

**Completing the Cost of Attendance Review Request form does not guarantee an increase to cost of attendance. Each request receives a thorough review by a committee, and committee decisions regarding requests for increase are considered final. Please note that any approved increase will only result in additional loan funding availability and will not provide additional grant aid from the university.**

Cost of Attendance (COA) – the average cost of attendance for TTU students is the sum of the following estimated elements:

1. Tuition and fees
2. Housing and Food
3. Books and Supplies
4. Transportation
5. Personal/Miscellaneous Expenses
6. Direct Loan Fees

Cost of attendance for enrolled students will be assigned based on the student's actual enrollment as of the 20<sup>th</sup> class day.

We have the authority to use professional judgement (PJ) to adjust COA on a case-by-case basis to allow for a student's special circumstances (FSA HB 3-36). This authority allows us to increase or decrease a student's COA if circumstances warrant it. Our decisions based on PJ should be "reasonable" and not circumvent the intent of the law or regulations. COA is meant to estimate the student's educational related expenses for their period of enrollment. Examples of unreasonable PJ might include but are not limited to vacation expenses, tithing expenses, credit card expenses, travel sports fees, wedding expenses.

The reason for the adjustment to COA must be documented and it must relate to the special circumstances that differentiate (the student) – not to conditions that exist for a whole class of students (FSA HB AVG-119 and HEA Sec. 479A(a)). COA adjustments should NOT be considered for overaward adjustments except in unusual circumstances (e.g., lack of proper policy notification to the student, error in awarding, etc.) and must be reviewed by "committee" of two or more FA Advisors or Director level FA Advisor.

Each request for COA review will be evaluated by the assigned FA Advisor in conjunction with the following guidance. If the FA Advisor feels that an adjustment should be made outside of this guidance, the request (and all related documentation) should be reviewed by a "committee" of three or more FA Advisors (not a formal committee but thorough discussion by several advisors).

**For EACH review:**

- Review historical notes and documentation in Banner and Xtender (e.g., previous review requests). Document notes related to review in RHACOMM.
- Only expenses incurred **by and for the student** (or dependents of students) during current academic year (between August 1 and August 10 of following calendar year) will be considered.
- Consider whether request for increase to COA would be better served by Special Circumstances adjustment (decreased EFC).

Reasonableness of request along with prior indebtedness should be considered. Use your best judgement and get input from other advisors if warranted. Title IV aid should not be used to support a student's more costly lifestyle choices.

- Consider asking student to participate in a money management consultation with Red to Black should you see a pattern of money management issues (e.g., excessive borrowing or spending, multiple requests in the same year, etc.). Request documentation verifying the student has completed the money management consultation.
- Review actual tuition and fees on TSAAREV and adjust as necessary. Use code 02AT to increase the budget if actual tuition and fees are greater than estimated tuition and fees included in the Cost of Attendance.
- Review actual on campus housing and initial meal plan charges on TSAAREV and adjust as necessary. Additional meal plan charges should not be included without documentation of extenuating circumstances. Use code 12IC to increase the budget if actual initial housing and food charges are greater than estimated housing and food included in the Cost of Attendance. Reminder: Housing charges are applied 60/40 whereas FA is disbursed 50/50.
- With approval of the Assistant Director/Director a tolerance of up to \$25 may be applied to students with an overaward; \$300 tolerance is allowed if the student has campus-based aid. Increase the Miscellaneous Expenses budget component to allow tolerance. (FSA HB Volume 4, Ch. 3-158) Use code 01TO to increase budget due to a tolerance allowance. Advisor must include the Assistant Director/Director approval in the documentation.
- The FA advisor will include documentation of PJ calculations (ex. Excel sheet, Review & Result doc, signed and dated note on COARR form, etc).
- RHACOMM note with TCOARR category code will be added to Banner for all PJ adjustments made.

### Housing

- Adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
  - Written explanation of extenuating circumstances required.
  - Additional documentation of extenuating circumstances may be requested.
- Rent/mortgage documentation must be completed, signed lease with dates during academic year. Quotes, estimates, etc. will not be accepted.
  - Updated lease or letter from landlord required if lease has been renewed from prior year.
- Copies of 3 months detailed bills such as utility, gas, water, etc. required.
  - Bills can be just prior to August 1st to consider 3 months.
  - 1 month acceptable for consistent bills (phone, internet, etc.)
  - Utility amounts for new move-ins will not be considered until documentation of average monthly costs can be obtained
  - Internet max monthly cap \$75
  - Phone max monthly cap \$75
- Total monthly Housing maximum caps
  - Single and/or married without children with extenuating circumstances \$1200
  - With children \$1650
  - Maximum adjustment of \$5,000 for aid year
- Distance students (single and/or married without children) – use the average Housing COA component of 3 nearest college/universities
  - Single and/or married without children with extenuating circumstances maximum cap = (Average x 1.71)
  - With children maximum cap = (Average x 2.35)

### Meals

No adjustment unless extenuating circumstances apply (documented special dietary needs or dependents)

- Special dietary needs include medical (doctor's note required) or religious (must be indicated in personal statement).
- 1 month's itemized receipts required.

### Books/Supplies

- Require paid receipts and documentation (syllabus) from department of requirement.
- An estimate may be considered for purchase of a musical instrument. Adjustment allowed one-time per program. Documentation of the requirement from the department must indicate a reasonable purchase amount for the instrument required.
- Adjust with documentation per semester, not full year.

### Medical

- Only non-elective/medically necessary procedures, medication, and supplies not covered/reimbursed by insurance considered.
- Require paid receipts or payment plan documentation with a receipt of at least one payment made.
- Require itemized bill/EOB showing date and description of service.
- Must have incurred expense or be making payments on plan during academic year.
- \$3000 annual maximum.
- Anything over maximum will require committee decision.

### Disability Expenses

- Only procedures, services, supplies, medication not covered by insurance or paid by a 3rd party will be considered.
- Require paid receipts or payment plan documentation with a receipt of at least one payment made.
- Must have incurred expense or be making payments on plan during academic year.
- Require copy of medical documentation of necessity of expense.
- Can adjust based on actual fees for the Techniques Center, per TSAAREV.

### Dependent Care

- Consider up to max for children 13 years of age or younger living in HH. \$6,000 per child annual maximum.
- Request Dependent Care Expense Worksheet.
- Require payment documentation (cancelled checks, receipts, etc.).

### Computer

- \$1500 one-time per program maximum for UG/Grad. \$2500 for Law. If special requirements for major, documentation required from college.
- Allowed only once during program at TTU.
- Copy of paid receipt or detailed estimate required.
- FA Advisor will add tracking requirement per program that will auto-roll each year. TCMPUG (Undergraduate), TCMPGR (Graduate), TCMPLW (Law), TCMP2D (2<sup>nd</sup> Undergraduate Degree).

Vehicle/Home Repairs

- Only repairs that are necessary for the student to continue their educational program will be considered
- Require paid receipts of vehicle/home in student's name paid by student for amounts not covered/reimbursed by insurance.
- New/used car purchase not allowed. Standard maintenance expenses not allowed (e.g., oil change, insurance, etc.).
- \$2000 annual maximum.
- Any amount above maximum requires committee decision.

Interview Expenses (Law Only)

- Only necessary hotel, flights, mileage, food, etc. costs to attend scheduled job interview will be considered.
- Copy of paid receipts required.
- Documentation of scheduled interview required.

Other

- For expenses not included in other categories
- Require detailed letter of explanation.
- Require documentation of reason for expense and paid receipts.
- Travel Required for Education Program
  - Require paid receipts and department documentation that travel is **required** for degree.
- Professional Licensing (Separate category on Law form)
  - One-time only for examination fee incurred during academic year.
  - Study material/study course fees not considered.
  - Require department documentation that it is required for degree completion.
  - Require paid receipts.
  - Not allowed for licensing required for admission into another school.
- Emergency Travel
  - Require paid receipts.
  - Require documentation (doctor's notes, obituary, etc.) of reason for travel.
- Relocation Expenses - Law only.
  - Allowed only once during program at TTU for relocation to Lubbock, TX.
  - Require paid receipts.
  - Expenses greater than \$2,000 will require committee approval
- Personal
  - Health Insurance
    - If personally purchased insurance, don't consider amounts in excess of TTU Academic Health Plan costs.
    - Require paid receipts or charge to TTU bill (TSAAREV).
  - Professional Clothing – LAW only.
    - Require paid receipts.

- Transportation
  - Only flights for out-of-state students will be considered. Flights for in-state students is already covered in standard COA.
    - Only consider flights home at semester breaks (to/from Lubbock in August, December, January, May). Dorms are open during other holidays so return home not required
    - Require paid receipts (PP)
  - Consider mileage for students commuting from 40 miles or more 3 or more times a week. Home address in Banner must confirm commute, or letter documenting other reason for commute (co-op course, required internship, etc.)
    - Require mileage map from Mapquest, Google Maps, etc.
    - Use current state/federal mileage rate to determine expense amount.

<b>Budget Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
01TF	Tuition and Fees
02PJ	Tuition and Fees PJ
03H	Housing
04PJ	Housing PJ
05M	Meals
06PJ	Meals PJ
07BS	Books and Supplies
08PJ	Books and Supplies PJ
09TE	Transportation Expenses
10PJ	Transportation Expenses PJ
11ME	Miscellaneous Expenses
12PJ	Miscellaneous Expenses PJ
15SA	Study Abroad
16UF	Undergraduate Direct Loan Fee
17GF	Graduate Direct Loan Fees
18PF	Direct PLUS Loan Fees
19BF	BOT Loan Fees
PJ01	Direct PLUS Loan Fees PJ
PJ02	Medical & Dental Expenses PJ
PJ03	Disability Expenses PJ
PJ04	Dependent Care Expenses PJ
PJ05	Computer Allowance PJ
PJ06	Program Required Travel PJ
PJ07	Professional Licensing PJ
PJ08	Vehicle Repair Expenses PJ
PJ09	Emergency Travel Expenses PJ