



Introduction to the Needy Students Fund

The fund was initiated by Synod 2010 for the assistance of students enrolled in the Seminary of the Canadian and American Reformed churches. The role of the Fund is to “assist” the students in expenses incurred in the pursuit of their studies; the role of the Fund is not to cover all expenses as may be generated. It is the student’s responsibility to make financial preparations for their study, and lifestyle concessions during the course of their study.

The fund is supported by annual assessments of each communicant member in the federation.

Calendar

Here are some key dates to be aware of:

DATE*	OUTCOME
August 1	Applicants are to submit a completed Letter of Request and a Budget Request form to needystudentsfund@gmail.com
August 1 to mid-August	Applications reviewed by the Committee and visits arranged
Mid-Aug to 1 st Week of Sept	Visits to applicants completed
Sept 1	Cheques for September assistance mailed. Amounts are reconciled on October cheque run as applicable.
Sept 15	Notification to applicants of acceptance/denial of request (completed Support Guidelines), or additional information required for the Committee to make a decision
Monthly – 15 th of the month	Assistance cheques issued for the following month (Sept – April)
February 28 th	Statements of annual support issued to students for income tax purposes
May 1	Budgets reconciled to account for any adjustments over the academic year

**Where date falls on a weekend/holiday, the next business day will count as the key date*

Process

Students accepted by the Seminary requiring financial aid must ensure that all available resources have been depleted prior to, or in concert with, an application to the Fund. This includes support from family, fixed/liquid assets as may be available, etc.

If a need remains, application to the Fund may be made and will include the following steps:

- First, a letter outlining requested assistance, accompanied by a proposed budget for living expenses in the study period, are submitted according to the requirements listed.
- Next, the Committee will review the request and make arrangements to visit. The budget and other particulars may be discussed to ensure that the Committee and applicant have an agreement on the amounts requested. The acknowledgement form (included in the Support Guidelines document), is signed at this meeting.

- A reporting of the visit is made at the next Committee meeting and the amount of assistance is agreed to by Committee. In most cases, this remains unchanged from the visit with the applicant, as the Committee will have previously reviewed the request and flagged any items to be discussed.
- Following this, the applicant will receive confirmation of support via a signed Support Guidelines document. Please be advised that the September cheque mailing (posted on/around the 15th of the month) is for the month of October and will include a reconciliation of any over/under payments from the September 1st cheque.
- Going forward, assisted students should keep good records of their expenses, in the event that budget adjustments are required either upward or downward. Students should also keep in mind that assistance is pro-rated for the entire term of study (9 months), and therefore by example, high utility bills in the winter will require surpluses at other times of the year to be carefully managed. Students who do not maintain an accounting of their expenses will not be able to validate their budget and therefore justify levels of support for following years; this puts their application in jeopardy.
- Finally, applicants should ensure confidentiality in speaking about the support that has been given to them. Just as the Committee strives to deal with these matters in an individual, personal, pastoral, and confidential manner, so too should applicants communicate directly with the Fund for any challenges they may face.

Contact information is as follows:

needystudentsfund@gmail.com

This address is checked about once a week but if you require urgent assistance, a phone number is provided in the automatic notification that you will receive once a message is sent.