

HOPE and Zell Miller Programs Exception Request

In exceptional cases, the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) Board of Commissioners (Board) may waive a specific regulation of the HOPE or Zell Miller Program for a student who meets certain criteria. The Board has sole discretion to grant an exception based on the circumstances documented by a student who is requesting the exception. No student has a right to an award under any of these circumstances. Rather, the Board reviews the circumstances to determine if a student should receive scholarship or grant payment despite not having fulfilled the regulatory requirements for receiving the award. The complete guidelines for exception requests can be found online in the program [regulations](#).

Exceptions may be granted for extenuating circumstances such as serious injury, serious illness, psychiatric disorder, death of an immediate family member, to provide temporary care for an immediate family member, requirement to report for active duty military service outside the state of Georgia, or reaching a scholarship checkpoint without achieving a GPA. *In no case shall a student's grades be forgiven or altered by the GSFC Board of Commissioners as part of this exception process.*

In cases where a serious illness, serious injury or psychiatric disorder is the basis for an exception request, such illness, injury or psychiatric disorder must have been sustained, diagnosed, or treated within the six (6) months immediately preceding the student's official date of withdrawal from the academic term for which the exception is being requested.

In cases where the death of an immediate family member is the basis for the exception request, the death of such family member must have occurred within the six 6 months immediately preceding the student's official date of withdrawal from the academic term for which the exception is being requested.

In cases where active duty military service is the basis for the exception request, such service must have begun during the term of withdrawal.

The Board's decision to approve or deny an exception request is final and cannot be appealed. In order for an exception to be considered, the student must submit the request to the GSFC office within 45 days of receiving notice of denial of his/her award. All required documentation (see Attachment A) must be provided at the time of submission. Incomplete requests will not be considered by the Board and may result in an automatic denial.

The Board will review exception requests at its regularly scheduled quarterly meetings. *Each individual scholarship or grant recipient is limited to one exception, as granted by the Board of Commissioners, and such exception shall only apply to one school term.* The student will be notified by mail, of the Board's determination, within seven (7) business days of the meeting.

The *Exception Request*, student's letter, and all other documentation should be forwarded to:

**Georgia Student Finance Commission
Student Aid Services
2082 East Exchange Place
Tucker, GA 30084
770.724.9251**

**HOPE and Zell Miller Programs
Exception Request**

Please Print

Student's Name _____
Last Name First Name MI

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Name of institution currently attending _____

Name of institution attended during term for which you are requesting an exception _____

School term for which you are requesting an exception _____

Check condition which best describes your situation. **Please sign below, submit a personal letter of explanation, and attach required documentation.**

Type of Request (check all that apply)

- _____ 0.00 grade point average (GPA) at a Scholarship Checkpoint
- _____ Less than 3.0/3.3 GPA at a Scholarship Checkpoint due to withdrawal from courses because of extenuating circumstances
- _____ Exceeded Attempted-Hours or Paid-Hours Limit due to withdrawal from courses because of extenuating circumstances

Extenuating Circumstance Requiring Withdrawal from Course(s)

- _____ Withdrawal from course(s) during a term due to serious illness or serious injury
- _____ Withdrawal from course(s) during a term due to being treated for a psychiatric disorder
- _____ Withdrawal from course(s) during a term due to the death of an immediate family member
- _____ Withdrawal from courses during a term to care for an immediate family member
- _____ Withdrawal from courses during a term to report for active duty military service outside the state of Georgia

GSFC will review your information, present it to the Board, and notify you and your current institution of the decision via written correspondence.

I certify that the information reported above, and on any other document or writing in connection with this request for consideration of an exception to the regulations of the HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarship Programs is or true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I also certify that the underlying cause for or basis of this request for an exception is not attributed to any criminal act committed by me that resulted in either a conviction or a plea of guilty or nolo contendere by me. I authorize use of the information on this form by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in the determination of my eligibility for an exception to the HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarship Program regulations. I hereby authorize release and exchange of information between the Georgia Student Finance Commission and educational institutions, state and federal agencies, and private lending institutions from which student financial assistance is sought or obtained by me, and agree that such information exchanged may include financial, enrollment, academic status and legal residency information necessary to ensure proper administration of student aid programs by state, federal, and institutional program administrators.

Student's Signature

Print Name

Student's Social Security Number

**HOPE and Zell Miller Programs
Exception Request
Required Documentation
(Attachment A)**

The *Exception Request* must be accompanied by a signed letter from the student giving a full explanation of the circumstances for which the student is requesting an exception to the HOPE or Zell Miller Program regulations along with other required supporting documentation. All supporting documentation must be submitted with the letter and request. The applicant must designate which school term is to be reviewed for the exception.

The following is the minimum documentation that must be submitted for an application to be considered:

Exception based on *complete* withdrawal due to serious illness, serious injury, or psychiatric disorder

- Official transcripts from ALL postsecondary institutions the student has attended*
- Institutional statement, if required for partial withdrawal **
- Documentation from physician(s) and/or psychologist(s), providing the following information
 - Diagnosis;
 - Date(s) of diagnosis; and
 - Date of dismissal or prognosis if the student remains under the physician's care for this diagnosis.

Exception based on *complete* withdrawal due to death of an immediate family member

- Official transcripts from ALL postsecondary institutions the student has attended*
- Copy of death certificate

Exception based on *complete* withdrawal to provide temporary care of a immediate family member

- Official transcripts from ALL postsecondary institutions the student has attended*
- Documented official statement of student as sole provider of care to an immediate family member

Exception based on withdrawal for active duty military service

- Official transcripts from ALL postsecondary institutions the student has attended*
- Copy of official military orders

* *Official transcripts must indicate each course from which the student withdrew and/or received an incomplete.*

** *If the institution required the student to withdraw from some, but not all courses, the student must also submit a written statement from an institutional official stating the circumstances of the partial withdrawal.*