

Title 27. Transportation

Chapter IX. State Parks Division, Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism

Subchapter A. Generally

Part 180. Arkansas State Parks License Plate Fund

Subpart 1. Generally

27 CAR § 180-101. Purpose.

The purpose of this part is to provide alternatives for allocation of funding collected through the Arkansas State Parks License Plate Program.

Authority. Arkansas Code § 22-4-104.

27 CAR § 180-102. Background.

(a)(1) The Department of Finance and Administration offers over one hundred (100) motor vehicle specialty license plates to Arkansas residents.

(2) These plates are sold for thirty-five dollars (\$35.00) above standard registration, with:

(A) Twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) going to the sponsoring agency; and

(B) Ten dollars (\$10.00) going to the Department of Finance and Administration.

(b)(1) The State Parks Division of the Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism has issued its first specialty license plate and continues to do so today under the authority of Acts 2011, No. 292.

(2) The fees remitted shall be deposited into a cash fund to be used by the division for the following purposes:

(A) Sponsoring college scholarships in the state parks profession; and

(B) State parks education programs.

Authority. Arkansas Code §§ 22-4-104, 27-24-1602.

Subpart 2. Procedures — Scholarships

27 CAR § 180-201. Scholarships — Generally.

(a) The Arkansas State Parks License Plate Program provides scholarships for Arkansas residents to attend institutions of higher education within the state and uses funds from license plate sales to assist students in reaching their potential as tomorrow's state park professionals.

(b) Scholarship amounts are subject to decrease based on budget allocations.

Authority. Arkansas Code § 22-4-104.

27 CAR § 180-202. Academic scholarship applicants — Eligibility.

(a) First-time scholarship recipients must meet the following criteria:

(1) Planning to attend an Arkansas college or university;

(2)(A) Pursuing a degree that qualifies a candidate for a uniformed staff position.

(B) Fields of study should be chosen based on the Division of Higher Education and the Office of Personnel Management list of degrees that qualify an applicant for a career as uniformed personnel with the State Parks Division.

(C) Approved fields of study include:

(i) Environmental interpretation;

(ii) Natural resources, environmental, or conservation management;

(iii) Forest resources;

(iv) Fisheries and wildlife biology;

(v) Environmental science or studies;

(vi) Forestry;

(vii) Wildlife ecology and management;

(viii) Wildlife management;

(ix) History or historic preservation;

(x) Biology;

- (xi) Criminal justice or related field;
- (xii) Botany;
- (xiii) Recreation and park administration/management;
- (xiv) Museumology;
- (xv) Hospitality management; and
- (xvi) Communications.

(D) **Note.** Other fields of study may be considered in addition to the above list, subject to justification and review by the Award Committee;

(3) Demonstrate a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 (on a 4.0 scale) by providing their most recent official transcript;

(4) Verify intent to maintain full-time enrollment status throughout the semesters during which they receive the scholarship;

(5) Verify Arkansas residency and pay in-state tuition; and

(6)(A) Comply with first-time application deadline requirements and application paperwork/project requirements.

(B) See application for more details.

(b) Renewal recipients must meet the following criteria:

(1) Continue to meet all eligibility requirements;

(2) Submit a renewal application;

(3) Provide their most recent official transcript; and

(4)(A) Comply with renewal application deadline requirements.

(B) See renewal application for more details.

Authority. Arkansas Code § 22-4-104.

27 CAR § 180-203. Award amounts.

(a) Scholarships are payable only in fall and spring semesters during which students are enrolled full time.

(b)(1) The scholarships are renewable for up to eight (8) semesters.

(2) Semesters do not have to be consecutive.

(c)(1) Award amounts will be based on the college or university status of the student as a freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior.

(2) Awards are awarded by semester.

(d)(1) Award amounts are:

(A) Freshman, five hundred dollars (\$500);

(B) Sophomore, seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750);

(C) Junior, one thousand dollars (\$1,000); and

(D) Senior, one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

(2) **Note.** The above amounts may be increased over time, subject to funding received from Acts 2011, No. 292.

Authority. Arkansas Code § 22-4-104.

27 CAR § 180-204. Process of selection — First-time applicants.

(a)(1) A detailed database will be kept of all applicants.

(2) The database will include:

(A) Applicant name;

(B) Permanent address;

(C) Phone number;

(D) Email address;

(E) Last four (4) digits of Social Security number;

(F) Race;

(G) Gender;

(H) University;

(I) Field of study/major;

(J) Number of hours completed during previous semester;

(K) Cumulative GPA;

(L) Date application form and transcript were received;

(M) Date scholarship funding was requested;

(N) Date scholarship funding was issued; and

(O) Date scholarship funding was sent to university.

(b)(1) Applications will be screened for eligibility criteria.

(2) Those missing any supporting paperwork or failing to meet eligibility criteria will:

(A) Not pass the screening phase of selection; and

(B) Be sent a letter or email explaining that their application was missing required criteria.

(c)(1) Selected by the Director of the State Parks Division, a committee of three (3) or more non-State Parks Division professionals will score each application meeting minimum qualifications.

(2) One (1) of these individuals will serve as the scholarship program coordinator.

(3) This committee will not have access to information which is collected by the agency for statistical analysis (for example, gender, race, Social Security number).

(d) Scoring will be based on a rubric that places emphasis on nonsubjective criteria from applications.

(e) Scores will be totaled and entered into a spreadsheet to complete ranking.

(f) Scholarships will be awarded competitively, based on ranking, until budgeted funds are exhausted.

(g) First-time scholarships will only be awarded during fall semesters.

(h) Notification will be sent to applicants not receiving scholarships.

Authority. Arkansas Code § 22-4-104.

27 CAR § 180-205. Process of selection — Renewal applicants.

(a) A database will be kept for all renewal applicants and will include:

(1) The same information as the first-time applicant database; and

(2) How many semesters each applicant has received a scholarship.

(b)(1) All applications will be screened to verify eligibility.

(2) Applications missing supporting documentation or which show the applicant to be otherwise ineligible will not pass the screening phase of selection, and a notification will be sent to the applicant explaining why their scholarship will not be awarded.

(c) Scholarship recipients who fail to meet any eligibility criteria, excluding deadlines, in any given semester will from that point forward remain ineligible to receive a scholarship.

(d) Students who do not reapply during consecutive semesters will have to submit a first-time application and be scored anew.

Authority. Arkansas Code § 22-4-104.

27 CAR § 180-206. Appeals Committee.

(a) For applicants who question their denied status for the scholarship, there will be a formal appeal process.

(b) Denied applicants may submit an appeal form, and this form will be forwarded to an Appeals Committee.

(c) This committee will be composed of a pool of State Parks Division employees including:

- (1) The Scholarship Program Coordinator;
- (2) A representative from the human resources section;
- (3) The Manager of Operations; and
- (4) The Director of the State Parks Division.

Authority. Arkansas Code § 22-4-104.

Subpart 3. Internships and Other Education Programs

27 CAR § 180-301. Internships.

(a)(1) Many degrees granted by universities have an internship or field work component.

(2) The State Parks Division will offer educational internships of 500–600-plus hours to students studying various fields who will learn from working at the agency.

(3) An internship is an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge they gain in classroom study to real-world situations within an Arkansas state park.

(4) In cooperation with colleges and universities, each student will work under an approved educational work plan for the position.

(5) These work plans will be approved by the:

(A) College/university supervisor and/or designee;

(B) Requesting park superintendent; and

(C) Manager of Park Operations.

(b)(1) To qualify for an internship, an applicant must meet the following criteria:

(A) Declared degree of study;

(B) Sixty (60) hours of college credit by the time the internship begins;

(C) Full-time student at an Arkansas college/university at the time of application;

(D) Must be an Arkansas resident paying in-state tuition;

(E) A 2.5 cumulative grade point average; and

(F) Demonstrate coursework or knowledge related to work area.

(6)(A) Selected interns will coordinate directly with their universities to obtain credit for their work.

(B) Priority will be given to interns from universities who provide course credit hours for internships.

(c) The internships can encompass more degree opportunities than the scholarship, allowing the agency and the intern to gain valuable experience in other positions besides uniformed staff positions.

(d)(1) An internship committee will be appointed by the Director of the State Parks Division including:

(A) Park superintendent or superintendents;

- (B) Regional supervisor or supervisors; and
 - (C) Other professionals such as HR or park professional.
- (2) The committee would recommend and match applicants to parks and/or positions.
- (3) Applicants will complete a State of Arkansas employment application.

Authority. Arkansas Code § 22-4-104.

27 CAR § 180-302. Education programs.

(a) State Park Field Trip Grants.

- (1) These would be grants offered to schools (K-12) that have difficulty securing travel funds to visit their local state parks.
- (2) The grants would focus on a classroom visiting the park during the school year.
- (3) Priority would be given to field trips that align with the school curriculum and are between September and April (see attached application).

(b) State Parks Explorer Program.

(1) This program's goal is to connect young people ages six (6) to fourteen (14) to Arkansas's state park system through a variety of in-park, open-ended, self-initiated activities that are designed to introduce them to the system and cultivate future generations of park stewards.

(2) Funds from the license plate program would support:

- (A) Educational materials;
- (B) Supplies; and
- (C) Public outreach.

(c) Educational programs. Funding from the specialty license plate program may fund:

- (1) Visitor centers interpretive galleries and state parks wayside exhibits;
- (2) Brochures;
- (3) Teacher workbooks and guides;

- (4) Related supplies and materials; and
- (5) Programming equipment.

Authority. Arkansas Code § 22-4-104.

Appendix A. Application for Transportation Funding Assistance

Link:

<https://CodeOfARRules.arkansas.gov/docs/CARCodeAppendices/Appendices/229/27CARpt.180Appendix.pdf>