



California Community Colleges

MEMORANDUM

March 20, 2020

FS 20-02 | via email

TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Instructional Officers
Chief Student Services Officers
Chief Business Officers

FROM: Lizette Navarette, Vice Chancellor, College Finance and Facilities Planning Division

CC: Eloy Ortiz Oakley, Chancellor
Marty Alvarado, Executive Vice Chancellor, Educational Services and Support
All-CCCCO Staff

RE: Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance – Clarification on Apportionments, Withdrawals, and Student Fee Refunds

While our main priority is to support students to ensure they remain in their program of study, we recognize that under certain circumstances, students may need to temporarily pause their attendance. We nonetheless encourage continued support and outreach to students during these difficult times.

The California Community Colleges Board of Governors, on March 16, 2020, granted Chancellor Oakley additional authority to help colleges continue to provide educational services to students including the ability to temporarily suspend regulations adopted by the Board of Governors and as well as local rules and regulations. This memo provides further guidance on temporarily suspended regulations related to apportionments, withdrawals, and student fee refunds.

APPORTIONMENTS

For Spring 2020, apportionment may be claimed for all students in attendance as of a course's census date, including those student who later withdrew due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Chancellor's Office, College Finance and Facilities Planning Division

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www.CaliforniaCommunityColleges.cccco.edu

Clarification on Apportionments, Withdrawals, and Student Fee Refunds

March 20, 2020

For weekly or daily census courses, districts may claim FTES for apportionment for all students in attendance as of a course's census date even if the student withdraws due to the coronavirus outbreak and receives no evaluative symbol or an EW. Under normal circumstances, the lack of an assigned evaluative or non-evaluative symbol or an EW is not counted as an enrollment attempt and would not generate FTES for apportionment purposes. However, during this period of emergency, this prohibition is waived and an EW may be counted as an enrollment attempt generating FTES.

For the Apportionment Enrollment Fee Revenue Report, total enrollment fees reported may be reduced by the amount of fees refunded to students who withdraw due to the coronavirus outbreak. This is described in more detail in the Student Fee Refunds section below.

As a reminder, Title 5, section 58120 permits districts to count any day that includes at least three hours of courses of instruction, including Saturday and Sunday, toward the 175-Day Rule. As a result, primary terms can be shorter than the average of 17.5 weeks. As courses are converted to online, any day with three or more hours of instruction, including online instruction, will continue to count toward the 175-Day Rule.

WITHDRAWALS

Students may withdraw and should not be required to complete additional paperwork or petitions to withdraw or receive a refund.

Colleges should not record a withdrawal (W), or grade on the transcript of a student who withdraws due to an epidemic or other extraordinary circumstances. An excused withdrawal (EW) may be recorded; but in all cases, a withdrawal due to extraordinary conditions should not affect a student's academic progress, academic probation, or ability to repeat a course. Districts may choose to record no evaluative symbol or an EW. The EW is a non-evaluative symbol distinct from a W in that an EW does not penalize a student academically. An EW is not counted in progress probation or dismissal calculations, towards the permitted number of withdrawals. We encourage you to make the best local decision to help students achieve their educational goals.

No additional verifiable documentation is required from the student or district. The Chancellor's Office will waive the requirement for any additional petitions or documentation and considers the following public declarations sufficient and verifiable documentation of all such withdrawals:

[March 19, 2020 State of California Proclamation of Stay At Home Order](#)

[March 13, 2020 Proclamation on Declaring a National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Outbreak](#)

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[March 4, 2020 State of California Proclamation of a State of Emergency](#)

STUDENT FEE REFUNDS

A refund of student fees, including enrollment fees, may be provided to all students who withdraw due to the coronavirus outbreak. The change of delivery method from face-to-face to online instruction is a significant program change and not all students will have the same access to courses converted to online instruction.

The Chancellor's Office waives any regulatory requirement that would prohibit a student from receiving a refund of fees if the student withdraws due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Under normal circumstances, per Title 5, section 58508, refunds are not allowed after the first two weeks of instruction, or ten percent point of the length of the course, unless the program change is a result of action by the district to cancel, reschedule, or drop a student that fails to meet a prerequisite. However, regulatory authority is granted to the Chancellor to waive these provisions in Title 5, section 58509, which states that a district may provide a full refund of enrollment fees to any student who withdraws due to emergency conditions, including an epidemic.

For apportionment purposes, student enrollment fees are reported as the full amount of the fees charged, regardless of whether the fees are collected. The Budget and Accounting Manual, which has the standing of regulations, requires a contra-revenue account to track bad debt, which may not be netted against enrollment fees for apportionment reporting.

However, the Budget and Accounting Manual does not specifically prohibit netting student enrollment fees with a contra-revenue account for student enrollment fee refunds due to an unprecedented emergency such as the coronavirus outbreak. As such, the Chancellor's Office recommends that districts track these enrollment fee refunds in a separate and distinct contra-revenue account. In this way, districts may reduce the student enrollment fees reported for apportionment purposes by the amount of the refunds given due to the coronavirus outbreak.

For more information and Chancellor's Office guidance regarding the Novel Coronavirus, visit the [Novel Coronavirus 2019 section of the Chancellor's Office Website](#). For questions about this memo, you can contact me or Wrenna Finche at fiscalstandards@cccco.edu.