



AUSTIN  
CAREER  
INSTITUTE

FINANCIAL  
AID  
HANDBOOK

Effective 2023 – 2024 AY

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## Purpose

This Handbook was designed by ACI to help a student gain a better understanding of the financial aid process at Austin Career Institute. You should refer to the *Handbook* whenever possible, and work with the Financial Aid Department at Austin Career Institute (ACI) to ensure any questions or concerns from students are resolved.

Please remember that the Department of Education (ED) regulates the Title IV program, also known as financial aid. These regulations specify what we can do as professional financial aid administrators. The following pages are guidelines that may help you through the financial aid process at ACI.

If your situation is not covered in this Handbook, or if you would like further explanation on the topic, make an appointment to see your Financial Aid Administrator. Please keep in mind that no one other than the financial aid staff is qualified to answer financial aid related questions.

Check with the Financial Aid Department about their business hours. It is highly recommended to schedule an appointment.

Most of the information dissemination activities required by the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended have been satisfied with this *Handbook* and with the Austin Career Institute *Catalog*. However, Financial Aid Officers (administrators/advisors) are available to discuss consumer information in more detail.

## Financial Aid Department Contact Information

### Estella Proctor

Director of Financial Aid and Business Operations

Email: [estella@austincareerinstitute.edu](mailto:estella@austincareerinstitute.edu)

Direct # Phone, Text, or Fax: (512) 750-9337

### Terry Solis

Assistant Director of Financial Aid/VA SCO

Email: [terry@austincareerinstitute.edu](mailto:terry@austincareerinstitute.edu)

Direct #, Phone, Text, or Fax: (512) 677-7776

ACI Main Phone number: 512-371-0100

ACI Main Email: [contact@austincareerinstitute.edu](mailto:contact@austincareerinstitute.edu)

### Administration Office Hours

Financial Aid Services is open Monday through Thursday 9 am to 6 pm and Friday 8 am to 5 pm.

## Purpose of Financial Aid

The purpose of financial aid is to assist students who might otherwise be financially unable to pursue the higher education program of their choice. Although the primary responsibility for meeting ACI costs rests with the student and his or her family, it is understood by institutions that some families have limited resources and are unable to meet such costs. For this reason, financial aid programs have been established by institutions and by federal, state, and local governments.

Financial aid is awarded based on need, regardless of sex, age, race, color, religion, creed, or national origin. Need is defined by the Department of Education as the difference between the cost of attendance for one academic year and the amount a student's family can be expected to contribute to this cost of attendance for the same period. See "program cost" section in this handbook for a definition of a cost of attendance.

Austin Career Institute assists every student who seeks financial aid. The office staff provides guidance to determine eligibility or other financing options to attend ACI. ACI participates in federal, state, and other student financial assistance programs. These programs aid students who are currently enrolled or accepted for enrollment and whose financial resources are inadequate to meet the full cost of their education.

Aid received from federal financial aid programs and/or other government assistance programs must be used for education purposes only.

Any financial aid commitment involving the use of federal funds is tentative and depends upon completion of the necessary forms by the student, actual receipt of the funds by ACI, and subsequent appropriation by Congress. The award from federal aid programs is not automatically continued from one year to the next; therefore, students may need to reapply each award year while enrolled. Applicants may apply for Financial Aid by contacting the campus Financial Aid Office. [See 8 Steps to Completing the 2023-24 FAFSA Form.](#)

## Student Eligibility

To be eligible for financial aid, a student must:

- Be enrolled as a student in an eligible program.
- Meet ACI's admission standards.
- Be a U.S. Citizen, or an eligible non-citizen (verification of eligible non-citizenship status may be required).

- Have financial need as determined by a need analysis system approved by the Department of Education.
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP).
- Provide required documentation for the verification process and determination of dependency status within 30 days.
- Not have been convicted for the possession or sale of illegal drugs while receiving federal student aid (grants, loans, federal work study. For special exceptions to this rule, consult the Financial Aid Department).
- Sign and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) certifying that the student will use federal student aid only for educational purposes and is not falsely submitting data for eligibility of federal awards.
- Have not borrowed in excess of the aggregate loan limits for the Title IV financial aid programs.
- Be registered for the Selective Service, if required.
- Have a valid permanent resident Social Security Number (Not For Work Only Social Security Card).

## Application Procedures

To apply for financial aid, a student must complete a standard application such as FAFSA. The application must be completed with extreme care and accuracy. Austin Career Institute Financial Aid Administrators are available to assist students and to answer any questions.

The FAFSA is used to determine eligibility for all types of financial aid programs. Once processed, the application will produce an Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

Financial aid is not guaranteed from one academic year to the next. Students must reapply each new award year and academic year. Also, if the student changes school, their aid does not automatically transfer. Students will need to check with the new school for eligibility information.

## Verification

Verification is a process the Department of Education uses to check the accuracy of information that a student reports on the FAFSA when applying for federal student aid. Austin Career Institute verifies all applicants selected by the Department of Education. In addition, ACI has the right to select a student for verification should there be any conflicting information in the information provided.

## Policies and Procedures for Verification

All applicants selected by the Department of Education will be verified. Selected applicants must submit a signed copy of the required verification documents within thirty (30) days of notification. Austin Career Institute may choose to select a student for verification if the student's documents contain conflicting information.

Students will be given a clear explanation from ACI's Financial Aid Office of the documents needed to satisfy the verification requirements and the process for submitting those documents.

Required documentation may be, but is not limited to, the student's tax return or transcript, parent(s)' tax return or transcript, and a Verification Worksheet.

If the student submits a Social Security Number that cannot be confirmed, the student may be required to submit documents to support the discrepancy. Any eligible non-citizen may be required to undergo a secondary confirmation that will be reviewed and collected by the Financial Aid Office. This will require the student to submit a copy of their credentials to the Department of Homeland Security.

If the student fails to provide the required documents within the established deadline, the student will be treated as a cash-paying student.

If the student does not meet the deadline and is not capable of making a cash payment at the end of the deadline, they may be withdrawn from ACI and will be billed in accordance with the Enrollment Agreement. The student may re-enter ACI when able to provide the required documentation.

The Financial Aid Department reserves the right to make exceptions due to extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis to the above stated policies. Please see the Financial Aid Department as early as possible to determine if you qualify for an extension of the thirty (30) day requirement.

ACI will inform the student in a timely manner of the consequences of failing to complete the verification requirements and the actions ACI will take if the student does not submit the requested documents within the deadline specified by ACI.

Students will be notified by email or in person if the result of verification changes the student's scheduled award. ACI will assist the student in correcting erroneous information.

Any suspected case of fraud will be reported to the Regional Office of the Inspector General, or, if more appropriate, to a state or local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction to investigate the matter.

No disbursements of Title IV Aid will be made prior to the completion of verification.

## Financial Aid Award Types Available

The majority of financial aid available to students is provided by the Federal Government and is called Title IV Federal Student Aid. This includes the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Direct Loan, and Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (Parent PLUS).

The student may be eligible to participate in institutional or private loan programs that enable the student to contribute to their education while in ACI. In addition, ACI is eligible to participate in state agency programs.

### Federal Pell Grant

This grant is designed to assist needy students who desire to continue their education beyond high school. Undergraduate students may apply for a Federal Pell Grant. Eligibility is determined by the student's need, the cost of attendance, and the amount of money appropriated by Congress to fund the program. The amount of the grant is determined by a standard formula used by the Department of Education. The amount of the grant available to the student will depend on the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and the Cost of Attendance (COA).

The Federal Pell Grant provides a foundation of financial aid to which other aid may be added. Students or prospective students may secure an application to participate in the Federal Pell Grant program from the Financial Aid Department of ACI, from a high school counselor, or electronically complete the application on the Department of Education's web site, [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov). The application will be transmitted electronically through a federally approved need analysis system that will determine your expected family contribution.

Federal Pell Grants are disbursed to eligible students in two payments. The first payment at the beginning of the program within 30 days of starting a program, and the second payment is after completing midpoint of the program length and the student has met SAP. Students who switched programs within ACI that transfer hours for previous training may have fewer disbursements scheduled.

### Federal Direct Subsidized Loans

Federal Loans are low interest loans that are subsidized by the Federal Government and awarded to eligible students while enrolled in a program at ACI. The loan must first be used to pay for direct educational expenses. The interest rate changes annually and will never go over a cap of 8.25%. Should interest rates change, the borrower will be notified by the federal loan servicer throughout the life of the loan. An origination fee of 1.059% is deducted from the total loan amount borrowed before it is disbursed. Origination fees change annually and will be no more than 4% and may be as low as 1%.

The Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans are disbursed in two payments, the first (loans for first time borrowers in their first academic year) 30 days from the student's start date. The student loans pay (disburse) electronically and will be directly credited to the student's tuition account.

Repayment of this loan begins after the federal grace period of (six months) of the student's graduation date or after the last date of attendance.

### Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans

The Federal Unsubsidized Loan is available to eligible students, regardless of family circumstances. An origination fee of 1.059% is deducted from the total loan amount borrowed before it is disbursed. Origination fees change annually by Congress and will be no more than 4% and may be as low as 1%. The terms of an Unsubsidized Loan are the same as those for a Subsidized Loan with the following exceptions:

The government does not pay interest on the student's behalf on an Unsubsidized loan. The Unsubsidized loan interest accrues during enrollment and the grace period (six months)

Repayment of this loan begins after the federal grace period of (six months) of the student's graduation date or after the last date of attendance. All the interest accrued during the student's enrollment time at ACI will be capitalized when repayment begins and be charged monthly during the repayment of the loan. The student can pay the interest while enrolled without penalty by either making monthly payments to the federal student loan servicer or wait to pay the accrued interest when repayment begins.

### Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loans for Undergraduate Students

The PLUS loan is available to parent(s) of dependent students to help pay for the educational expenses of the student. The PLUS loan is not based on need, and, when combined with other resources, cannot exceed the student's cost of attendance. A parent must apply for this PLUS loan to aid with paying for educational expenses of his/her enrolled dependent student. The application undergoes an instant credit check through a separate government system. A parent may apply directly at <https://studentaid.gov/plus-app/parent/landing> and instantly know where the loan was approved or denied. If approved, the parent must complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN) for ACI to process the loan. A parent may opt to authorize in writing for the ACI Financial Aid Department to run the credit check through the government federal student aid system. If approved, the parent must go onto the website to complete the MPN.

Parents may borrow up to the remaining balance due of the student or borrow up to the cost of attendance minus all other financial aid for the academic year. The origination fee of 4.228% is deducted from the total loan amount borrowed before it is disbursed. Origination fees change annually by Congress and will be no more than 4% and no less than 1%. The current interest rate for a Parent PLUS loan is 8.04%.

Repayment begins within 60 days after the student graduates or last day of attendance. The actual payment and schedule are determined by the total amount borrowed. For more information, please visit <https://studentaid.gov/plus-app/>. ACI's Financial Aid Department may guide families with this loan process.

### Maximum Loan Amounts

The maximum loan amounts for a student completing any of ACI's programs are first-year students since programs are less than a year to complete and do not advance as four-year degree-seeking programs do.

ACI student loans are awarded as follows based on processed FAFSA applications.

#### Dependent student –

\$3,500 Subsidized and \$2,000 Unsubsidized and/or a PLUS in the amount to pay the cost of the program but no more than the Cost of Attendance minus other estimated financial aid. If a dependent student's parent credit is denied a PLUS loan, the student may borrow an Unsubsidized in an amount up to \$6,000 maximum.

#### Independent Student –

\$3,500 Subsidized and \$6,000 Unsubsidized

Borrowers should review with the Financial Aid Officer opportunities for deferment for military, Peace Corps, public health service, attendance at another school, or hardship situations, such as unemployment or disability. It is particularly important to note that borrowers are responsible for notifying the lender immediately of any change of name, address, or telephone number. Borrowers should also be aware that they may repay the whole loan or any portion of it without a penalty. Another feature of these loans is that the loan obligation is canceled if the borrower dies or becomes permanently disabled (except in the case of a spousal consolidation).

All these special provisions are explained in the master promissory note (MPN) that the borrower must sign to get the loan. Borrowers should be sure to get a copy of the promissory note, read it, and keep it for future reference.

### 30 Days Right to Cancel

As a **student** or parent borrower, you have the **right to cancel** an entire **loan** or any portion or specific disbursement of any federal **loan**. Federal **student** and parent **loans** may be canceled prior to disbursement or within **30 days** of notification that funds have been credited.

ACI students have the right to cancel all or a portion of this loan or loan disbursement and have the loan proceeds returned to the US Department of Education by notifying the Financial Aid Office in writing within thirty days of receipt of notice. ACI is required to provide the student with this **RIGHT TO CANCEL** notice per Federal regulations. Please note that canceling this loan does not relieve you of the obligation to pay any or all your outstanding tuition and other institutional costs balance. ACI will provide the notice electronically via the financial aid student portal. Please note the financial aid student portal is separate from the ACI's system, Campus Login student portal.

### Deferments

The student Federal Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans are automatically deferred for repayment while the student is enrolled in ACI. During this period, the federal government pays the interest on the Subsidized Loan as long as the student remains enrolled ACI. Deferments also occur for any prior student Federal loans obtained through other prior higher educational institutions. Either the student fills out an "In-School" deferment form to their loan servicer or can wait for ACI to report to the government that the student is enrolled in a full-time program. Deferment forms can also be obtained from ACI's Financial Aid Offices or through their lender. Note: you may continue paying your federal student loan interest or any portion or your monthly existing federal student loans while enrolled at ACI. To do this, students must communicate with their federal student loan servicer.

Deferments after the student drops will trigger the repayment grace period of six months for all loans obtained through ACI. If any student loans existed prior to ACI, the repayment of those loans will begin within 30 days of the reported last date of attendance. For additional deferment information contact the campus Financial Aid Office.



## Federal Student Loan Borrower Rights and Responsibilities

The borrower has a **right** to:

- Written information on loan obligations, including loan consolidation and refinancing, and information on borrower rights and responsibilities;
- A copy of the promissory note, and return of the note when the loan is paid in full;
- Before repayment, information on interest rates, fees, the full amount of the loans, and a loan repayment schedule;
- Notification if the loan is sold or transferred to a loan service;
- A grace period, if applicable, and an explanation of what that means;
- Prepayment of the loan without penalty;
- Deferment or forbearance, if the borrower qualifies;
- Knowledge of late charges and collection or litigation costs if you are delinquent or in default;
- Information on the effect borrowing will have on the students eligibility for other types of financial aid;
- Notification of the yearly and total amounts a student can borrow, the maximum and minimum repayment periods and the minimum repayment amount;
- An explanation of default and its consequences.

The borrower has a **responsibility** to:

- Repay all loans according to the terms of the promissory note. The note is a binding legal obligation and the borrower must repay even if the student does not complete the education, or is unable to get a job afterwards, or is dissatisfied with or does not receive the education paid for;
- Repay the loan in accordance with the repayment schedule, and notify both ACI and lender of anything that affects his/her ability to repay, or eligibility for deferment or cancellation;
- Continue to make payments even after applying for a deferment or forbearance until notified that the request has been granted;
- Notify the lender if s/he graduates, withdraws from ACI, drops, transfers to another school, or changes name, address, or social security number;
- Notify the lender if s/he fails to enroll for the period of the loan;
- Notify ACI of a change of address;
- Attend an entrance interview before starting ACI, and
- Attend an exit interview before leaving ACI.

If you borrow a Direct Loan, a Direct Loan Servicer will manage it.

### Loan Repayment Chart

The chart below shows estimated monthly payments and total interest charges of 6.8% for loans of varying amounts, with typical repayment periods. ***Interest rates may change, so ask the FA Department for the current rates.***

Total Loan Amount	Number of Payments	Monthly Payment Amount	Interest Charge	Total Amount Repaid
\$ 3,500	65	\$64.52	\$ 693.80	\$4,193.80
\$ 4,000	100	\$52.51	\$1,251.00	\$5,251.00
\$ 7,500	120	\$86.31	\$2,857.20	\$10,357.20
\$10,000	120	\$115.08	\$3,809.60	\$13,809.60
\$15,000	120	\$172.62	\$5,714.40	\$20,714.40

Remember: You must repay your student loans after you graduate or even if you do not finish your program, are dissatisfied with your education, or cannot find employment.

### Preferred Lender Financial Aid Staff Code of Conduct

ACI prohibits (a) revenue-sharing arrangements with any lender; (b) Financial Aid office employees receiving gifts from a lender, a guarantor, or a loan servicer; (c) consulting or other contracting arrangements with a lender or affiliate; (d) directing borrowers to particular lenders or delaying loan certifications; (e) requesting or accepting offers of funds for private loans from a lender; (f) staffing assistance from lenders; or (g) advisory board compensation.

### Program Cost

Tuition and fees, books and supplies, personal expenses, room and board, and transportation cost for an academic year are considered in determining the student's cost of attendance. The amount to be used for indirect costs such as room and board, personal expenses are obtained from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. These expenses are subject to change.

### Packaging Aid Overview

ACI assists students to find the best combination of aid to meet the financial need of its students. Once the FAFSA is completed, the information will be used in a formula established by Federal Student Aid that calculates EFC, an amount you and your family are expected to contribute toward your education. Students are considered to have financial need if their COA exceeds their EFC. The process of awarding aid without exceeding the student's financial need (for need-based aid) or COA (for total aid received) is traditionally called packaging. Packaging is a process that varies from school to school.

### Determining Need and Cost of Attendance

The Cost of Attendance consists of all educational related costs such as program tuition, fees, book(s), transportation, food and housing, and personal miscellaneous expenses. To determine need, the following list represents the order on determining a student's eligible awards which are subtracted from the COA.

Austin Career Institute uses the Economic Policy Institute National Standardized Budget for indirect cost (an allowance for housing, food, transportation, and miscellaneous personal).

The living allowance for the financial aid year will vary by the following two categories:

1. Student living at parent(s)' home with no dependents.
2. All other students

An average 7.5-month Academic Year budget for a single student not living with parents and considered Dependent status in his/her FAFSA for the academic year would be:

#### Example: Cost of Attendance (Dependent Student)

Tuition and Fees \$18,995\* + Living Allowance \$19,905 = Cost of Attendance \$38,900

\*Refer to your enrollment agreement for your actual Total Program cost.

For a breakdown of each program's cost of attendance, visit the Consumer Information link on the ACI website.

The EFC is the Estimated Family Contribution which is based on student or student and family income, family size, etc. resulting from the FAFSA form.

The Estimated Financial Assistance is all the federal student aid that a student may be eligible for plus all other.

The student's need-based aid must not exceed the student's financial need, and total financial aid and other Estimated Financial Assistance (EFA) must not exceed the student's COA. Need-

based aid includes the Federal Pell Grant and Direct Subsidized loan programs. Pell Grants are the first source of aid for students with financial need. A student's eligibility for aid from the other need-based programs is then determined by subtracting the student's EFC and EFA (Pell Grant, if any) from the COA:

$COA - EFC - EFA = \text{remaining financial need}$

For other Title IV programs, also known as financial aid, eligibility is not based on the student's EFC. These "non-need-based" programs include Direct Unsubsidized Loans and Direct Parent PLUS Loans. A student's eligibility for non-need-based aid is determined by subtracting EFA (including any need-based aid) from the COA:

$COA - EFA = \text{eligibility for non-need-based aid}$

A student's aid package when combined with other aid and sources (scholarships, state agency vouchers, etc.) must not exceed the Cost of Attendance (COA). The following is an example of the financial need is determined:

Example: Basic Packaging (Dependent Student)

COA	\$38,900
Minus EFC #	0
Minus Pell Grant	(\$7,395) (maximum award year Pell)
Minus Subsidized Loan	(\$3,464) (3,500 – 1.059% origination fee)
Minus Unsubsidized Loan	(\$1,980) (2,000 – 1.059% origination fee)
Equals Financial Remaining Need	\$ 26,061

Example: Awarding Student's Towards Total Program Cost Total Program Cost

	\$18,995
Minus Pell Grant Award	(\$7,395)
Minus Subsidized Loan	(\$3,464)
Minus Unsubsidized Loan	(\$1,980)
Minus Parent PLUS loan	(\$6,156)
Total Student Account Balance	0

## Disbursements

Financial Aid awards are processed in at least two disbursements per academic year. The first disbursement occurs within 30 days of starting the program and the second disbursement occurs after SAP is met, typically at midpoint when SAP is met. If SAP is not met at midpoint of the program length, then the second disbursement is on hold until SAP is met. Please note that an academic year is not a calendar year. You must successfully complete the minimum of total weeks of your program to complete an academic year. Refer to the SAP Policy for details.

Disbursement Timeframes for First-Time and Non-First Time

The first disbursement of your Direct Student Loan is received within the first thirty (30) days after you begin the program. If they are the first time borrowers there is a 30-day calendar delay. For non-first-time borrowers first disbursements, the Pell grant and student Direct Loans disburse after the add drop period which is after 10 class days or two weeks of starting the program.

The second disbursement will be made after you complete and earned passing grades and attendance which is the midpoint of your program length required. Austin Career Institute receives disbursements by electronic funds transfer (EFT). The Financial Aid Department will confirm you are in satisfactory academic progress or on a warning or probationary status and have successfully completed the required hours. All formal SAP notifications will be through the Student Services Department.

### What if one program crosses over into two award year?

If you fail to apply for your second award year funds, or to complete your financial aid file in a timely manner, you will delay or jeopardize your financial aid awards. This could create a cash balance situation that will need resolution prior to continuing your education. It is the student's responsibility to check with the Financial Aid Department to ensure they have completed and provided all required documents to receive the financial aid scheduled on their award letter.

You must make an appointment with the Financial Aid Department to complete your second award year funding.

## Payment for Your Education

ACI publishes tuition prices for each program offered and are included in the Enrollment Agreement. Arrangements for payment of tuition must be made in advance of the first day of class. Contact the Finance or Financial Aid Office staff for arrangements or changes.

## Tuition Account

During orientation or before starting, every student is given access to ACI's system, Campus Login Student Portal, where a student can view their academic grades, progress, and finance information. To keep track of charges and credits to your tuition, an account ledger is created and tracked throughout your enrollment at Austin Career Institute. The charges on your account should match your enrollment agreement, so it is very important that you agree to those charges prior to signing your agreement. Your account ledger will be comprised of an amount that includes tuition, book, and registration fee. Additional charges, such as lost books, additional uniforms, retake of classes, and licensing, may be included. For assistance on accessing your Campus Login student portal, please contact an ACI staff member or the Director of Student Services.

Student Federal Student Aid Pell grant and Direct Loan disbursements are received via electronic funds transfer. Austin Career Institute must receive a student's acknowledgement and authorization from students to process federal award disbursements to student accounts. The federal funds will be posted to a student account and subtracted from their tuition and fees balance due. This authorization form is provided through the financial aid application process. Without a signed authorization to disburse the funds, the awarded disbursed funds will not apply towards charges to pay down the balance owed to ACI. This will instantly create a Past Due balance which will need to be resolved immediately to prevent dismissal of a program.

## Tuition Payments

If you have chosen to pay cash (out of pocket) for your program, or if your financial aid package does not cover the total tuition charges, you are responsible for paying down the remaining balance before graduating. If a student is unable to pay the balance in the beginning, ACI can provide a payment arrangement that will keep the student account current.

Students will be notified by phone, text, or email of any past due payments by the Financial Aid Office, Finance Business Office, or, if applicable, an outside payment management organization. It is extremely important to stay current with your cash payments. If you are having a challenging time making your payment, make an appointment with your Financial Aid Administrator or Finance Business Office.

A delinquent tuition balance may be grounds for termination/dismissal from your program.

Austin Career Institute reserves the right to withhold an official transcript and credentials if your financial obligations to ACI are in arrears or you have defaulted on your federal student loans.

### Workforce Solutions Vouchers

Once a student has been approved by Workforce Solutions, the agency's contact will submit a voucher to ACI to pay the approved amount towards the program's tuition and fees.

When ACI receives a voucher for a student, ACI will then electronically send an invoice to WFS to pay on the approved value. Once payment is received, ACI will apply the credit to the student's account.

### Scholarships

When a student has an outside ACI scholarship, ACI will work with the student and the scholarship organization to apply approved funds towards the student's program.

### Credit Balance

Austin Career Institute will monitor student balances on a weekly basis. If a credit balance occurs, ACI will pay a credit balance within fourteen (14) days. The student will be notified by phone, text, or email when a credit balance check is available. If no response is received promptly, ACI will mail the refund check to student's address on file with the campus by the Finance Business Office Department.

### Program Changes and/or Doubling Up on Classes

If at any time you decide to change your program, or request approval from ACI's Campus President to double-up on classes, you must follow the procedures outlined below. To start the process, make an appointment with the ACI Campus President. The Director of Student Services will evaluate your request to determine if it is academically possible.

Upon approval by ACI's Campus President for a program change, you will need to meet with Admissions to sign a new enrollment agreement and then with the Financial Aid Department to re-process your financial aid. If approved to double up on a class, you will need to meet with Financial Aid to re-evaluate your eligibility for financial aid.

You will be charged for any difference in price between your old program and the new one. You will also be charged for any classes you have completed that are not fully internally transferable to the new program.

Doubling up on classes, must be approved by ACI Director and may change your financial aid eligibility.

### Overtime Charges

A school may not use Title IV funds to pay overtime charges for a student who fails to complete his or her academic program within the normal time frame. Overtime charges are in addition to normal tuition and fees, and since they are not charges normally assessed, they may not be included in a student's cost of attendance for Title IV purposes, and therefore Title IV funds may not be used to pay charges, even if a school obtains a student's (or parent's) authorization to do so.

- Leave of Absence Policy (LOA) An authorized Leave of Absence (LOA) is a temporary interruption in the student's program of study.

- The LOA refers to a specific period of time in which a student is not in attendance.
- An LOA is not required during an institutional break, however; a scheduled break may occur during an LOA.
- An LOA must meet certain conditions to be counted as a temporary interruption (LOA) instead of being counted as a withdrawal, which would then require Austin Career Institute to perform a withdrawal calculation.
- Austin Career Institute will not assess the student any additional charges as a result of the LOA.
- A student who must take an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) or must withdraw from training for nonacademic reasons may return to Austin Career Institute with no loss of SAP if the student was making SAP when the student left.
- To qualify for an authorized LOA:
  - The student must follow Austin Career Institute's Leave of Absence Policy when requesting an LOA.
  - There must be reasonable expectations that the student will return from the LOA.
  - The LOA must be requested and approved in writing according to Austin Career Institute's LOA Policy and prior to LOA occurring unless there is an unforeseen circumstance that would prevent the student from requesting in advance.
  - The LOA Form provided by the Director of Student Services must be dated and signed by the student.
  - The student must provide documentation to substantiate the LOA.
  - The student is required to list the reason for the LOA.
  - Emergency LOA, without prior written request, may be granted provided the student completes the LOA form and returns it to Austin Career Institute via email, DocuSign, or in person within a reasonable resolution of the emergency.
  - The first date of the LOA would be the beginning date of the approved LOA where the student, due to an emergency situation, was unable to attend Austin Career Institute.
  - A student granted an LOA that meets the criteria is not considered to have withdrawn, and no refund calculation is required at that time.
  - A student may be granted a LOA for any of the following reasons:
    - Emergency medical issues
    - Military requirements
    - Jury duty
    - Mitigating circumstances beyond the student's control
    - Academic Instructor recommendation
- The day the student returns from an LOA, the student is required to inform staff in the financial aid office and education office of their return.
- A leave of absence extends the student's contract period and maximum time frame by the same number of days taken in the Leave of Absence without penalty to the student.
- All parties must initial changes to the contract period on the Enrollment Agreement or an addendum must be signed and dated by all parties to reflect the new contract end date.
- If the student takes an unapproved LOA or does not return from an approved LOA, at the expiration of the LOA:
  - Austin Career Institute is required to take attendance, therefore; the withdrawal date for the purpose of calculating a refund is always the last date of attendance as listed in the student's attendance records.
- Austin Career Institute permits more than one LOA provided the total number of days of all LOAs does not exceed 180 calendar days in any 12-month period.

- If a student needs an extension to their LOA, pending all 180 calendar days have not been used in prior LOA(s), the student must complete a new LOA request form, prior to concluding the current LOA, outlining the details for the requested extension.
- If the student is receiving consumer loans and/or federal funding, no aid (consumer or federal aid funding) will be disbursed during the LOA.
- If the student does not return from the LOA, the student will be dropped from Austin Career Institute.
  - The student's Title IV loans (if applicable) will enter into repayment 6 months from the student's last date of attendance.
  - Any federal student Direct Loan repayment will be per the terms of the consumer loan.

*Effective 2023 – 2024 AY*