

## TUITION AND FEES, SECTION VI.B – NOTICE AND COMMENT

The Board of Trustees revised Section VI.B of the Lone Star College District Policy Manual on **March 3, 2016**. The notice and comment period for the policy was open to the public from **December 7, 2015, through February 24, 2016**. The Tuition and Fees procedures were last updated on **June 15, 2016**. The notice and comment period for the procedures was open to the public from **April 12, 2016 through May 12, 2016**. The policy and procedures were posted for public comment at <http://www.lonestar.edu/proposed-policies.htm>. Commenters could anonymously submit comments to [LSC-PolicyFeedback@lonestar.edu](mailto:LSC-PolicyFeedback@lonestar.edu) and [LSC-ProcedureFeedback@lonestar.edu](mailto:LSC-ProcedureFeedback@lonestar.edu). We received a total of 7 comments.

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**Comment 1:** Commenters were concerned that the policy’s definition of “Texas Resident” may differ from the regulations adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board found in Section 21.24 of the Texas Administrative Code. The commenters did not want out-of-state students to get the impression that if they live in Texas simply to attend Lone Star College, then they will be eligible for pay in-state tuition after residing in Texas for 12 months.

**Response 1:** The Office of the General Counsel recognizes that the tuition and fees policy does not match verbatim all applicable statutes and regulations; however, the policy does not contradict any statutes or regulations on establishing Texas residency we have seen, including Section 21.24 of the Texas Administrative Code. Confusion could arise because the tuition and fees policy does not define “domicile,” but because this term is clearly established under Texas law and is referred to in Policy Manual Section I.C.1.02, a definition of “domicile” will not be included at this time in the tuition and fees section of the policy manual. Moreover, these final procedures substitute the word “domicile” for the phrase “living in” used in earlier versions of these procedures to make that distinction clear. The Office of the General Counsel agrees that under Texas law, a person does not establish domicile in Texas merely by moving to Texas to attend college.

**Comment 2:** Commenters noted that SB 1004, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature in 2015, requires Lone Star College to enter into agreements with each school district located wholly or partly within Harris County to offer dual credit courses to certain high school students. These commenters asked how this new law affects proposed Section VI.B.1.02, which defines “Adult,” “In-District Texas Resident,” “Texas Resident,” “Out-of-District Texas Resident,” and “Out-of-State Residents” for purposes of College tuition and fees.

**Response 2:** The Office of the General Counsel refers commenters to Section VI.B.1.08, which provides that Texas high school students enrolled in dual credit courses will not pay the College any tuition, but the College may still charge fees for those students. We do not believe that SB 1004 requires any changes to Section VI.B.1 in light of that language.

**Comment 3:** Commenters noted that Section VI.B.2.01 incorrectly suggests that tuition payment plans can be paid up to the last day of the semester.

**Response 3:** The Office of the General Counsel recognizes the problem identified by commenters, and Section VI.B.2.01 was amended to reflect that payment plans must be paid in full by the tenth week of the semester.

**Comment 4:** Commenters suggested extending a payment plan option to students that have Summer classes of 10 weeks or longer. This would be helpful with our expensive programs like CHI and Massage Therapy.

**Response 4:** This comment was addressed in the Board Policy Manual. Section VI.B.2.01 was amended to reflect that payment plans must be paid in full by the tenth week of the semester, which allows students with 10-week classes to qualify for payment plans.

**Comment 5:** Commenters stated that the policy did not address in-district and out-of-district Texas residents.

**Response 5:** Section VI.B.1.02(c) and (e) respectively define “In-District Texas Resident” and “Out-of-District Texas Resident.”

**Comment 6:** Commenters suggested that the Chief Student Services Officer (CSSO) should be listed in the Tuition and Fees procedures.

**Response 6:** The procedures purposefully use the CSSO title but do not name specific individuals. We want to avoid potential confusion if a specific individual leaves or is no longer the CSSO for any reason. Every college should have a CSSO and every college should have readily available contact information for the CSSO. We encourage the commenters to ensure that their specific college publishes the name and contact information of the CSSO.

**Comment 7:** Commenters were concerned that some confusion exists regarding the departments involved when a student requests a refund. Commenters also requested that a form be developed to aid students in requesting refunds.

**Response 7:** Section VI.B.3 Refund Policy addresses these concerns. The Policy explains that Financial Aid and General Refunds are treated differently depending on the origin of the funds in question. We also added a form to the procedures to help students and college employees understand whether a student is requesting a financial aid or general refund.