



OFFICE OF ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

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Bright Start Fallen Heroes Scholarship Program Application

Purpose

To provide scholarships to eligible children of individuals who were killed in the line of duty and who served as a member of the Armed Forces, or as a fire fighter, law enforcement officer, or paramedic in Illinois (“Fallen Heroes”), on the terms and conditions set forth in this Bright Start Fallen Heroes Scholarship Program (“Scholarship”) Application (“Application”).

Who Can Apply

Children, including stepchildren and adopted children, under age 30 of Fallen Heroes (“Beneficiaries” or “Applicants”) may apply. The required documentation to establish Beneficiary status is set forth below. Applicants need not be enrolled in an undergraduate program, and awards may be deferred for future use.

The Scholarships

The Scholarship will award \$1,000 scholarships. Prior recipients of the Scholarship are not eligible.

Application Process

The Beneficiary, or the Beneficiary’s parent or guardian, if the Beneficiary is a minor, is required to complete and sign the Bright Start Fallen Hero Scholarship Program Application (“Application”), and return all required documentation by mail to Office of the Illinois State Treasurer, Fallen Heroes Scholarship, 100 W. Randolph St., Suite 15-600, Chicago, IL 60601, or by e-mail to FallenHeroes@IllinoisTreasurer.gov.

The Notification Process

Upon receipt of a signed Application and all required documentation, the Sponsor will review the Beneficiary’s materials and make a determination of whether the Beneficiary will be selected. If selected, the Sponsor will notify the Beneficiary, or his/her parent or guardian, as applicable, and take the necessary steps to open a Bright Start College Savings Program account and deposit the scholarship award into such account. The beneficiary of such account will be the Beneficiary identified in this Application. The scholarship will be invested in an Age-Based Portfolio based on the age of the Beneficiary.

Scholarship Administration

All scholarship awards will be invested in a Bright Start College Savings Program account owned by the Sponsor on behalf of the Beneficiary listed on this Application. To keep account information secure, only certain individuals authorized by the Sponsor will be allowed to give instructions for the disbursement of funds (e.g. request a distribution) with respect to the account.

Both the Sponsor and the Beneficiary designated by the scholarship will receive Bright Start quarterly statements.

How May the Scholarships be Used?

The Beneficiary may use the scholarship funds toward the payment of “qualified higher education expenses,” for attendance at an “eligible educational institution” as those phrases are defined in the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. 529. Generally, qualified higher education expenses includes tuition and fees required during years the beneficiary is enrolled at an eligible educational institution. An eligible educational institution includes most accredited public, nonprofit and privately-owned for-profit postsecondary institutions.

When the Beneficiary incurs qualified higher education expenses, he/she may submit a withdrawal form (available at www.brightstartsavings.com) to the Treasurer to request payment directly to his/her eligible educational institution. Bright Start is required to pay the school directly.

Rules and Restrictions

Scholarships will be subject to all terms and conditions set forth in this Application, including but not limited to the following:

1. The total scholarship award (the “Award”) will consist of the dollar value of the award plus earnings, if any, while invested in a Bright Start account. The scholarship may not have earnings and may lose value.
2. The Award can only be used for the designated Beneficiary’s qualified higher education expenses at his or her eligible educational institution. The Award is non-transferable and non-assignable.
3. A scholarship cannot be awarded as cash to the recipient nor withdrawn at any time for cash.
4. All decisions of the Sponsor with respect to interpretation and implementation of this Application will be within the sole discretion of the Sponsor and will be final.
5. If there is an existing Bright Start account for the Beneficiary, no action is needed with respect to such account; however, the scholarship cannot be deposited into such account.
6. Scholarship funds cannot be deposited into Bright Start if the deposit would cause the aggregate account balance for the Beneficiary to exceed the maximum account balance limit amount. This limit is based on all accounts for the same beneficiary invested in any of the state of Illinois 529 plans regardless of the account owner.
7. The Beneficiary will not have any ownership rights, title, interest in, power, or control over the scholarship award or the Bright Start College Savings Program account established with respect thereto.

8. The scholarship award will be invested in an Age-Based Portfolio under the Bright Start College Savings Program, based on the age of the designated beneficiary, for the life of the account.
9. A scholarship award may be forfeited at any time if:
 - (a) The Sponsor determines that the Beneficiary provided untrue or incomplete information on the Agreement;
 - (b) Funds in the Bright Start account established with respect to a designated Beneficiary have not been used by the time the Beneficiary has reached 30 years of age.
 - (c) The designated Beneficiary dies, becomes disabled or wins another scholarship such that the proceeds in the account are not necessary to pay the Beneficiary's qualified higher education expenses.
10. The Sponsor determines in its sole discretion the manner in which an account's proceeds will apply in the event of forfeiture.

Taxation Notice

The Sponsor has designed the Program so that, under current law, the scholarship award, the earnings on the Bright Start account established with such award, and distributions from the Bright Start account to pay the Beneficiary's qualified higher education expenses should not be considered federal taxable income to the Beneficiary. However, the Internal Revenue Service could take a contrary position. The Sponsor does not provide tax advice and the Sponsor does not warrant or guarantee that such tax results will be achieved. The Beneficiary must meet certain requirements of the Internal Revenue Service at the time the scholarship is used, and if the Beneficiary does not meet those requirements some or all of the scholarship may be included in his or her taxable income. Section 529 Plans, including Bright Start, are intended to be used only to save for qualified higher education expenses and are not intended to be used, nor should they be used, by any taxpayer for the purpose of evading federal or state taxes or tax penalties. Taxpayers are responsible for obtaining their own independent tax advice with respect to participation in the Program, and may wish to seek tax advice from an independent tax advisor based on their own particular circumstances.

Authority of Sponsor

The Sponsor is responsible for the implementation and interpretation of the Bright Start Fallen Heroes Scholarship Agreement. All decisions of the Sponsor will be final.

Amendment of Rules and Restrictions

The Sponsor may amend or supplement the Bright Start Fallen Heroes Scholarship Application at any time.

Non-Discrimination

All awards are made without regard to the applicant's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, order of protection status, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, or pregnancy.

Bright Start Fallen Heroes Scholarship Program Application Form

Deadline: This application form (“Form”) and all other required documentation must be submitted via mail to Office of the Illinois State Treasurer, Fallen Heroes Scholarship, 100 W. Randolph Street, Suite 15-600, Chicago, Illinois 60601 or via electronic mail to FallenHeroes@IllinoisTreasurer.gov. Applications must be received via electronic mail or postmarked no later than August 1, 2017. Applications submitted after August 1, 2017, will be reviewed on a rolling basis based on scholarship availability. All fields and requested documentation are required. The “Applicant” information requested below is for the intended beneficiary, unless otherwise noted. Questions may be directed to FallenHeroes@IllinoisTreasurer.gov or to (866)465-9724. All capitalized terms used in this Form have the meaning ascribed to them in the preceding pages or as defined herein.

Applicant’s Name (Last, First): _____

Applicant’s Date of Birth: _____

Applicant’s Social Security Number: _____

Applicant’s Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Applicant’s (or Parent/Guardian’s) E-Mail Address: _____

Applicant’s (or Parent/Guardian’s) Telephone Number: _____

The following supporting documentation must be submitted contemporaneously with this Application:

- The birth certificate or adoption certificate of the Applicant clearly stating the name of the Fallen Hero. In the case of stepchildren, a marriage license clearly stating the name of the Fallen Hero must also be included.
- Proof of Illinois residence of Applicant, or parent or legal guardian, as applicable. Acceptable documentation includes a current Illinois driver’s license, a utility bill issued within 90 days of application, official mail received from a State, County, City or Village, or a Federal Government agency, or a canceled check or bank statement dated within 90 days prior to application.
- Official documentation from a Federal agency or an Illinois State or local agency reflecting that the Applicant’s parent was a Fallen Hero, as defined herein. Acceptable documentation may include Department of Defense Document DD-1300 or proof of benefits under the Illinois Line of Duty Compensation Act for the deceased parent.
- Official documentation from a Federal agency or an Illinois State or local agency reflecting that the Applicant’s parent was an Illinois resident at the time of death. Acceptable documentation may include Illinois driver’s license, a utility bill, official mail received from a Federal agency or an Illinois State or local agency, or a canceled check or bank statement dated.

CERTIFICATION

I _____ have read and understand the conditions of the Bright Start Fallen Heroes Scholarship Program (“Program”) explained in the Program Application. I give permission to the Office of the Illinois State Treasurer (“Treasurer”) to release any information I provide in my Application as the Treasurer deems necessary. I certify that the information in this Program Application is true and complete. I understand that my scholarship award will be subject to all of the provisions set forth in this Program Application and to any further requirements as may be set forth by the Treasurer from time to time. The Treasurer is hereby authorized to verify any information contained in this application.

Signature of Applicant
(or Parent/Guardian if Applicant is under 18)

Date

Printed Name of Applicant
(or Parent/Guardian if Applicant is under 18)

Date

Program Disclosure Statement

An investment in a Bright Start account involves risks and may lose value. All Beneficiaries, and/or parents or guardians, as applicable, must carefully read the Bright Start Program Disclosure Statement, available at www.brightstartsavings.com.¹

¹ The Office of the Illinois State Treasurer serves as the Trustee of the Bright Start College Savings Program (“Bright Start”). The Program Disclosure Statement provides important information about the Bright Start College Savings Program and discusses the risks of investing in the Bright Start College Savings Trust. Investments in the Bright Start College Savings Program are not insured by the FDIC or any other government agency, and are not a deposit or other obligation any depository institution. Investments are not guaranteed by the State of Illinois, the State of Illinois Treasurer’s Office, or any other entity and are subject to investment risks, including the loss of the principal amount invested. The Program Disclosure Statement contains more complete information regarding risks, fees, and expenses associated with Bright Start and for those portfolios that invest a portion of their assets in bank deposits that are insured by the FDIC or fully collateralized.