

**STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING (SOU)
UTAH NATIONAL GUARD (ARMY and AIR)
STATE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (STA)**

A. GUIDELINES

1. **PRIVACY ACT INFORMATION.** State Tuition Assistance (STA) forms may include information protected under the Privacy Act of 1974. In order to review and approve STA requests, I authorize STA administrators to forward applicable STA applications and associated forms to my non-military email address.

2. **AUTHORIZED RATES.**
 - a. The State of Utah, through the UTAH NATIONAL GUARD, may pay up to 100% of my tuition assistance and/or fees based on the following caps and guidelines:
 - i. Up to \$250.00 per semester hour (SH) or \$167.00 per quarter hour (QH), not to exceed the institution's residential tuition rate.
 - ii. For awardees of the State Tuition Waiver, annual cap of no more than \$1000 toward fees or tuition differentials not covered by the waiver program.
 - iii. Annual funding limit for the 2023-2024 State Budget Year, subject to availability of funding, is as follows:
 1. Up to \$6000 combined FTA/STA cap for all non-STEM/Cyber degree programs, eligible for payment toward tuition only (not fees, except for awardees of the State Tuition Waiver).
 2. Up to \$7000 combined FTA/STA cap for all STEM/Cyber degree programs, eligible for payment toward tuition and/or fees. The school must certify that a degree program is considered STEM/Cyber using a memo/template provided by the UTNG Education Office.
 - iv. Lifetime funding limit of \$6000 for approved certificate programs.
 - v. I agree to pay the remaining amount and any other costs not paid by the State of Utah.
 - vi. STA is authorized on a course-by-course basis and no changes will be made in the courses or dollar amount for which STA is approved without approval of the UTAH NATIONAL GUARD Education Office. Changes to previously approved STA must be made within 30 days of class start date.
 - b. The use of STA funding is for a course (or courses) required for the completion of my degree or certificate plan. I am required to submit proof or validation of my degree plan or certificate program, along with my grades, no later than 45 days following the completion of my approved course(s). Degree plan and grade certification will be submitted on page 2 of the approved STA application.
 - c. STA will not be approved to fund a course more than once, unless the UTNG member has repaid the funds for the previously-taken class.

3. **ELIGIBILITY.**
 - a. I am a traditional UTAH NATIONAL GUARD soldier/airman in good standing (satisfactory participant) in my UTAH NATIONAL GUARD Unit.
 - b. If I previously served in another reserve component, I certify that I have been a member of the Utah National Guard for at least one year from the date of transfer.
 - c. I applied for, maximized, or was ineligible for funding through the State Tuition Waiver (STW) and/or Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) programs and:
 - i. I am in pursuit of my first degree at the Associate, Bachelor, and/or Graduate level, or

- ii. I am in pursuit of an additional degree at the Associate, Bachelor, and/or Graduate level and no funding for my previous degree at this same level was provided by the FTA, STA, STW, or GI Bill programs.
4. **OBLIGATION.** I understand that by receiving UTAH NATIONAL GUARD STA, I incur the following obligation. Failure to complete this obligation may result in recoupment of all or a portion of my UTAH NATIONAL GUARD STA.
 - a. My separation date from the UTAH NATIONAL GUARD will extend to or beyond the last date of course enrollment that UTAH NATIONAL GUARD STA funds have been approved.
5. **GRADES.**
 - a. I must maintain a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher. I will not be eligible for any further STA funding if I fall below this standard, until I provide clear evidence of realignment with the standard.
 - b. I will provide the State Education Office with proof of successful completion of approved courses within 45 days of completion of the class for which I receive UTAH NATIONAL GUARD STA. Grade certification will be submitted on page 2 of the approved STA application. Failure to do so will result in suspension of further STA funding until the UTNG Member satisfactorily complies with all STA requirements.
6. **CLASS / COURSE SUBMISSION AND CHANGES.**
 - a. I may submit my State Tuition Assistance request up to 90 days (but not less than 15 business days) before class/semester start.
 - b. I understand that I am responsible to provide a copy of my approved State Tuition Assistance form to my school accounting office within 30 days of STA approval. Failure to do so may result in interruption or denial of STA invoicing and/or payment to the school.
7. **DUPLICATION OF BENEFITS.**
 - a. STA is authorized in combination with all chapters of the GI Bill. GI Bill programs that pay toward tuition and/or fees are structured as last-pay; STA can be applied up to the maximum authorized rates listed above, and the school will process the remaining costs subject to compliance with the current VA School Certifying Official Handbook.
 - b. STA funds may be used in conjunction with FTA toward the same class, but not toward the same credit hour. Example: A 3 credit hour course that receives partial payment of 1 credit hour through FTA is eligible for STA funding for the remaining 2 credits, but STA cannot be used to offset additional tuition costs beyond the \$250 per credit hour maximum paid through FTA.
 - c. No funding supplied by the STA program can be refunded to the student; any overages resulting from previously accepted/applied tuition-only programs should be reduced from the amount requested from STA.
 - d. Any applicable requirements for additional funding or use of funds in conjunction with other monetary sources will follow guidelines set by existing policy.
8. **WITHDRAWAL/RECOUPMENT OF UTAH NATIONAL GUARD STA.** I agree to reimburse the UTAH NATIONAL GUARD the STA funds paid if I withdraw from or fail a course except for reasons beyond my control as determined by the State Education Services Officer (ESO) or designated representative.
9. **RECOUPMENT OF FUNDING.** Applicants are responsible for notifying the Education Office if there are any changes in approved coursework, such as class changes, drops or withdrawals.

- a. If a student withdraws from a class after the school designated “withdrawal period,” the school may still bill for that class. Unless the student is able to provide clear incontestable evidence that the course was dropped due to unforeseen circumstances, such as extreme illness or mobilization with less than 30 days’ notice, the student will be required to repay the entire charge for that course to the State of Utah, under the STA program policy guidelines.
 - b. Students who fail a course by receiving an F, E, W or I (“I” referring to incomplete coursework which was not finished within 120 days) will be recouped.
 - c. All recoupments must be initiated prior to future STA application approval.
10. **PERIOD OF AGREEMENT.** This SOU will remain in effect for the entire STA fiscal year in which it is signed. A new SOU must be signed each fiscal year the soldier/airman receives UTAH NATIONAL GUARD STA.

B. MEMBER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

I agree to all the above conditions.

Name (Last, First, MI)

Rank/Grade

Unit

Date

Signature

Address (Street, City, State, Zip)

Phone (Home, Work, Cell)

e-mail address

C. COMMANDER APPROVAL *REQUIRED FOR AIR GUARD ONLY*****

I certify the member is a traditional (or technician) Utah National Guard soldier/airman in good standing (satisfactory participant) in the Utah National Guard.

Commander/Authorized Designee Name

Commander/Authorized Designee Signature

AIR NATIONAL GUARD ADDENDUM

I have downloaded a copy of the State Tuition Assistance Quick Start Guide. By signing below, I certify that I have read the Quick Start Guide and understand the rules, policy and guidelines explained within.

Member's Name

Member's AFSC

Member's Signature