

## Employee Education Benefits/Tuition Remission

Augustana College offers several education benefit options for employees, their spouses, and their qualifying children. Each program described below has varied eligibility requirements. Cost and availability may vary based on the program and the participating school. Meetings will be held on a periodic basis to answer questions and help employees who hope to use this benefit understand the details of their particular situation.

The education benefit policy at Augustana is subject to change or elimination, at any time, by the Board of Trustees and is **not considered a contractual or vested obligation**. These programs are currently not taxable; however, should these benefits be declared compensation subject to either federal or state taxes, Augustana College will not be financially liable for such taxes. All inquiries concerning benefit eligibility should be directed to the Office of Human Resources. Coordination for tuition exchange with other institutions, as well as tuition remission, will be coordinated by the Financial Aid Office once eligibility has been confirmed.

### Eligibility

For the purposes of this policy only, eligibility for benefits is defined below

**Employee:** Refers to full-time or half-time (working more than 20 hours per week) regular employees with a schedule of at least 9 months per year. Benefits vary based on full or part-time status. Part-time employees are only eligible if they work a schedule of at least 20 hours per week and will receive a benefit proportional to a 40 hour work week. Adjunct faculty are those faculty members teaching at least 14 credits per year. Adjunct faculty are considered part-time employees for the purpose of this policy. Children of a deceased or totally disabled person are entitled to this benefit if the parent died or became disabled while serving as an active full or part-time employee of Augustana. In the case of death or disability, this benefit must be used within six years of the employee's death or total disability and will be at the same proportion as when the employee died or became totally disabled.

**Qualifying Spouse:** Refers to the legal spouse or equivalent same-sex domestic partner as recognized by a state, court, or religious sect recognized by the Internal Revenue Service. Employees will be required to show proof of this relationship to determine benefit eligibility.

### **Qualifying Children**

- a) The biological child of the employee
- b) The legally adopted child of the employee
- c) A step-child of the employee who has resided in the employee's home for 12 of the last 12 months
- d) In all of the above categories the dependent must begin the program before the end of his/her 24th year. Children may continue to receive the benefit if the benefit began prior to age 24 and enrollment is continuous.

- e) Exceptions will be made for military service with age extensions based on the length of military service. Requests for military exceptions should be made in writing to the Director of Human Resources.

### **A. Tuition Remission at Augustana College**

This benefit is available for full-time employees who work a 9-month or greater schedule. Employees must work continuously at the College for **two years** to become eligible for this tuition exemption scholarship. Part-time employees regularly scheduled for 20 or more hours per week and adjunct faculty will receive this benefit on a pro-rated basis after continuous employment of two years. Four years of continuous full-time service at another College or University within one year of the date of employment at Augustana will also satisfy this requirement. Tuition Remission will be available to retired employees if the dependent child is currently enrolled at Augustana and actively utilizing the Tuition Remission benefit upon the effective date of the employee's retirement.

Employees may not normally enroll in courses conducted during their working hours. An exception may be made when the supervisor determines this course to be for the improvement of the employee's service to the College and is not offered outside of normal working hours.

This scholarship is for full-time or part-time study, but applies to tuition only. Those eligible to receive this tuition exemption scholarship will be required to fill out the FASFA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form and any funds received through state or federal funding will offset the amount of the tuition exemption. Employees applying for this benefit are responsible for meeting the state filing deadline. Failure to meet this deadline will require the employee to pay the portion of the tuition that would have been covered by a state or federal grant.

Employees and/or their spouse/dependent will be responsible for any fees. This tuition exemption does not take the place of other scholarships. If a student enjoys the benefits of a scholarship, the exemption applies only to the balance due on tuition. Students must apply for scholarship help from outside sources if he/she is eligible. This exemption may **NOT** be applied to costs for books, room, board or other expenses associated with attendance at Augustana.

This tuition exemption does not cover fees for applied music courses or courses not completed on our Rock Island campus. Foreign study for example, would not qualify for this tuition exemption scholarship. Internship experiences can be covered with a tuition remission scholarship. .

Additionally, potential students must meet Augustana admission requirements.

The benefit will cease for children upon receipt of a degree from any institution or 140 attempted credit hours at Augustana, whichever occurs first. A tuition exemption for spouses with a baccalaureate degree shall be permitted. All Augustana coursework assessed on the student's billing statement will be considered attempted credits. This includes courses dropped after day 2 of the term but before week 5,

even if they do not appear on the transcript. Credits will be prorated for students who withdraw from the institution and receive a partial term benefit.

Additional detailed information on this benefit is available from the Human Resources Department and employees with an interest are encouraged to review detailed eligibility agreements as well as enrollment forms for applicable deadline dates.

### **B. ELCA Tuition Exchange Program**

Augustana also participates in the ELCA Tuition Exchange program. Eligible dependents of employees may attend another participating ELCA college (receiving institution) through this program. Dependents receive a tuition benefit at the receiving institution that is generally equivalent to the benefit that the receiving institution provides for its own full-time employees. Some institutions limit the imports they will take in any academic year.

The ELCA Tuition Exchange is available to dependents (as defined previously) of full-time employees. This exchange is **not** available to part-time employees, adjunct faculty or to employee spouses. Full-time employees must complete **two years of service** at Augustana to be eligible for this tuition exchange benefit. Four years of continuous full-time service at another College or University within one year of the date of employment at Augustana will also satisfy this requirement. Additionally, prospective students must meet criteria set by the receiving institution for acceptance into the College. A full listing of ELCA Institutions is available at [elca.org](http://elca.org).

Tuition Exchange will be available to retired employees if the dependent child is currently enrolled in a consortium institution and actively utilizing the Tuition Exchange benefit upon the effective date of the employee's retirement.

The Tuition Exchange benefit will cease upon:

- Receipt of a baccalaureate degree at any institution, OR
- Completion of four academic years (12 terms or equivalent) of full-time post high school study

Employees who have dependents interested in participating in the ELCA Tuition Exchange program must fill out an eligibility form available through the Human Resources Office. Once eligibility is verified, the Financial Aid Office will coordinate the exchange with the receiving school. Advance planning is necessary to receive this benefit. Employees are encouraged to attend one of the group meetings held periodically on this subject and/or meet individually with HR and Financial Aid to discuss participation.

Additional detailed information on this benefit is available from the Human Resources Department and employees with an interest are encouraged to review eligibility agreements as well as enrollment forms for applicable deadline dates.

### **C. National Tuition Exchange Program**

Augustana participates in the National Tuition Exchange Program providing tuition exchange benefits with many colleges and universities across the country. This benefit is available to dependents (as previously defined) of current full-time employees with **four or more continuous years of service** at Augustana. Eight years of continuous full-time service at another College or University within one year of the date of employment at Augustana will also satisfy this requirement. While service at another College or University may be used for eligibility purposes, only years of service at Augustana will be used for determining seniority. A full listing of participating institutions and information on the specific benefit offered by each school is available at [tuitionexchange.org](http://tuitionexchange.org).

**This tuition exchange is a reciprocal program which means Augustana must balance the number of individual sent out on the exchange (exports) by an equal number of imports over the most current five-year period. Because of this exchange requirement, this program is not a guaranteed program.**

Should it be necessary to limit the number of exports or eligible employee dependents, priority will be based on previous use of the program and the employee's seniority.

Tuition Exchange will be available to retired employees if the dependent child is currently enrolled in a consortium institution and actively utilizing the Tuition Exchange benefit upon the effective date of the employee's retirement.

The Tuition Exchange benefit will cease upon:

- Receipt of a baccalaureate degree at any institution, OR
- Completion of four academic years (12 terms or equivalent) of full-time post high school study

As with the other Tuition Benefit programs, employees who have dependents interested in participating in the program should fill out eligibility form available through the Human Resources Office. Once eligibility is verified, the Financial Aid Office will coordinate the exchange with the receiving school. Advance planning is necessary to receive this benefit. Employees are encouraged to attend one of the group meetings held periodically on this subject and/or meet individually with HR and Financial Aid to discuss participation.

Additional detailed information on this benefit is available from the Human Resources Department and employees with an interest are encouraged to review eligibility agreements as well as enrollment forms for applicable deadline dates.

### **D. Summer School**

Use of the Augustana Tuition Remission for employees utilizing The Tuition Exchange or ELCA Tuition Exchange programs will be limited to:

Six summer school credits per summer not to exceed 24 total credits AND will cease upon receipt of a baccalaureate degree at any institution.

Additional fees may be required for participation in summer school sessions.