

BOARD OF REGENTS
BRIEFING PAPER
HANDBOOK Revision, Fee Waiver Purple Heart Recipients

BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

In an effort to assist veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States, the 2019 Nevada Legislature passed [Assembly Bill 427](#), (*Chapter 320, Statutes of Nevada 2019*) requires the Nevada System of Higher Education to waive the payment of registration fees, laboratory fees, and other mandatory fees assessed to a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States who has been awarded the Purple Heart to the extent that the fees exceed the amount of any other federal education benefits received.

Existing law (*Nevada Revised Statutes 396.544, 396.5442, 396.5445*) authorizes the Board of Regents to grant a waiver of registration and certain other fees to certain persons, such as members of the Nevada National Guard, the children and surviving spouses of such members who are killed in the line of duty, and the spouse or dependent of a person who is identified as a prisoner of war or missing in action while performing his or her duties as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States. Assembly Bill 427 mandates a similar waiver for Purple Heart recipients that is applied after consideration of federal education benefits.

In order to be considered for the waiver, a student must provide eligibility documentation confirming their veteran status and award of the Purple Heart. To receive the waiver, the student must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) annually and provide a Veterans Administration Certificate of Eligibility. These documents will confirm the application and whether or not a student will receive benefits. The waiver is applied against the balance of registration fees, laboratory fees, and other mandatory fees after veteran education benefits and Title IV federal grant aid. The proposed revisions to Title 4, Chapter 17 will bring the Handbook provisions in compliance with provisions of state law enacted under Assembly Bill 427.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Approve the proposed revision to Title 4, Chapter 17, which provides registration fees, laboratory fees, and other mandatory fees to be waived for eligible Purple Heart recipients and deems them bona fide Nevada residents for tuition purposes.

IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

The passage of Assembly Bill 427 during the 2019 Nevada Legislature requires revision of Board policy granting a fee waiver to this specialized population of veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States.

CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:

- Access (Increase participation in post-secondary education)**
- Success (Increase student success)**
- Close the Achievement Gap (Close the achievement gap among underserved student populations)**
- Workforce (Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Nevada)**
- Research (Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21st century Nevada and raise the overall research profile)**
- Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals**

INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

Veterans face multiple unique challenges integrating into civilian life, higher education, and the workforce upon returning from active duty. Providing fee waivers for Purple Heart recipients of the U.S. Armed Forces promotes access, success and closes the achievement gap for this reintegrated population of adult learners. Earning a certificate or associate, bachelor's, master's, or professional degree will provide these men and women with the skills and knowledge necessary to integrate into Nevada's workforce.

BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- This policy revision is required for Board policy to remain consistent with the enacted provisions of AB 427.
- Adoption of the policy will facilitate application of the State law in determining eligibility and taking appropriate actions at the institution level.

