NEST Low-Income Matching Scholarship Program Rules

The College Savings Plan Low-Income Matching Scholarship Program (the "Program") provides matching scholarship contributions to eligible beneficiaries in the Nebraska Educational Savings Plan Trust ("NEST"). This includes the NEST Direct College Savings Plan, the NEST Advisor College Savings Plan, the State Farm 529 Savings Plan, and the Bloomwell 529 Education Savings Plan.

Scholarship funds may be used to pay for a beneficiary's qualified higher education expenses associated with attending any accredited college or university, including trade and technical schools, in the State of Nebraska. Scholarship funds must be used before the beneficiary's 30th birthday or the money will be forfeited.

Eligibility

An Applicant is eligible for participation in the Program if they are the Account Owner of a NEST Plan account established for a beneficiary eligible for a matching scholarship contribution.

A NEST beneficiary is eligible for a matching scholarship contribution if the beneficiary (i) is a Nebraska resident; (ii) is under 30 years of age at the time scholarship funds are awarded; and (iii) whose family has a household income of no more than 250% of the federal poverty level during the most recently completed tax year.[1] For the purpose of determining beneficiary eligibility, NEST beneficiaries born during the current year are eligible for matching contributions but are not included when calculating whether the household income meets the Program's income requirements.

- A "household" consists of the beneficiary, any person claiming the beneficiary as a tax dependent (the "tax filer"), the tax filer's spouse and any other tax dependents of the tax filer. If the beneficiary is not a tax dependent, a "household" consists of the beneficiary, the beneficiary's spouse, and any person the beneficiary claims as a tax dependent. The income of each member of a beneficiary's household will be combined to determine whether the beneficiary's household income exceeds 250% of the federal poverty level.
- "Income" for household members who file taxes is an individual's adjusted gross income for federal tax purposes. For household members who are income earners but do not file taxes, income is determined by completing a Non-Taxable Income Form.

The table below can help you quickly determine whether a household is likely to meet the Program's income requirements. For example, if a beneficiary's household consists of three people, the beneficiary can be eligible for the Program if the household's combined income in 2025 was $66,625 or less.

[1] Federal poverty levels for purposes of the Program are those levels for the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. The separate poverty guidelines for Alaska and Hawaii shall not apply.

Persons in Household	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	For each additional person, add:
250% of the 2025 Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	$39,125	$52,875	$66,625	$80,375	$94,125	$107,875	$121,625	$13,750

Eligibility requirements will be verified through the submission of supporting documentation (e.g., tax returns).

Amount of Scholarship

The Nebraska State Treasurer will approve up to $250,000 in matching scholarships each year. Funds are awarded based on the beneficiary's household income in 2025.

- 200% of an Applicant's contribution will be matched if the beneficiary's household income is no more than 200% of the federal poverty level, up to $1,000 annually.
- 100% of an Applicant's contribution will be matched if the beneficiary's household income is between 200% and 250% of the federal poverty level, up to $1,000 annually.

	Persons in Household	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	For each additional person, add:
A	*2025 Federal Poverty Level*	*$15,650*	*$21,150*	*$26,650*	*$32,150*	*$37,650*	*$43,150*	*$48,650*	*$5,500*
B	200% of the FPL	*$31,300*	*$42,300*	*$53,300*	*$64,300*	*$75,300*	*$86,300*	*$97,300*	*$11,000*
C	250% of the FPL	*$39,125*	*$52,875*	*$66,625*	*$80,375*	*$94,125*	*$107,875*	*$121,625*	*$13,750*

Row A shows the 2025 federal poverty levels based on household size. If a beneficiary's household income does not exceed the amount listed in Row B (based on the size of the household), the beneficiary may be eligible to receive a 200% matching scholarship contribution. If a beneficiary's household income exceeds the amount listed in Row B but does not exceed the amount listed in Row C (based on the size of the household), the beneficiary may be eligible to receive a 100% matching scholarship contribution.

Eligible Contributions

Only the contributions made directly by the Applicant to a beneficiary's NEST account in 2026 will be matched. Contributions not eligible for the Low-Income Matching Scholarship include:

- Contributions from third parties, including employer contributions;
- NEST GiftED contributions;
- Meadowlark Program contributions;
- Transfers within the NEST plan.

Participation

A NEST Low-Income Matching Scholarship Program Application for the applicable year must be completed and, along with supporting documentation, submitted to the Program Manager by the deadline noted on the application. Applications postmarked after the deadline will not be accepted.

In January, the Program Manger will determine how much an Applicant contributed to each beneficiary's account during the prior year to calculate the amount of matching scholarship funds that a beneficiary is eligible to receive. Applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

If an application is approved, the Program Manager will notify the Applicant in writing and deposit a matching contribution into an omnibus account in the beneficiary's name. Omnibus accounts are owned by NEST for the benefit of a beneficiary; neither a beneficiary nor an Applicant shall have any ownership rights or interest in, title to, or power or control over such an account.

Withdrawing Scholarship Funds

You may request a qualified withdrawal of a beneficiary's matching scholarship funds by submitting a NEST Incentive Programs Distribution Request Form to the Program Manager.

Forfeiture of Scholarship Funds

A beneficiary's matching scholarship funds will be forfeited in certain circumstances, including (i) when the beneficiary reaches 30 years of age; and (ii) upon the beneficiary's death.

Questions

If you have questions regarding the Program, contact the Program Manager at (888) 993-3746.