

South Texas Training Center

Code of Conduct- Financial Aid

South Texas Training Centers financial aid office is committed to helping students achieve their education goal by providing them with appropriate resources and guidance. Our institution is committed to providing students and their families with a professional and unbiased approach to the financial aid process. Our objectives include helping students by providing as much student aid as is available to them from all sources. We believe strongly in abiding by ethical principles.

South Texas Training Center strongly recommends a student complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine if they are eligible for more favorable types of Title IV aid before applying for a private education loan. A student will be provided with a financial aid offer letter that will reflect the maximum Title IV grant they are eligible for.

In addition, it is our recommendation that students take out a Federal Direct Loan before a private/alternative loan because:

- Federal Direct Loans typically have a lower interest rate
- Federal Direct Loans are guaranteed to the student as long as they complete the necessary accompanying paperwork – private/alternative loans require credit approval.
- It is possible part of their Federal Direct Loan will be interest-free while they are in school (this will be determined by the Financial Aid Office)
- Federal Direct Loan is completely in the student's name – not in a cosigner or parent's name

South Texas Training will process a student's Federal Direct Loan and/or private loan in a timely manner.

Staff Guidance and Policy:

1. No action will be taken by financial aid staff that is for their personal benefit or could be perceived to be a conflict of interest.
 - a. Employees within the financial aid office will not award aid to themselves or their immediate family members. Staff will reserve this task to an institutionally designated person, to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.
 - b. A preferred lender list will not be provided to students
 - c. A borrower's choice of a lender will not be denied, impeded, or unnecessarily delayed by the institution.
 - d. No amount of cash, gift, or benefit in excess of a de minimis amount shall be accepted by a financial aid staff member from any financial aid applicant (or his/her family), or from any entity doing business with or seeking to do business with the institution (including service on advisory committees or boards beyond reimbursement for reasonable expenses directly associated with such service).
2. Information provided by the financial aid office is accurate, unbiased, and does not reflect preference arising from actual or potential personal gain.
3. Institutional award notifications and/or other institutionally provided materials shall include the following:

- a. A breakdown of individual components of the institution's Cost of Attendance, designating all potential billable charges.
- b. Clear identification of each award, indicating type of aid, i.e. gift aid (grant, scholarship), work, or loan.
- c. Renewal requirements for each award.

4. All required consumer information is displayed in a prominent location on the institutional web site(s) and in any printed materials, easily identified and found, and labeled as "Consumer Information."

5. Financial aid professionals will disclose to their institution any involvement, interest in, or potential conflict of interest with any entity with which the institution has a business relationship.

Code of conduct for education loans

Lender Selection

Compliant to HEOA, which was signed into Federal law Aug. 14, 2008, South Texas Training Center does not provide a preferred lender list to their students. South Texas Training Center does not participate with private loans.

South Texas Training Center has established this Code of Conduct for Education Loans. It provides guidance and regulations to our employees involved with student loans to follow. It will be made available to them and accessible via website. In addition to the disclosures above, South Texas Training Center employees will adhere to the following principles

Revenue-sharing

South Texas Training Center will not participate in any revenue sharing loan products where South Texas Training Center of profit from the loans the student/parent borrows.

Gifts

South Texas Training center will not accept, solicit or receive any gift or payment of other than nominal value (established as \$10 per employee) from a lender. This includes payment or reimbursement for lodging, meals or travel to conferences or training sessions. South Texas Training Center will not allow lenders to print financial aid pieces that have our school logo.

Contracting arrangements

South Texas Training Center will not enter into consulting or contracting arrangements with any lender.

Lender assignment

South Texas Training Center does not require any borrower, first-time or continuing, to select a specific lender. We will process a loan in a timely manner through any lender a borrower chooses.

Opportunity pool loans

South Texas Training Center will not request or accepted any offer of funds for loans in exchange for providing the lender with a preferred lender arrangement or a specified number of loans or loan volume amount.

Staffing assistance

No lender shall provide staffing assistance to South Texas Training Center except for the following: professional development training, educational counseling, financial literacy or debt management.

Lender advisory boards

No South Texas Training Center employee shall receive any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses for serving as a member or participant of a student loan advisory board of a Lender's advisory board or council.

Private loans versus federal loans

South Texas Training Center will continue to inform students about Title IV loan availability and options before proceeding to certify an alternative loan.