

## **HRHA Scholarship Policies**

### **Application Requirements and Process**

To apply, students must have a 2.5 cumulative GPA – or if their school does not have GPAs, a 900 SAT or a 17 ACT score. Students must submit the application, essay, and two letters of support to an HRHA Scholarship Contact person by the deadline. Applicants may submit their VAHCDO application and letters of recommendation to HRHA or use the HRHA application and submit two letters of recommendation.

Scholarship Contacts are HRHA's Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator, currently Jacques Mushagasha, and the Resident Services and Communications Coordinator, currently Victoria Hill.

Scholarship awards will be made to HRHA residents or voucher holders who have maintained their HRHA residence for six months prior to the application deadline.

HRHA scholarship application timing will follow soon after the VAHCDO process, opening roughly in early March, applications due in late April, and recipients notified by mid-May. All application documents must be submitted to an HRHA Scholarship Contact person by the deadline.

Scholarship funds will be paid to the educational institution. Students must fill out HRHA's Scholarship Payment Request Form, informing HRHA of the school they are attending, their student id number, address funds should be sent to, student GPA, and declaring their commitment to enrolling in a full-time schedule of classes.

HRHA Scholarship documents include these policies, the application form, the candidate scoring and evaluation sheet, selection committee conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements, and the payment request form.

### **Recipient Selection**

Scholarship selection criteria may include, but are not limited to, the following: prior academic performance; performance on tests designed to measure ability and aptitude for educational work; recommendations from instructors or others who have knowledge of the applicant's capabilities; additional biographical information regarding an applicant's career, academic, and other relevant experiences; financial need; and conclusions the selection committee may draw as to the applicant's motivation, character, ability, or potential. Scholarship awards will be made to

HRHA residents or voucher holders who have maintained their HRHA residence for six months prior to the application deadline.

Recipients must be secondary school students; undergraduate or graduate students pursuing studies to meet requirements for an academic or professional degree; or students in a program that provides full credit toward a bachelor's or higher degree, or offers a training program to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation and is authorized under federal or state law to provide such a program and is accredited by a national recognized accreditation agency. Scholarships must be used for tuition and related expenses. Scholarships may be transferred between accredited institutions, such as from community college to a four-year college.

HRHA reserves the right to impose additional restrictions or requirements.

### **Selection Committee**

The scholarship selection committee shall have five members and include: one HRHA Commissioner, one HRHA staff member, and three community representatives. Candidates will be ranked using a scoring and evaluation sheet as well as in person or remote interviews.

Every member of any selection committee charged with evaluating scholarship candidates shall adhere to relevant HRHA policies, including a conflict of interest and confidentiality policy. Every member of any selection committee shall be obligated to disclose any personal knowledge of and relationship with any potential grantee under consideration and to refrain from participation in the award process in a circumstance where he or she would derive, directly or indirectly, a private benefit if any potential grantee or grantees are selected over others.

### **Grant Renewals**

Scholarships will ordinarily be awarded for a one-year period, but may be for a shorter or longer period. They are renewable for spring and fall semester up to \$1,000 per school year.

Students must submit a transcript to a designated HRHA Scholarship Contact person at the Contact's email or to [info@harrisonburgrha.com](mailto:info@harrisonburgrha.com) each term showing that they are maintaining a 2.5 GPA and a full-time schedule. Students who fall below the minimum requirements will be given six months to improve their grades or return to school full-time.

If a scholarship recipient's family moves out of public or assisted housing after the award has been made, the recipient shall be eligible to continue to receive multi-year funding provided other guidelines are met.

## **Supervision of Scholarship Grants**

### ***General Procedures***

HRHA shall pay scholarships directly to the educational institution for the use of the scholarship recipient. Each educational institution must use the grant funds to defray the scholarship recipient's expenses or to pay the funds (or a portion thereof) to the recipient only if the recipient is enrolled at such educational institution and his or her standing at such educational institution is consistent with the purposes and conditions of the scholarship.

Scholarships must be used only for qualified tuition and related expenses and for room and board. Scholarships may be used only for: (1) tuition and fees required for the enrollment or attendance of the student at a qualifying institution; (2) fees, books, supplies, and equipment required for courses of instruction at such an educational institution; and (3) room and board.

### ***Special Procedures***

Where the reports submitted, or other information (including the failure to submit reports) indicates that all or any part of a scholarship is not being used in furtherance of the purposes of such grant, HRHA is under a duty to investigate. While conducting its investigation, HRHA shall withhold further payments to the extent possible until any delinquent reports required under the foregoing provisions of these procedures have been submitted.

If HRHA learns that all or any part of a grant is not being used in furtherance of the purposes of the grant, the Authority shall take all reasonable and appropriate steps to recover the grant funds and/or ensure restoration of the diverted funds to the purposes of the grant. If such a diversion occurs and the grantee has not previously diverted grant funds to any use not in furtherance of the purposes of the grant, HRHA shall withhold any further payments to the grantee until it has received the grantee's assurance that future diversions shall not occur and shall require the grantee to take extraordinary precautions to prevent future diversions from occurring.

Where a grantee has previously diverted funds received from HRHA and HRHA determines that any part of a grant has again been used for improper purposes, HRHA shall take all reasonable and appropriate steps to recover the grant funds

and/or ensure restoration of the diverted funds to the purposes of the grant. In such case, HRHA shall withhold further payments until: the diverted funds are in fact recovered or restored; HRHA has received the grantee's assurances that future diversions will not occur; and HRHA requires the grantee to take precautions to prevent future diversions from occurring. HRHA reserves the right to terminate scholarship support in this instance.

Steps taken to recover funds may include legal action where appropriate, but need not include legal action if it is unlikely to result in the satisfaction of execution on a judgment.

### **Recordkeeping Requirements**

HRHA shall retain the following records in connection with all scholarships: all information obtained to evaluate the qualifications of potential grantees; the identification of grantees, including any relationship of any grantee to the Authority or to a director or officer; the purpose and amount of each grant; and any additional information HRHA obtains in complying with its scholarship administration procedures. Information pertaining to unsuccessful applicants for awards shall be kept along with information on successful applicants.

Records pertaining to any scholarship made pursuant to this policy shall be kept for no less than three years after the filing of HRHA's annual tax return for the period in which the last installment of such grant was paid.