



***The College Tuition Benefit®  
Employer Administrative Guide***

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**College Tuition Benefit® Frequently Asked Questions**

***How do employees register?***

There are two ways for employees to register:

A month after your anniversary date, **Independence Blue Cross (Independence)** will send College Tuition Benefit (CTB) an eligibility file with the registration information. If Independence has an employee’s email address, it will provide the address to CTB and the employee will be registered and will receive a welcome email. If Independence does not have email addresses for employees, CTB will email the plan administrator a census file with employees’ names and the administrator simply adds email addresses and returns the file to CTB. When this file is uploaded, the administrator will be notified and the employees will receive a welcome email.

Alternately, you can send employees who are not registered to **www.ibx.CollegeTuitionBenefit.com** and they can register online. The registration username is always your **Independence CID number** and the Password is the employee’s **Independence member number**. Group Plan administrators will need to provide employees with the CID number. Please note that, if an employee fails to register, we cannot provide retroactive Tuition Rewards; if employees put off registration, a child may lose eligibility. *Our colleges will make no exception for this situation.*

***How do new hires register?***

New hires should go to **www.ibx.CollegeTuitionBenefit.com** to register online. The registration username is always your **Independence CID number** and the Password is the employee’s **Independence member number**. Group Plan administrators will need to provide employees with the CID number. Please note that if an employee fails to register, we cannot provide retroactive Tuition Rewards, if employees put off registration, a child may lose eligibility. *Our colleges will make no exception for this situation.*

***What if an employee does not have an email address or does not supply one?***

Unfortunately, we cannot register or communicate with any employee without an email address. We cannot provide Tuition Rewards to employees without an email address. (An employee can use a spouse’s email address.)

***Where does the money come from to pay for the Tuition Rewards?***

The Tuition Rewards are a guaranteed minimum discount off the full “list price” of tuition as opposed to monetary reimbursement. Participating schools have entered into a contractual agreement to reduce their tuition by the amount of Tuition Rewards points submitted by the employee. One Tuition Rewards point = \$1 reduction in full tuition. Tuition Rewards are never provided in cash.

***Whom can employees register for Tuition Rewards?***

Sponsored students must be registered before August 24<sup>th</sup> of the year they enter 11th grade and can be in an employee’s immediate or extended family – children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, stepchildren and godchildren.

Your employees cannot sponsor their neighbor’s or co-worker’s children when there is no family connection. Employees **cannot** use Tuition Rewards for personal use.

***Is there any limit to the number of students an employee can register?***

There is **no limit** to the number of students an employee can register. We expect and hope your employees continue to register children as their family commitments grow. To do this they simply log in to their personal account by going to [www.ibx.collegetuitionbenefit.com](http://www.ibx.collegetuitionbenefit.com) and selecting Log into Your Existing Account, click on “Add Student” and complete the necessary information.

***What is the maximum amount of rewards employees can use per child?***

Participating colleges honor rewards points submitted as a guaranteed minimum discount off the published price of tuition. Rewards are “capped” at a maximum 25 percent discount - divided evenly over four years. Rewards may be combined with other financial aid. A handful of participating colleges are still operating under pre-2004 contracts limiting the maximum reward to \$13,800-to-15,600. An updated college list is always available online when employees log in to their accounts.

Note that there are Employee Tuition Rewards and Student Tuition Rewards. Employee Tuition Rewards are in the employee’s account and can be used in any amount, for any registered student. Student Tuition Rewards can only be used by that Student and are non transferrable.

***What are the Employee responsibilities?***

In order for an employee to enroll a student, the student must be registered before August 24th of the year he or she enters 11th grade.

Employee Tuition Rewards are in the employee’s name until they are pledged to a registered student. Rewards must be pledged to a student before August 24th of the year the student enters 12th grade. Employees will receive several emails when a registered student is in 11th grade reminding them they must go into their account and pledge some or all of their Tuition Rewards if they want to use them for that 11th grade student. The employee must do this before August 24th prior to the student entering 12th grade. If the employee does not do this, this drastically limits the amount of rewards points that can be submitted to participating colleges at time of application.

Also shown in an employee’s account is a list of member colleges. Within a few days of sending in an application to a member college an employee must click off the college on the list to which the student has applied. In this way, we notify the college(s) of the student’s Tuition Rewards Points.

Reminder: Student Tuition Rewards can only be used by that student. Student Tuition Rewards are “activated” by the employee by following the instructions above when a registered student is in 11th grade.

***What if an employee pledges Tuition Rewards and the student doesn't use them or attends a non-SAGE College?***

On June 15th following 12th grade, an employee can go into his or her account, retrieve the Tuition Rewards Points and then transfer them to any other eligible, registered student. If points remain in a student's account unused or are not transferred back for three years after high school graduation, the Rewards will be forfeited.

***Are Tuition Rewards taxable?***

No. IRS Publication 970, "Tax Benefits for Education," states, "You do not have to include a qualified tuition reduction in your income." Tuition Rewards® are discounts and meet the qualified tuition reduction definition.

***What happens if a college stops participating before a student can use the Tuition Rewards at that college?***

When a college stops participating in the SAGE Scholars network, the college is obligated to honor Tuition Rewards earned up to the date of withdrawal. The college does not have to honor Tuition Rewards points earned after the termination date.

***Do the colleges have any obligation to accept students with Tuition Rewards?***

No. The colleges will observe their normal student acceptance policies.

***How do Tuition Rewards affect financial aid qualification?***

Tuition Rewards are considered guaranteed minimum financial aid. All students are encouraged to apply for financial aid. Let's say a student's family has 20,000 Tuition Rewards points – a guaranteed minimum discount of \$5,000 per year. The student applies for financial aid at three of our participating schools (a very common occurrence). The first school awards \$10,000 per year in total aid, the second awards \$4,000 per year, and the third awards no financial aid.

The first school has more than met its obligation of a \$5,000 per year discount. The second college will have to increase their award to at least \$5,000 per year. The third school will have to provide \$5,000 of financial aid.

***What if we have employees in the same family who register the same eligible student?***

Each employee has his or her own account and receives his or her own Tuition Rewards. Employees can pool their Tuition Rewards points for the same student as long as the student is registered under both accounts.

***What happens if or when an employee leaves your organization or is terminated?***

The employee keeps the Tuition Rewards earned up to the time he or she leaves. He or she will not earn any new Tuition Rewards points. If the employee joins another employer that offers both Tuition Rewards and Independence medical benefits, and the employee enrolls in one of the employer's medical plans, the employee can connect his or her Tuition Rewards' account through the new employer to continue accruing Tuition Rewards. The employee will need to contact College Tuition Benefit once they join the new employer to request continued account access. So long as the employer offers Tuition Rewards and Independence medical benefits, the employee can continue to accrue Tuition Rewards. Otherwise, the employee will not be eligible to earn any additional Tuition Rewards.

***Who sees the names of registered students and what do they do with them?***

Our privacy statement says the only people who see the names of registered students are the colleges. Starting when a student is in 9th grade, the colleges can view the names and may begin sending recruiting materials. The event is similar to what most families experience in 11th grade when students take the SAT or ACT. Colleges never see the amount of Tuition Rewards an employee or student has until the Tuition Rewards are pledged in 11th grade and then they will only see the Tuition Rewards pledged to that student.

***Can Tuition Rewards be used for Graduate School?***

No. Tuition Rewards can only be used for full-time, undergraduate education beginning with a student’s freshman year.

***Can Tuition Rewards be used if a student transfers to a participating college?***

That is up to the school to which the student transfers. There is no contractual obligation to honor the Tuition Rewards.

***Do Tuition Rewards go with an employee into Retirement? What happens if an employee passes away?***

Yes, Tuition Rewards go with you into retirement; employees can add grandchildren as they come along. If an employee passes away, his or her executor can move the Tuition Rewards into the name of a student’s guardian, typically the parents, if the person is a grandparent.

***What if an employee has questions about their account?***

Any employee having difficulty registering or setting up his or her account can contact College Tuition Benefit® at (844) 244-4086 or send an email to [admin@collegetuitionbenefit.com](mailto:admin@collegetuitionbenefit.com). Employees who are registered and have a personal account should contact [support@TuitionRewards.com](mailto:support@TuitionRewards.com).



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## Important Deadlines

There are four very important deadlines that must be met in order for employees to utilize their Tuition Rewards Points for their student scholarship.

1. **Adding Students to Tuition Rewards.** Students must be added to the program by August 24th of the year that the student begins **11th grade**.
2. **Transferring Student Rewards.** The last day that someone can transfer earned Rewards to a student is August 24th of the year that the student begins **12th grade**. This is also the last day that a student can earn any directly allocated Tuition Rewards from any source.
3. **Submitting Rewards to Member Schools.** Using the college list in their online account, an employee must submit a Tuition Rewards Statement to any member school(s) that a registered student is applying to **within a few days of sending an application to that school**.
4. **Using Rewards Before They Are Forfeited.** Tuition Rewards can remain unused in a student's account for three years after high school graduation. After the third year, the Rewards will be forfeited (with an exception for military service).

## Confirmation Email of Registration from College Tuition Benefit®

When an employee registers for the College Tuition Benefit, he or she will receive an automated email confirming his or her registration.

This email will explain what to expect next, and also provides the College Tuition Benefit Account deadlines.



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