Children and Spouses of Deceased Or Disabled Veterans (CSDDV) Scholarship Program

Section 295.01, Florida Statutes
Section 295.015, Florida Statutes
State Board of Education Rule 6A-20.019
OVERVIEW

- CSDDV Explained – Program Overview
- Eligibility – Veteran, Child, Spouse
- Florida Residency Requirements
- Applying
- Eligibility Disputes
- Disbursements
The CSDDV Scholarship is a state scholarship offered to dependents of deceased or disabled veterans. This scholarship is unique as it is only available to dependents of veterans.

The CSDDV does not take into consideration a family’s income and Expected Family Contribution (EFC) like many other scholarships do.

All applicants receive equal consideration as long as they meet eligibility and application requirements.

FDVA’s role in the process is to ensure the veteran meets the criteria for his/her family member to receive the scholarship. It is the FDVA’s responsibility to notify the Florida Department of Education of a veteran’s eligibility status.
To be eligible for the CSDDV Scholarship, the veteran must be:

- 100% permanent and total disabled as determined by the Veterans’ Administration
- Died from a service-connected disability
- Killed in action
- Individually Unemployable
- Prisoner of War or missing in action
  - Benefits cease when the veteran is returned alive or otherwise classified

**AND**

- Be a Florida resident 12 months immediately preceding the date of disability award
Eligibility for Children

- Children of veterans must be between the ages of 16 and 22
- Children must be initially eligible prior to their 23\textsuperscript{rd} birthday
- Be a dependent child of a \textit{qualified} veteran certified by the FDVA
  - Adopted
  - Biological
  - Step
- Pursuing an undergraduate degree
- Listed with the VA as a dependent child
Eligibility for Spouse

• Legally married to a **qualified** veteran (including civil unions) for a minimum of one year
  – Benefits stop if the marriage is dissolved or annulled
• Listed with the VA as a dependent of the veteran
• Widowed spouses must use the benefit within 5 years of the veteran’s date of death
  – Remarried spouses are not eligible for this scholarship
How Do I Determine My Disability Award Date?

- Veterans can go to ebenefits.va.gov to review their disability rating.
- If the veteran does not have an account with ebenefits, they will need to select the “Register” button and create an account.
- Once logged in, the veteran can go to the “Documents” section and search for their Rating Decision Letter.
  - The rating decision letter will advise the veteran if they are 100% permanent and total disabled and if they are eligible for Chapter 35 benefits.
- The veteran MUST be 100% permanent and total disabled **AND** a Florida resident 12 months preceding the award date to be eligible.
Eligibility and Future Exams

When reviewing a veteran’s information, the FDVA looks for:

- The veteran’s Character of Discharge
  - Families of dishonorably discharged veterans are not eligible
- Scheduled Future Exam
  - Future exams can result in either an increase or decrease of benefit amounts
  - FDVA determines if an exam is being conducted on a static or non-static disability
    - Static Disability – The condition will not get better, therefore the rating for the condition will not change
    - Non-static Disability – The condition can get better, thus affecting the veteran’s disability rating
- 100% permanent and total disability award date
  - To find information on your award date, go to ebenefits.va.gov and search the documents section for your Rating Decision Letter
Florida Residency Requirements

- For a veteran’s dependents to be eligible for the CSDDV scholarship, the veteran must have been a Florida resident 12 months immediately preceding the disability award date
  - Example: The veteran is awarded 100% permanent and total disability with an eligibility date of 15 Jan 2020
    - In this scenario, the veteran is required to be a Florida resident 15 Jan 2019 – 15 Jan 2020
  - Veterans cannot receive disability starting 15 Jan 2020 and wait a year to claim Florida residency for the purpose of the CSDDV scholarship
  - Residency must be obtained prior to the disability award
When Do I Apply?

• The on-time application window is 1 October – 1 April the following year
  – Example: An individual may apply 1 Oct 2020 – 1 Apr 2021 as an on-time applicant for academic year 2021/22
  – Applications received after 1 Apr 2021 will be wait-listed and will only receive funding if there is money left over from on-time applications

• Funding decisions will be made by the Florida Department of Education in the month of July, before the Fall term begins
Do I Have to Apply Every Year?

• If you are eligible for the scholarship *and* receive funds, you do not need to apply for subsequent years, unless
  – You lose funding because GPA is not met
  – You take time off from school
• If you are eligible for the scholarship and *do not* receive funds, you will need to reapply
• Reminder: If you lose funding for any reason, you will need to reapply
What Happens if I Transfer to Another School?

- If you would like to transfer from one school to another, you are required to notify the Florida Department of Education.
- You must be enrolled in the new school prior to leaving the old one, otherwise, you could lose funding.
- The Florida Department of Education sends scholarship money directly to the school.
Where Do I Apply? What Information Do I Need?

- Applications must be completely and correctly filled out at floridastudentfinancialaid.org to be eligible for consideration.
- Applicants are required to provide the veteran’s:
  - Name
  - SSN or Claim Number
  - Phone Number
  - Email Address
  - Military Conflict
- The applicant must provide their requested information on the application.
The Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs will conduct a review of all applications and notify the Florida Department of Education of the applicant’s results.

- It is the applicant’s responsibility to follow their application from start to finish.
- The FDVA will not notify you of any application issues, but a note will be added to your application.
- Applicants will receive email updates from the FL Department of Education when additional information is requested.
- Eligibility does NOT guarantee funds.
After You Apply for the CSDDV Scholarship

• The Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs will complete the initial review of the application

• Upon completion of review, the applicant will be updated in the system to
  – Eligible
  – Ineligible

• Funds disbursement decisions are not made until July prior to the Fall semester start

• Questions about disbursements can be directed to the FL Department of Education at 888-827-2004
  – Do not direct disbursement questions to the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs
CSDDV Eligibility Disputes

• What you should do if your application for the CSDDV is determined ineligible
  – Contact the Florida Department of Education for clarification
    • They will either assist with the ineligible status or
    • They will have you contact the scholarship administrator for more information

• The most common reasons for denial
  – The veteran is not 100% permanent and totally disabled as determined by the Veterans’ Administration
  – Florida residency is not met
    • Not all veterans update their address history with the VA
    • Veteran’s records are how we determine residency
    • Veteran will have to provide proof of Florida residency

• The applicant does not provide a veteran’s requested information
Disbursements

- All funds disbursements and amounts are determined by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE)
- The FDVA only determines eligibility for the CSDDV
- Funds are disbursed directly to the educational institution the dependent is attending
- If a dependent changes schools, they must notify the FDOE of the new school
  - Inaccurate information can result in a delay in funding
- Scholarship decisions are made in July and funds are disbursed late July – early August
  - All disbursement questions must be directed to the FDOE
If you have additional questions about the CSDDV Scholarship, you may contact the Florida Department of Education at 888-827-2004 or the administrator of the program at clarkp@fdva.state.fl.us