cosmetology are also responsible for purchasing their KITS. (See 6.4-1). Students who are eligible for a Federal Pell Grant can receive a book voucher from the Financial Aid Office (provided the student has processed a FAFSA and been awarded a Pell Grant and all necessary paperwork has been finalized in the Financial Aid Office) if they wish to purchase a book outside of the classroom. The student must contact Financial Aid and/or Bursar. A Pell eligible student may use the voucher to charge books to his/her Pell Grant. In using the voucher, the student is authorizing Meridian Technology Center to deduct the cost of items purchased out of the student's Pell Grant. If the student "opts out" of purchasing books outside of the ones provided in the classroom, they will receive a check for any Pell proceeds in excess of tuition, to purchase books from a vendor of their choice.

5.6 Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant (Student State Incentive Grant)

5.6-1 Purpose

The Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) is known as the Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant in this state. This program assists states in

providing grants to eligible students who have substantial need. Students may receive a portion of tuition from the Oklahoma Regents of Higher Education, based on full-time and part-time enrollment.

5.6-2 Eligibility Requirements

Students must meet all of the general eligibility requirements outlined in Section 5.3. In addition, the student must be an Oklahoma resident, attend an approved Oklahoma school, and must demonstrate substantial financial need as determined by the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education.

5.6-3 Application Procedures

Students who wish to apply for this grant program must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form and must complete the Federal Student Aid Release Section of this form giving permission for the release of their financial information to the state financial aid agency (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education).

5.6-4 Criteria for Selecting Recipients from Group of Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are funded to the limit of available allocated funds. Students must be enrolled, be attending the second half of their program and have been awarded Pell during the current award year. As of the 2024-2025 school year, these funds are limited to year-round, adult only programs. This has been decided due to limited funding during summer months.

5.6-5 Criteria for Determining Amount of Student Aid

Grant amounts are based upon the following:

- Annual OTAG allocation Meridian receives from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
- Financial need as determined by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
- Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant award is determined based on the allocated funds for the school year that are divided equally between the eligible students in adult only programs.

5.6-6 Method and Frequency of Disbursement

Once verification is completed, the institution determines eligible students and returns a claim form to the OTAG Department for processing for the issuance of Electronic Funds Transfer. If the student drops enrollment after Meridian Technology Center receives the funds from OTAG, the student's award must be returned to OTAG. Within 30 days of receipt of funds, an adjustment is made on the OTAG Claim Form and a refund check to OTAG is submitted. EFT Funds for each OTAG Award Claim submitted will be forwarded to the institution during the processing semester.

5.7 Oklahoma's Promise

5.7-1 Purpose

The Oklahoma's Promise provides scholarships equivalent to all or part of tuition expenses for students who complete the program's requirements while in high school. For enrollment periods beginning after July 1, 2017, Senate Bill

529 passed and this change allowed the OK Promise scholarship to be used for any certificate program at a career technology center that qualifies for federal financial aid or Pell grant. This usually refers to Career Major's consisting of 600 or more clock-hours. This change is consistent with other state and federal financial aid policy.

5.7-2 Eligibility Requirements

1. High School students enrolled in the eighth, ninth and tenth grade, as well as, home schooled students age 13-16, are eligible to enroll for this program.

Senate Bill 1673 was passed May 26, 2022 that has changed the initial family income limits for Oklahoma's Promise.

The income limits are based on the number of dependent children in the family:

\$60,000 for parents with 1-2 dependent children

\$70,000 for parents with 3-4 dependent children

\$80,000 for parents with 5 or more dependent children

This change became effective for 8th-11th grade students applying for OKPromise beginning in the 2022-23 school year.

Please Note: SB 1673 does **not** change the current **second** income limit of \$100,000 that is applied to OKPromise college/postsecondary students each year they are enrolled in college/postsecondary education.

Once enrolled, the student must complete a specified 17-unit high school core curriculum, achieve a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA in both the required core and for all high school coursework, attend school regularly, and refrain from substance abuse and criminal/delinquent acts.

2. For students receiving the Oklahoma's Promise award in 2012-2013 and thereafter, at the time the student begins postsecondary education and prior to receiving any program benefit award, the federal adjusted gross income of the student's parent(s) shall not exceed \$100,000 per year if the student is determined to have dependent status for federal financial aid.

3. Students must begin postsecondary education within three years of graduating from high school. Once a student begins postsecondary education, he/she is eligible for benefits for a maximum of five consecutive years or a bachelor degree, whichever comes first. The student's five-year expiration date is noted on the Oklahoma's Promise website eligibility list. If the student receives his/her bachelor degree prior to the expiration date, their eligibility ends upon completion of the degree.

4. Oklahoma's Promise will NOT be available for the first summer college semester immediately following high school graduation. Oklahoma's Promise eligibility is not determined until high school graduation. The first scholarships will be available for the fall semester.

5. **It is the responsibility of the student to notify the institution's financial**

aid office that he/she is eligible for the Oklahoma's Promise award.

Students will receive an award letter from the State Regents' office after their final paperwork has been evaluated and approved.

6. To retain eligibility while pursuing the program of higher learning, the student shall meet the requirements for retention and degree completion as established by the institution in which the student is enrolled. The student must maintain good academic standing and SAP as required by federal Title IV student financial aid programs. Students should refrain from conduct that leads to suspension.

7. Students receiving Oklahoma's Promise awards beginning in the 2012-2013 academic year and thereafter, will have their qualifications identified by the Oklahoma Board of Regent's Office. Schools will be responsible for removing ineligible students from claims for payment and will be required to monitor these students for possible future compliance with this requirement.

5.7-3 Application Procedures

Students may apply online at www.okhighered.org/okpromise; pick up an Oklahoma's Promise application from a counselor at school; or call the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education's information hotline at 800.858.1840.

5.7-4 Criteria for Determining Amount of Student Aid

Public Career Technology Programs: The student should check with the public technology center he/she plans to attend to determine if the career major they are enrolling in qualifies for Federal Financial Aid funding.

Oklahoma's Promise is a cash award. While the award level is calculated based on the amount of tuition, the award does not have to be applied only to tuition costs if the student has another tuition-only award or waiver.

Oklahoma's Promise can be used with other forms of financial aid. An Oklahoma's Promise student may not receive more financial aid than his/her cost of attending an Oklahoma postsecondary education program. The cost of attendance should be consistent with regulations for federal Title IV student financial aid.

5.7-5 Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Oklahoma's Promise

Beginning 2012-2013, if any Oklahoma's Promise student is not eligible to receive federal financial aid as defined by the institution's SAP policy and fails to meet eligibility, the student is not eligible to receive Oklahoma's Promise. The school is responsible for monitoring compliance with this requirement. Unlike many of the previous rule changes, this applies to ALL Oklahoma's Promise recipients. All Oklahoma's Promise students are subject to this requirement including those that do not apply for and/or receive federal financial aid.

5.7-6 Oklahoma's Promise Transfer Students

If a student has used a portion of their Oklahoma's Promise before enrollment at Meridian Technology Center, the Financial Aid Officer will verify the students remaining eligibility through the OK Regents online system. Credit hours remaining to be paid are converted to clock-hours at a rate of 30 clock-hours per credit hour remaining.

5.8 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

5.8-1 Purpose

The WIOA program is a federal program of assistance designed to assist individuals facing employment barriers, economic disadvantages or additional school training to secure productive employment. In order to qualify for the program, a student must be unemployed or underemployed and economically disadvantaged. Review WIOA assistance programs at www.OKJobMatch.com. The term "economically disadvantaged" is defined as follows.

☒ Receives welfare payments.

☒ Has a total family income for the 12-month period prior to application in family size that does not exceed the poverty level determined in accordance with criteria established by the Office of Management and Budget.

5.8-2 Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility is determined by the Workforce Investment Act Office. Students must secure WIOA eligibility before enrollment with Meridian.

5.8-3 Application Procedures

Contact your nearest Workforce Oklahoma Office. This can be obtained in the phone book or from your financial aid administrator.

5.8-4 Criteria for Determining Amount of Student Aid

In some cases, WIOA will pay for tuition, books, and supply costs. Amounts are determined by the WIOA counselor.

5.9 Vocational Rehabilitation

5.9-1 Purpose

The purpose of Vocational Rehabilitation is to assist individuals who are physically or mentally handicapped. Services include testing, psychological evaluation, medical examination, and counseling services.

5.9-2 Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility is determined by the Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Office in Oklahoma City.

5.9-3 Application Procedures

Contact the nearest Vocational Rehabilitation Center. This can be obtained in the phone book or from your financial aid administrator.

5.9-4 Criteria for Determining Amount of Student Aid

In some cases, Vocational Rehabilitation will pay for tuition, books, and supply costs. Amounts are determined the vocational rehabilitation counselor.

5.10 Bureau of Indian Affairs

5.10-1 Purpose

One of the purposes of the Bureau of Indian Affairs is to aid Native Americans who meet the requirements mandated by each tribe.

5.10-2 Eligibility Requirements

Bureau of Indian Affairs determines eligibility.

5.10-3 Application Procedures

To apply for assistance, contact your tribal office.

5.10-4 Criteria for Determining Student Aid

Assistance is determined by tribal agency. Grants may provide tuition, supplies, and living expenses.

5.11 Oklahoma Department of Career Technology Education - Otha Grimes Memorial Scholarship

5.11-1 Purpose

The Oklahoma Career and Technology Foundation Scholarships are reserved for adult students who have initiated formal training to achieve vocational career objectives.

5.11-2 Eligibility Requirement

- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- Must be enrolled in and making satisfactory academic progress in a full-time career major.
- Must exhibit an evident need for scholarship assistance.
- Must declare an intention to complete a career objective in the stated vocational-technical program.

5.11-3 Application Procedures

Applicants must use the authorized online application form. When applications are available, the Financial Aid Office will provide information to all students through their instructors.

5.11-4 Criteria for Determining Student Aid

Scholarships are reserved for deserving adult students who may not qualify for other scholarships or student assistance programs. Scholarships are awarded more on the basis of need and commitment rather than on good grades alone. Scholarship recipients and award amounts are determined by the Oklahoma Department of Career Technology Education Foundation.

The scholarship stipulates that the award is to be used toward books, tuition,

and other direct expenses incurred for training.

5.12 Second Year Senior Tuition Waiver

5.12-1 Purpose

The purpose of the Second Year Senior Tuition Waiver is to provide assistance with educational costs for in-district students who begin a program of study during their senior year of high school and need to complete the second year of the program as an adult student.

5.12-2 Eligibility Requirements

Secondary students attending Meridian Technology Center may receive a tuition waiver upon completion of their high school graduation requirements, if they meet the following criteria: 1) the student must have attended Meridian Technology Center while he/she was enrolled in a Meridian Technology Center district high school, 2) the student must have attended Meridian Technology Center less than four semesters, but more than one, during the time he/she first enrolled at Meridian Technology Center and the time he/she completed high school graduation requirements at a Meridian Technology Center district high school, and 3) while the student attended Meridian Technology Center, he/she must have followed the Meridian Technology Center Student Handbook's policies and regulations and be in good standing with the institution.

5.12-3 Application Procedures

No application is necessary. Inform the career counselor at the time of enrollment.

5.12-4 Criteria for Determining Amount of Student Aid

Provides a waiver of tuition allowing the student to complete the program for up to one-half of the program length.

5.13 Next Step Scholarship

5.13-1 Purpose

The purpose of the Next Step Scholarship is to provide assistance with educational costs for in-district students who attend Meridian Technology Center after receiving their diploma or obtaining their GED within two years of their expected high school graduation date.

5.13-2 Eligibility Requirements

Students may receive a tuition waiver if they meet certain criteria. Students must be a graduate of a Meridian Technology Center district school, or obtain a GED within the district and reside in the district. High school graduates must utilize the scholarship within two years after graduation and GED graduates within two years of their expected high school graduation date. Students must meet all Meridian Technology Center enrollment requirements. Students must maintain a B (80%) grade or higher and maintain 90% attendance. Students must provide the following items: deposit, written career plan/goals, two letters of reference, high school transcript or GED, and proof of residence. The Next Step Scholarship does not apply to enrollment into adult only programs.

5.13-3 Application Procedures

The application for the Next Step Scholarship can be obtained from a career counselor or downloaded from Meridian Technology Center's website at www.meridiantech.edu.

5.13-4 Criteria for Determining Amount of Student Aid

Students are required to pay a deposit however; this scholarship provides a waiver of tuition for the student to complete one career major. Scholarship recipients are required to pay for books, clothing and any other materials required by the program.

5.14 Meridian Technology Center Foundation Scholarships

5.14-1 Purpose

The Meridian Technology Center Foundation was established in 1985 to advance vocational-technical education and to support the efforts of Meridian Technology Center. The Foundation accomplishes its purposes primarily through providing scholarships and loans for tuition, books, and supplies to students attending Meridian Technology Center.

5.14-2 Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility requirements are determined by the Meridian Technology Center Foundation.

5.14-3 Application Procedures

Scholarship applications are available in the Career Planning Center and [online at www.meridiantech.edu](http://www.meridiantech.edu).

5.14-4 Criteria for Determining Amount of Student Aid

Amount of scholarship awards is determined by the Foundation and its donors.

5.15 Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency

5.15-1 Purpose

The Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency program is a federal program of assistance for families and students to obtain self-sufficiency attend school and receive counseling. In order to qualify for the program, a family or student must attend life skill training, be unemployed or underemployed and economically disadvantaged. The term "economically disadvantaged" is defined as follows:

☐ Family income is at the 150% poverty level.

5.15-2 Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility is determined by the Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency serving Cleveland, Lincoln, Logan, Payne, Pottawatomie and Seminole Counties.

5.15-3 Application Procedures

Contact your nearest Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency or call (405) 624-2533 in Stillwater.

5.15-4 Criteria for Determining Amount of Student Aid

Criteria are determined by Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency.

SECTION 6: INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

6.1 2025-2026 Financial Aid Approved Career Majors

The following career majors of study are currently offered at Meridian Technology Center, and are approved for Title IV Financial Assistance:

AIR CONDITIONING AND REFRIGERATION

- Residential Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Installer
- Residential Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Technician

AUTOMOTIVE AND COLLISION REPAIR TECHNOLOGY

- Automotive Service Technician (Natef Compliant)
- Combination Collision Repair Technician

BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

- Administrative Assistant
- Entrepreneur

COMPUTER AIDED DRAFTING

- CAD Specialist

COSMETOLOGY

- Cosmetologist – Adults only
- Master Instructor – Adults only

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Criminal Justice I
- Criminal Justice II
- Criminal Justice III

CULINARY ARTS

- Culinary Arts

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Early Care and Education Master Teacher

ELECTRICAL TECHNOLOGY

- Residential Electrician
- Commercial Electrician

ENERGY AND POWER

- Industrial Technology
- Electric Utility Line Worker

HEALTH CAREERS

- ☒ Health Careers - MEDICAL ASSISTANT
- ☒ Health Careers Pre-Rad Tech

HEALTH INFORMATICS TECHNOLOGY

- ☒ Medical Coding Associate **CCA**
- ☒ Medical Coding Specialist **CCS**

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- ☒ Digital Forensics Analyst
- ☒ Enterprise Network Professional
- ☒ Home Technology Integration

INTERACTIVE MEDIA

- ☒ Graphic Design Specialist
- ☒ Desktop Publisher/Graphic Designer
- ☒ Motion Graphics Artist
- ☒ Video Technician

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND MACHINING/CNC

- ☒ CNC Machinist
- ☒ Manual Machinist

PHARMACY TECHNICIAN

- ☒ Pharmacy Technician

PRACTICAL NURSING

- ☒ Practical Nursing – Adults only

PRECISION METAL FABRICATION

- ☒ Metal Fabricator

RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGY

- ☒ Radiologic Technologist – Adults only

RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION

- ☒ Frame Carpenter
- ☒ Finish Carpenter

WELDING TECHNOLOGY

- ☒ Welding

6.2

Full-time Administration and Faculty at Meridian Technology Center

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Autry, Mona	Adult Education Instructor/Coordinator
Bateson, Jeana	Health Careers Instructor
Black, Heather	Pharmacy Technician
Bolay, Anita	Health Careers Instructor
Boles, Cy	Residential and Commercial Construction Instructor
Gloria Branch	Digital Media Instructor
Burnett, Schelina	Executive Director, Finance
Camp, Madison	Early Care and Education Instructor
Carlile, Rick	Automotive Technology Instructor
Charter, Dustin	Culinary Arts Instructor
Chavez, Kayrene	Daytime Cosmetology Instructor
Clary, Vivian	Evening Registrar
Cotton, Dolores	Practical Nursing Coordinator/Instructor
Colasacco, Keith	Part-Time Evening Supervisor
Colasacco, Sandy	Director, First Impressions
Conley, Zachary	Underground Utility Locator Instructor
Curtsinger, Malena	Evening Cosmetology Instructor
Devers, Daniel	Career Development Specialist
Ellis, Gina	Information Technology Instructor
Etheridge, Brittany	Practical Nursing Instructor
Ford, Wayne	Electrical Technology Instructor
Frick, Russell	Computer Aided Drafting Instructor
Gage, Jennifer	Bursar
Gray, Joe	Information Management Specialist
Grant, Megan	Career Development Specialist
Greene-Hicks, Anne	Information Technology Instructor
Hernandez Torres, Ashley	Financial Aid Officer
Herring, Carol	Academic Services Instructor
Hicks, Dustin	Director of Instruction, Academic Services and Health
Hines, Rena	Director, Short-Term Adult Education
Hixon, Claudette	Adult Education Instructor
James, Brian	STEM Academy Instructor
Johnston, Melody	Business Technology Instructor
Jones, Doug	Health Careers Instructor
Jones, Leon	Criminal Justice Instructor
Justus, Luke	Industrial Technology Instructor
Keith, Walter	Welding Technology Instructor
Lane, Heather	Practical Nursing Instructor
Lester, Titus	Coordinator, Short-Term Adult Education
Littau, Jeff	Energy and Power Instructor
Little, Les	Criminal Justice Instructor
Little, DeAnna	Director, Instruction, Trade & Industry Services
Major, Doug Dr.	Superintendent/CEO
Mantooth, James	Biomedical Sciences Instructor
McMurry, Sheila	Digital Media Instructor
Mills, Michelle	Health Careers Instructor

Neiman, Patricia	Health Informatics Instructor
Ogle, Tina	BioMedical Sciences Instructor
Prewitt, Charlotte	Practical Nursing Instructor
Ray, Teri	Career Counselor/Student Organization Coordinator
Reeves, Eric	Automotive Technology Instructor
Turlington, Richmond, Andrea	Pre-Engineering Instructor
Schaefer, Scott	South Campus Director
Short, Debbie	Pre-Engineering Academy Instructor
Short, Jordan	Combination Collision Repair
Smith, Anthony	Precision Metal Fabrication Instructor
Snowden, Travis	Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Instructor
Thomas, Mark	Pre-Engineering Instructor
West, Heather	Educational Enhancement Instructor
Wheeler, Emily	Radiologic Technology Coordinator
Williams, Jimmy	Product Development & Machining Instructor
Zagar Jeanie	Executive Director, Career Planning/Development
Zweiacker, Jeremy	Executive Director, Planning and Operations

These budgets and expenses are reviewed and adjusted annually. Student expenses are taken from the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The standard allowance breaks down the expense categories as follows: 37% - Housing/Utilities, 19% - Food, 11% - Transportation, 33% - Miscellaneous

6.4-4 Cost of Attendance Budget example for a 1050 Clock-Hour program

Cost of Attendance (COA) is used to give an idea of what the full cost of attending school will be for each year. There are Direct* and Indirect* costs included in the COA. Your specific costs may be different than what is listed below. *Please review your specific program expense sheet for your individual COA budget.



Career Major: Air Conditioning and Refrigeration-Residential Technician

Cost of Attendance- 1050 Clock Hours

Cost of Attendance(COA) is used to give adults an idea of what the full cost of attending school will be for each year. There are Direct and Indirect costs included in the COA. Your specific indirect costs may be different than what is listed below.

Total Cost of Attendance 2025-2026					
		Dependent		Independent	
		In-District	Out-of-District	In-District	Out-of-District
Direct	Tuition and Fees	\$3,150.00	\$6,300.00	\$3,150.00	\$6,300.00
Indirect	Books/Course Materials/Supplies/Equipment	\$408.00	\$408.00	\$408.00	\$408.00
Total program related expenses		\$3,558.00	\$6,708.00	\$3,558.00	\$6,708.00
Indirect	Housing/Utilities & Meals	\$5,621.00	\$5,621.00	\$11,855.00	\$11,855.00
Indirect	Transportation	\$1,104.00	\$1,104.00	\$2,329.00	\$2,329.00
Indirect	Miscellaneous	\$3,313.00	\$3,313.00	\$6,986.00	\$6,986.00
Indirect	Licensure/Certification Cost	\$55.00	\$55.00	\$55.00	\$55.00
Estimated cost of Attendance		\$13,651.00	\$16,801.00	\$24,783.00	\$27,933.00

Definitions

Direct costs are items that will appear on your Meridian Invoice, such as tuition and fees.

Indirect costs will not appear on your invoice but are **estimated** costs associated with going to college and should be included in your personal budget. Most of these costs would be incurred whether you attend school or not. These include items like books, transportation, housing and personal expenses.

Dependent students are under 24 years old, are not married and have no dependents. Still required to list parents on FAFSA.

Independent students are any students who do not fall into the dependent student definition.

In-District students currently live within one of the districts that we serve.

Out-of-District students are charged double tuition, due to living outside of the Meridian district. (Exceptions can be made if program is not available at students closest Tech center.)

*all tuition costs provided are for the full career major. If you enroll as half-time, you may not incur the full tuition amount during the 25-26 school year.
 *Indirect costs are based on the Consumer Price Index as of December 2024. Source: US Department of Labor.

6.5 Institutional Refund Policy

Full-Time Programs

Upon written notification of withdrawal, a tuition refund will be remitted to individuals enrolled in full-time programs according to the following guidelines. A 100% refund, less the deposit, will be remitted to students who officially withdraw within the first five (5) days of a payment period. No tuition will be refunded to a student who has not officially withdrawn within the first five (5) days of a payment period. A 100% refund, including the deposit, will be remitted only to students who have documented extenuating circumstances that have been approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Written notice of withdrawal is considered to be the completion and submission of an official withdrawal form or a letter that is dated and signed by the student, and addressed to the Director of the Career Planning Center.

Refund Policies for Recipients of Title IV Financial Aid

A federally-mandated refund must be calculated for all Title IV financial aid recipients who withdraw prior to the completion of the period of enrollment for which he/she has been awarded aid according to the following federal regulations. If a student withdraws on or before the 60% point for the current period of enrollment, a portion of the total of Title IV funds awarded a student (PELL Grant) must be returned, according to the provisions of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998. The calculation of the return of these funds may result in the student owing a balance to the school and/or the Federal Government.

Short-Term Programs

At the time of enrollment in a short-term program, a deposit per class is required. Full tuition for these courses is due by the first-class meeting. Deposits and class fees are non-refundable except when Meridian Technology Center cancels classes or the student has documented extenuating circumstances that have been approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee. The Federal Pell Grant is not approved to pay toward short-term programs or clock-hour programs less than 600 hours.

6.6 Return of Title IV Financial Assistance

When a student withdraws, drops out, or is dismissed from a school, the amount of aid earned by the student must be determined. A Return to Title IV Funds calculation is completed at this time. If the amount disbursed to the student was greater than the amount the student earned, unearned funds must be returned. If the amount disbursed to the student is less than the amount the student earned, he or she is eligible to receive a post-withdrawal disbursement of the earned aid that was not received. Meridian Technology Center has adopted the following policies and procedures to ensure proper accountability when a student leaves school.

6.6-1 Return of Title IV Funds

Based on 668.22 - Treatment of Title IV Funds, Federal law now specifies how a school must determine the amount of federal financial aid that a student earns if he or she withdraws, drops out, or is dismissed

prior to completing more than 60% of a payment period. It is the responsibility of Meridian Technology Center to determine the amount of Title IV assistance the student earned as of the withdrawal date.

If the student completely withdraws from school during a payment period, the institution must calculate, according to the Return to Title IV formula, the total scheduled financial assistance earned and determine if the student is entitled to receive more assistance or if the unearned excess funds must be returned to the Federal Government.

Once a student has completed more than 61% of the payment period, the student is said to have earned all of the assistance. If the student withdraws from school before completing 61% of the payment period, a prorated schedule is used in the calculation to determine the amount of Title IV funds the student has earned at the time of withdrawal.

If the total amount of Title IV assistance the student earned based on the required calculation, is less than the amount that was disbursed to the student, as determined by the student's withdrawal date; the difference of these two amounts must be returned to the Title IV programs in the order specified by the regulation. Since Meridian Technology Center does not participate in Federal Student Loans, returns will be sent to Federal PELL Grant first and remaining institutional charges will be paid last.

The funds owed to the PELL Grant program by the student will be reported to NSLDS as an Overpayment if, within 45 days of notification, the student has not returned the funds to the school to be returned to the grant program. The student is required to pay back 50% of the over-payment to the Federal Government.

When a student withdraws during a payment period and a credit balance is created. Meridian will not release the credit balance until a Return of Title IV Funds calculation Title IV has been performed. The Title IV credit balance will be allocated as follows: first to repay any grant overpayment owed by the student as a result of the current withdrawal. Any remaining credit balance funds will be used to pay authorized charges at the institution and finally to the student.

6.6-2 Official and Unofficial Withdrawal

Official withdrawal will be made by completing the Adult Student Enrollment Status Form or submitting a letter notifying of withdrawal. Students may contact the Executive Director of the Career Planning Center to give notice of intent to withdraw. If information regarding last date of attendance is not clear, student's instructor will be contacted to confirm student's last date of attendance. An unofficial withdrawal occurs when the student did not go through the official withdrawal procedure. The last documented date at an academically related activity as determined from the

attendance records will be used as the date of withdrawal.

Meridian Technology Center will first determine the withdrawal date. Then the Financial Aid Officer will determine the percentage of Title IV funds earned by the student. The percentage of the period completed by a student is determined by dividing the number of hours the student was scheduled to complete in the payment period as of the day the student withdrew, by the total number of clock hours in the same period. The amount of Title IV aid earned by the student is the percentage of Title IV aid earned (from the percentage of payment period completed) multiplied by the total of Title IV aid disbursed and could have been disbursed for the payment period.

The institution and/or student may need to return any unearned funds as determined by the calculation. The student may be billed for any unearned funds including the amount of institutional charges the institution has to return on behalf of the student. If it is determined that the student owes unpaid tuition, books and supplies, the balance due is the responsibility of the student. The percentage unearned is 100% minus percent earned. If the student withdraws after completing more than 60% of the payment period, the student has earned 100% of the clock hours scheduled to be completed within the payment period. Please note that amounts of .6001 to .6004 are not rounded up.

6.6-3 Early Completers

In order to meet financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP), students must complete 90 % of their attendance hours, in addition to 100% of their coursework hours, to earn the Meridian program certificate. Students that find themselves finishing coursework early, without required attendance hours will be completed as a course concentrator and cannot participate in graduation. Since Pell Grant funds are calculated based on individual program hours, disbursed Pell funds will be sent back to the Department of Education for any program completions that do not meet 90% attendance requirements. This will result in the student having a balance with Meridian.

6.6-4 Leave of Absence

An approved leave of absence has the effect of placing the student's aid and tuition on hold for the period of time the student is on approved leave. A student who violates the terms of an approved leave risks automatic dismissal as well as liability for the repayment of financial aid received by the student. If a student fails to return from an approved leave of absence as defined in section 7.26-5, the date that the institution determines the student began the leave of absence will be used as the withdrawal date and a Return to Title IV will be conducted.

Financial aid students should meet with or inform the Financial Aid Officer before an approved leave of absence is taken. This will allow for

discussion on how tuition payments and financial aid disbursements will resume once returned from the leave.

6.6-5 Post Withdrawal Disbursements of Title IV Funds

If the Return to Title IV Funds calculation determines the student received less federal aid money than the amount earned, Meridian Technology Center will make a disbursement of the earned aid that was not disbursed if the student has met all other eligibility requirements (satisfactory academic progress and completed hours from previous pay period). Written notification will be sent no later than 30 days after the date the Financial Aid Officer determines the student withdrew. The notification will advise the student that he or she can receive a direct disbursement, identifying the type and amount of these title IV funds and explaining that the student may accept or decline some or all of those funds. Earned funds in excess of tuition and/or books will be disbursed directly to the student. The student will be advised they have 14 calendar days from the date the school sent notification to accept the disbursement. Meridian Technology Center may choose to make a post-withdrawal disbursement after the 14-day period on a case-by-case basis. Disbursements cannot be made after 180 days.

6.6-6 Satisfactory Academic Progress in Relation to Return to Title IV

Satisfactory academic progress for each student who receives Federal Student Aid is reviewed prior to the beginning of each payment period. If a student fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress, the student will be placed on financial aid suspension and subsequent aid returned. Please refer to 7.30. Administration of attendance records and procedures is the responsibility of the Director of Full-Time Program.

6.7 Overpayment

An overpayment of a PELL occurs any time the student receives a payment that is greater than the amount for which the student is eligible. If an overpayment does occur, a portion of the award may need to be refunded to the Title IV programs, and/or the student may need to repay a portion of the award funds he or she received. Meridian Technology Center is required to return the full amount owed (that exceeds \$1.00) to any Title IV program no later than 45 days after the date the institution determines that the student has withdrawn. Current regulations specify a student does not have to repay a grant overpayment of \$50.00 or less that is a result of the student's withdrawal. Student will be responsible for repayment of funds which are returned to Title IV by Meridian Technology Center on the student's behalf (as determined by the Return to Title IV calculations). The student's Title IV repayment obligation is determined after the school's share is calculated. Monetary amounts are to be reported in dollars and cents using standard rounding rules to round to the nearest dollar. The amount the institution and student are each responsible to return will not be rounded to the nearest dollar.

Meridian Technology Center will return all unearned funds within 45 days from the date the financial aid office determines the student withdrew. Funds owed by Meridian Technology Center will be returned by transferring monies into the PELL Grant account; or, if the institution is in the process of requesting funds for a PELL Grant disbursement, the institution may reduce the request of the amount of funds to be drawn down by the amount of funds it is due to return.

If a student owes a repayment, written notification will be sent to the student within 30 days advising that he or she must repay the overpayment. The notification will include the following information:

1. Notification that the student owes an overpayment of PELL Grant funds.
2. The student's eligibility for additional Title IV funds will end if the student fails to contact the Financial Aid Office within 45 days as of the date the letter was sent to discuss repayment options.

If the student fails to contact the Financial Aid Office, the student's overpayment will be reported to NSLDS and referred to the Department for collection: Student Loan Processing Center, Attn: Overpayments, P.O. Box 4157, Greenville, TX 75403.

Meridian Technology Center will apply the same Return of Title IV Funds calculation to all students who apply for and receive Federal Student Aid. The calculation is performed using the Return to Title IV Worksheets and the Return to Title IV Web Product developed by the U.S. Department of Education. Examples of the application of the refund policy are available upon request by contacting Meridian Technology Center's Financial Aid Officer.

PROCEDURE MANUAL

SECTION 7: ADMINISTRATION OF PELL GRANT PROGRAM

7.1 Definition

The PELL Grant Program is a federally funded program that provides a grant up to \$7,395 for 2025-2026 post-secondary students enrolled in an eligible program.

7.2 Aid Office Handling of Application for PELL Grant

The Financial Aid Officer determines if all application requirements have been met. If so, the Financial Aid Officer uses the Institutional Student Information Record information and the current PELL Grant Payment Schedule to determine the scheduled PELL Award and estimated disbursement. The student is notified through an award letter. Payment periods are based on the hours of the enrolled career major and disbursements will be determined by enrollment dates and payment period hours.

7.3 Preparation of Student Financial Aid Folder

The Financial Aid Office prepares student folders; makes color-coded file labels showing students' name and school year enrolled; reviews previous years' student files, and combines any previous years' records with new file. This becomes the current year file. The Financial Aid Office will ensure

that all documents required by Federal Regulations are in the students file before aid is disbursed.

7.4 Verification Policy and Procedure

MERIDIAN TECHNOLOGY adheres to the following verification principles developed by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and the regulations, which govern verification of Title IV assistance. To ensure that limited financial aid funds are awarded to eligible students in an equitable and consistent manner, all institutions must develop policies for verification of family reported information. Requirements for verification of family-reported information for purpose of qualifying for financial aid must be cost effective, flexible, and based upon acceptance of a reasonable tolerance range for error applied to award amounts. While institutions vary widely by type, students served, and mission; minimum standards for verification must exist for all institutions. Established institutional policies, which outline required forms and procedures to fulfill verification standards, shall be written and made available to applicants for financial aid. Verification procedures used by institutions should as a minimum be based on an accurate representation of the applicant pool and may include the use of single or multiple edit checks used to establish error-prone criteria. (In compliance with 34 CFR 668. 53 of the Federal Regulations, these policies and procedures are required.) All applicants selected for verification by the central Processing System will be verified. Meridian does not elect to use the 30% verification requirement. Therefore, Meridian will verify 100% of selected applicants. An exception to this may be students, who were not selected for verification at the time they were enrolled at Meridian, but were selected for verification after enrolling at another institution.

7.5 Required File Documents for Verification

(Verification flag will be indicated on ISIR for Financial Aid Officer to review)

A. WHO MUST BE VERIFIED:

1. The institution will verify all applicants selected by the Secretary via the Federally approved edits. An exception to this may be students who, were not selected for verification at the time they were enrolled at Meridian, but were selected after enrolling in another institution.
2. The institution will, in addition, select applicants for verification under the following circumstances:
 - a. When there is knowledge of conflict
 - b. When the IRS income tax return transcript is submitted, the verifiable items will be verified
3. The institution will require transfer students previously selected for verification to re-verify their information unless they are excluded under the provisions of 34 CFR Par 668.54 (b).

The institution's selection policy will be applied consistently to all applicants not selected or required to be selected by the Secretary.

B. REQUIRED VERIFICATION ITEMS:

1. For applicants selected under criteria above, the institution will verify the items specified below for all applicants and tax filers and a Verification Worksheet completed by student and/or parent:

- a. Household size
- b. Number enrolled in College

Tax Filers

- a. Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)
- b. U.S. Income Tax paid
- c. Certain untaxed income and benefits
- d. Education credits
- e. Specific untaxed income items (Untaxed IRA distributions, untaxed pensions, IRA deductions, tax exempt interest)
- f. Student and/or parent to use IRS Data Retrieval Tool on FAFSA

For Non-tax Filers:

- a. Income earned from work and copy of W-2 if needed

High School Completion Status (if needed)

- a. High school diploma dated
- b. Final high school transcript with date of diploma awarded
- c. General Educational Development (GED Certificated dated
- e. Home schooled – transcript signed and dated by parent or guardian listing completed courses and documents completion of secondary school education or signed/dated verification affidavit

Household Resources

- a. Verify income data based on tax filing status
- b. If verified income is not sufficient, student/parent must explain how family was supported

In addition, the institution may verify any other application items, requiring reasonable documentation, which may be selected by the institution.

2. Documentation requirements: Meridian has the authority to **require** students to provide certain documentation as deemed necessary to complete the verification requirements.

- a. U.S. Federal tax return 1040's
- b. Dept. of Education approved verification worksheet
- c. Untaxed income/benefits-signed statement and/or official agency documentation
- d. Internal Revenue Service Tax Return Transcript
- e. Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose

These are acceptable methods of documenting the required verification items, but in certain cases, any other reasonable documentation would be allowed. This documentation is to be submitted to the Meridian Financial Aid Office not to the Department of Education.

File at this point must contain:

- Institutional Student Aid Report (ISIR) with access granted to transfer the FTI to FAFSA
- If social security benefits are claimed, verification of amount
- Cost of attendance
- Calculation Worksheet
- Signed FAFSA correction statement (as needed)

7.6 Required File Documents for Non-Transfer Students

- Regular student in an eligible program
- Enrollment status (at least half time)
- History: at this school - satisfactory academic progress
- Verification: selected (conflict), not selected
- Cost of attendance
- Calculation Worksheet
- Signed FAFSA correction statement (as needed)

7.7 Procedure to Follow Concerning Missing Information

If required information is missing, the Financial Aid Office will send the student notice in the mail that additional documentation is needed and advising the student to bring proper documentation.

The Financial Aid Officer reviews documents to make sure there is no conflicting information in file. If so, the Financial Aid Officer must contact student to resolve the conflict. If no conflicts exist, the Financial Aid Officer proceeds with processing.

7.8 Procedure for Handling Ineligible ISIR

Applicant brings in eligibility letter and information review form. Letter states that index is too high for PELL Grant.

Student is advised on his/her Student Aid Report to make any necessary corrections and resubmit. The Financial Aid Office takes no responsibility for verifying data unless student is selected for verification.

7.9 Use of Professional Judgment

Definition - A discretionary decision or opinion reached on the basis of the experience of a financial aid administrator. It allows for flexibility in dealing with individual student circumstances.

It is the philosophy of the school that Professional Judgment be utilized at a minimum level. Student applications whose financial and personal background truly reflects a unique applicant circumstance which Federal Regulations do not address will be assessed on an individual basis.

Professional judgment will only be implemented when the student has some extraordinary circumstance that warrants overriding normal procedures. Such adjustment must be fully documented in the student's file.

If applicant is selected for verification, verification must be completed before PJ adjustments made.

7.10 Verification of Information Reported

Dependency Status: A comment will appear on SAR/ISIR. Any student who is claiming to be independent on some basis other than age, veteran's status, having legal dependents other than a spouse, marriage and/or orphan status must verify the claimed independence status by submitting documentation.

Adjusted Gross Income for base year: for independent students (and their spouse) the FTI access granted on FAFSA.

Non-filers: signed Verification Worksheet that tax return was not and will not be filed and a listing of sources and amounts of all income for the base year. Include copy of W-2's for each employer.

Tax Paid for base year: See AGI

Number in Household: Verification Worksheet signed and dated by student and/or parents is used to verify this item. If 90 days or less have elapsed between the date the applicant signed the application and the date the school received the ISIR, this item does not have to be verified. Other exceptions are listed in the Department of Education Financial Aid Handbook.

Number in College: Verification Worksheet signed and dated by student and spouse and if dependent, parent and spouse. If the Financial Aid Officer feels there is a reason to doubt the information, the schools listed may be contacted to confirm enrollment. See the Financial Aid Handbook for exceptions.

Untaxed Income:

- Social Security
- Child Support received
- Earned Income Credit:
- Foreign Income Exclusion
- IRA and Keogh income:
- SEP Deductions
- Interest on Tax Free Bonds: signed verification form
- Worker's Compensation
- Disability

7.11 Verification of Other Information

The Central Processing System (CPS) will alert the school on the SAR if the high school is not recognizable. If high school does not appear on National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), verification is required. Verification should include High School Diploma and/or dated final Transcript showing the courses the student completed. A student receiving a High School "Certificate" after a state exam is not sufficient for Financial Aid.

The SAR will often have comments requiring the Financial Aid Officer to

verify specific items. Citizenship status must sometimes be verified.

7.12 Tolerance Options, Corrections and Verification Status Codes

This institution uses no tolerances before disbursing aid. If an applicant has been selected for verification, all required verification items must be accurate before any funds are disbursed. In addition, there is no tolerance for errors in non-dollar items. If an original application has an error in any non-dollar item, such as household size, the student or the school must correct it.

7.13 Eligibility Assessment

The Financial Aid Officer reviews documents in file and ascertains that the student meets general qualifications for financial assistance:

- Must be a citizen or eligible non-citizen. Unless the SAR/ISIR demands it, US citizens who answered yes to the citizenship question do not have to verify citizenship. Permanent residents must submit proof of status to aid office.
This proof becomes a permanent part of their aid file.
- All eligible non-citizens must submit proof of status for file. Proof includes US passport stamped "noncitizen national", or "Form I-151 or Form I-551 (green cards). Other forms of documentation are rare and the Financial Aid Officer will consult the Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook if necessary.

7.14 Regular Student Status

Students must be regular students to be eligible for financial assistance. A regular student is defined as a student who is enrolled or accepted for enrollment for the purpose of obtaining a certificate.

The Financial Aid Officer reviews student's statement of purpose on financial aid application on SAR/ISIR to verify purpose and ascertains from admissions office that student has been admitted for the purpose of obtaining a certificate, i.e. is enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a certificate program.

The student must meet eligibility by having a High School Diploma, GED, or a Home School Certificate.

7.15 Admittance to an Eligible Program

The Financial Aid Officer ascertains from institutional records on enrollment and admission that student is enrolled in an eligible program. An eligible program for PELL purposes must be at least 600 clock hours in length. This is noted in student's file.

7.16 Need

Need for the PELL grant program is documented by submission of a valid SAR/ISIR with a SAI of 7395 or less

7.17 Return Status

Student signs statement concerning return status on FAFSA.

The Financial Aid Officer also consults student's aid history at this school to ascertain no returns are owed.

If a return is owed the student is ineligible for PELL grant assistance.

7.18 Default Status

If the student is in default, he/she is not eligible for further Title IV assistance. However, it is possible for the student to obtain satisfactory arrangements for repayment. Student must have a letter from the holder of the loan stating that the student has made satisfactory repayment arrangements and is eligible for Title IV funds before any funds may be disbursed.

7.19 Statement of Educational Purpose/Registration Compliance/Update

The statement appears on the FAFSA and must be signed by the student.

7.20 History

If the student has attended this school in the past, the Financial Aid Officer combines any existing student aid file with current file, reviews file and ascertains whether the student was making satisfactory academic progress in previous course work.

7.21 Verification

If the student was selected for verification or if there is conflict in the file and the aid administrator has verified items, the file should contain the verification work sheet and support documentation.

7.22 Social Security

If student receives social security, the amount no longer has to be verified unless verification of this item is specifically required by a comment on the federal output document or unless one has reason to believe that benefits were received and were reported incorrectly.

7.23 Undergraduate Status

Student states on PELL application that he/she does not have a Bachelor's degree. Students who have undergraduate degrees are not eligible for the PELL grant.

7.24 Computing the PELL Grant Award

There are five steps in computing a PELL grant:

7.24-1 Determination of Cost of Attendance

PELL grant cost of attendance is used to determine PELL grant payment to students. Cost of attendance for purposes of the PELL grant is the cost of tuition and fees for a full-time student for a full academic year plus an allowance for room and board, books, supplies, transportation and miscellaneous expenses incurred by the student for a full academic year.

7.24-2 Determination of Scheduled Award

Once the PELL Cost of Attendance is determined, the Financial Aid Officer looks up the Student Aid Index provided on the students ISIR. This SAI is then subtracted from the Maximum Pell Award for the year (7395) to determine the Scheduled Award. This Scheduled Award amount is then multiplied by the total career major hours and then divided by 900(academic year). This calculation will produce the actual Pell award for the student during the award year.

7.24-3 Determination of PELL Payment Periods

The PELL payment periods are determined by academic year. Disbursement periods are defined in 5.5-6. The Financial Aid Officer consults a calendar sheet and ascertains the beginning and ending dates of each payment period for each student. The Financial Aid Officer then determines in which award year each payment period belongs. An award year is defined as July 1 of one year to June 30 of the next year. If a payment period occurs entirely within an award year it is part of the award year. If a payment period begins in one award year and ends in another award year it is considered a spanning pay period and must be classified as belonging to one award year. If more than six months of such a payment period occur in a particular award year, then the payment period must be classified as belonging to that award year. Otherwise the Financial Aid Officer may classify the period on a student by student basis. Refer to 5.5-7, Crossover Policy.

7.24-4 Determination of Payment Per Pay Period

For each pay period classified as being part of the current award year the formula for determining payment is $\text{clock hours student is Scheduled Award} \times \text{Total program clock hours} / 900 \text{ academic year hours}$.

7.24-5 Determination of Leave of Absence

Realizing that unforeseen circumstances do arise, Meridian Technology Center allows a period of leave of absence for family emergency. The leave of absence may be granted to a student who will be unable to attend class for a consecutive number of days--five or more, but does not exceed nine weeks. The leave must be requested in advance, or within 24 hours when the need for such a leave of absence arises. The student may not be paid for the hours but may be excused without penalty. The Leave of Absence Form is located in the Career Planning Center and must be approved by the Director of the Career Planning Center.

If eligible prior to the start of the Leave of Absence, a student may still receive a Pell disbursement during this time. By taking a Leave of Absence, students are agreeing to extend their completion timeframe in the program and will plan with their instructor to attend the program longer or make up hours missed during leave.

Tuition will be paused during a Leave of Absence, however a tuition payment could be due when the student returns, as the Pell payment will be delayed.

7.24-6 Determination of Disbursement of Regular Student

The total expected disbursement is the sum of expected disbursements for all payment periods classified as belonging to the current award year.

7.24-7 Determination of Disbursement of Transfer Student

A student who has received a PELL grant from another school in the current award year is a transfer student. The Financial Aid Officer will consult NSLDS to determine the scheduled and disbursed award at the previous school. Because a student may only receive one (or up to 150%) of a PELL grant per award year, the expected disbursement at the second school may have to be adjusted to avoid awarding more than one or 100% (or 150 percent, if the student is enrolled and eligible for a Year-Round Award) of a PELL grant to transfer students total expected disbursements:

The information needed is obtained from the financial aid transcript from the previous school. First, one must find the percentage of the PELL received at that school: Divide the amount the student received at the previous school by the student's Scheduled Award at that school. Then subtract this percentage from 100 percent (or 150 percent, if the student is enrolled and eligible for a Year-Round Award). The result is the maximum percentage of the Scheduled Award that the student generally may receive at our school.

7.25 PELL Grant Calendar/Award Sheet

To facilitate the above calculations, we have developed PELL Grant award sheets.

- The Financial Aid Officer completes the top portion of the award sheet with student's name, SAI, and social security number.
- The Financial Aid Officer selects the appropriate program calculation sheet.
- The Financial Aid Officer determines the dates of payment periods, classified payment periods into award years and shows the expected disbursement for payment periods in this award year. The total expected disbursement is shown. This sheet becomes a permanent part of the student's file and serves to document exactly how and why a student received a particular award. It also facilitates coding payment documents and completing award letters.

7.26 Coding on PELL Payment Document Using EDE

Meridian Technology Center currently uses Electronic Data Exchange for the PELL Applications. It is also used in submitting PELL Origination and Disbursement records. The Financial Aid Officer submits each student and their origination and disbursement records electronically through EDE. EDE conducts an edit check to make sure necessary information is submitted. This information is then sent via modem to the Department of Education. The Department processes it and returns it back to Meridian Technology Center to pull down from their electronic mailbox.

7.27 Award Notification

After the Financial Aid Officer has received all application materials required, verified the ISIR if necessary, completed PELL Grant calculation, the Financial

Aid Officer fills out award notification or amends copy of existing award notification in order to produce a revised award notice.

7.28 Monitoring Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress is monitored every disbursement period (depending on program and enrollment status). Progress reports are sent out to the teachers concerning PELL student's satisfactory academic progress on grades, progress in program, and attendance. These forms are returned to the financial aid office. If student is making satisfactory academic progress their disbursement will be included on the PELL memo to the Finance office. If the student is not making satisfactory academic progress their subsequent financial aid will be suspended and their name will be withdrawn from the PELL Memo. Students are notified in writing of their failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Students receiving Pell Grant should verify with the Financial Aid Officer that their program course and attendance hour requirements have been met before graduation from the program. If coursework is complete, but 90% of the attendance hours were not met, this could result in Pell Grant funding being owed back to the Department of Education.

7.29 Authorizing Disbursements

Once all required documentation is in the students file and Satisfactory Academic Progress is verified then the Financial Aid Officer places the student on the next PELL memo. This memo is sent twice a month, on a day early enough to allow Finance to process and disburse checks on the 15th and 30th of each month to the Finance office.

7.30 Initial Payment

Students are paid the first time based on their enrollment only. Enrollment will be verified by the Financial Aid Officer prior to the student being put on the PELL Memo. Enrollment must be verified before the first disbursement will be issued.

Payment thereafter is based on satisfactory academic progress. For students who are within their first payment period and who continue to be enrolled, in good standing and whose enrollment status has not changed, the Financial Aid Officer places the student on the PELL memo for the date the student is eligible according to the student's scheduled disbursement dates.

7.31 Subsequent Payments

Students' names and subsequent payment dates can be located on the PELL Spreadsheet and in ED Express by the Financial Aid Officer. When a student is due to be disbursed their second PELL disbursement the student's file is pulled and their name and amount of disbursement is added to the PELL memo. The Financial Aid Office confirms continued enrollment and determines if the student has withdrawn during a payment period. Progress reports are distributed from the Financial Aid Office to instructors. The Financial aid Officer will review the returned progress report to verify Satisfactory Academic Progress. If

anyone's progress is unsatisfactory and results in the student being placed on financial aid suspension, his or her name is removed from the PELL memo.

Notification of failure to meet

Satisfactory Academic Progress guideline is distributed to the student along with information on how to appeal the suspension. If student re-establishes eligibility through the appeal process during the payment period, disbursement will be made. If student does not re-establish progress until after the allotted time (sec.5.47) has elapsed, then aid recommences. If the student neither re-establishes eligibility through the appeal process or through the process of 5.47, the student is not paid any additional PELL disbursements.

7.32 Withdrawal and Institutional Refund of Tuition

The Financial Aid Officer establishes the date of withdrawal from institutional records as the earlier of the last date the student attended or the date the student has withdrawn from school for purposes of Return to Title IV calculations.

The bursar calculates tuition refund due according to institution policy. If there is no tuition refund due, the Financial Aid Officer proceeds to the question of overpayment.

If a tuition refund is due according to the institutional refund policy, the bursar calculates amount of institutional refund due. Title IV refunds are dealt with in Sec. 6.7.

7.33 Receipt of Additional Resources

PELL Grant is an entitlement program. PELL Grant is never to be adjusted downward because a student receives additional resources during the award year.

7.34 Records and Accounting

Student Records – The Financial Aid Office maintains individual student files for at least three years beyond closing of award by ED Payment Management System. A student's file ultimately includes the ISIR, PELL calculation worksheet (if applicable) and all related documentation.

7.35 Program Records

7.35-1 Payment Document:

Payment documents are transmitted electronically through EDE.

7.35-2 End of Year Student Payment Summary:

A summarized fiscal year activity list of student's disbursements is run by the Financial Aid Office from information contained in ED Express. This list is compared to the records within the Financial Aid Office and reviewed for accuracy. If inaccurate, a student's pay document must be resubmitted to reconcile the difference(s).