

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Board Action/Information Summary

☒ Action ☐ Information

MEAD Number:
202356

Resolution:
☒ Yes ☐ No

TITLE:

Metro Memorial Scholarship Fund

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Amend the Metro Memorial Scholarship Fund (the “Fund”) eligibility rules.

PURPOSE:

To request Board of Directors approval to amend the Metro Memorial Scholarship Fund eligibility rules so more individuals qualify for assistance.

DESCRIPTION:

The Fund is currently only available for dependents of employees who died while performing their Metro jobs. Recommendation is to expand eligibility to include dependents of employees who have died or became permanently disabled while employed at Metro, and dependents of employees who are honorably discharged veterans.

Key Highlights:

The Fund’s intended purpose is to help cover the higher educational expenses of the families of qualified employees in need. Due to the underutilization of the Fund, staff recommend expanding the group of individuals who would be eligible for the Fund.

Background and History:

The Board of Directors established the Metro Memorial Scholarship Fund in 2006 to provide partial scholarships to honor employees who died while performing their Metro jobs. Dependents of Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) officers killed in the line of duty do not utilize this Fund as those dependents are eligible for a different scholarship that provides full tuition and other related expenses which must be used prior to accepting funds from this Scholarship Fund.

Discussion:

The Fund is held as part of the assets of the Community Foundation, which is a tax-exempt entity. When there are excess dollars in the Fund it is used for other charitable purposes of the Community Foundation outside of the originally intended purpose. By expanding the eligibility, the Fund will remain aligned with the purpose of benefitting Metro's deserving employees and their families.

FUNDING IMPACT:

Define current or potential funding impact, including source of reimbursable funds.	
Project Manager:	Sherri Dickerson
Project Department/Office:	HC

There is no impact to funding.

TIMELINE:

Previous Actions	
Anticipated actions after presentation	

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval to amend eligibility rules of the Metro Memorial Scholarship Fund.

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT OF RULES FOR METRO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, In Board Resolution 2006-67, the Board of Directors established rules for the Metro Memorial Scholarship Fund (the "Fund") to provide educational scholarships to dependents of Metro employees who died in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, Staff recommends amending the rules to expand Fund eligibility to include dependents of employees who have died or became permanently disabled while employed at Metro, and to dependents of employees who are honorably discharged veterans; and

WHEREAS, The Fund rules also need to be revised in light of changes to the Internal Revenue Code relating to dependent exemptions;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors hereby amends Rules #1, 2, 4, and 7 of the Rules of the Metro Memorial Scholarship Fund as shown on Attachment A to this Resolution; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this Resolution shall become effective 30 days after adoption in accordance with Compact Section 8(b).

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,

/s/ _____
Patricia Y. Lee
Executive Vice President and General Counsel

ATTACHMENT A

1. An "Eligible Individual" is a person who, ~~at the time of the death of a qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority employee,~~ was both under the age of twenty-two (22) years and financially dependent on the deceased employee; ~~provided, however, that, disabled, or veteran Metro employee.~~ If a person's eligibility is based on the death of a Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee and if the Eligible Individual was accepted to or attending an Eligible Institution at the time of the death of a Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee, such person may still be considered to be an Eligible Individual so long as that person was under the age of twenty-three (23) years and meets the financial dependency requirements as set forth in Paragraph 2. If a person's eligibility is based on a Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee's Veteran status, then that person must be under age 22 when first applying for the scholarship and the Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee must still be employed at Metro.
2. Financial dependency will be determined by inclusion of the person seeking to be an Eligible Individual as a child or qualifying relative for personal exemption purposes on the ~~federal state~~ tax return of the Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee or as established by a judicially approved Divorce Decree or Property Settlement Agreement incident to a divorce. If the familial connection of the proposed Eligible Individual and the Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee is established solely by paternity proceeding and no one else is eligible to claim the child as a dependent then proof of dependency will consist of a certified copy of the court order establishing paternity and such other documentation as the Metro Memorial Scholarship Fund will, in its unchallengeable discretion, deem appropriate. A child who is in the process of adoption may be considered to be an Eligible Individual if:
 - a. the Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee has either filed a Petition for Adoption or has received a letter from a licensed child placement agency that the child was placed with the Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee with the intent of adoption by the Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee; and
 - b. the child was financially dependent on the Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee. A person who is both a relative and in the household of the Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee under an existing court ordered legal guardianship shall, for the purposes of the Metro Memorial Scholarship Fund, be considered to be the child of the Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee upon presentation of a certified copy of the court order establishing the legal guardianship.
4. A "Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee" is one who was employed by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority in either a full time or part time position at the time of his or her death or disability. ~~His or her death must have occurred in the performance of that person's duties for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (such that it would be covered under Workers' Compensation) or, if a sworn law enforcement employee under such circumstances as to be considered a "line of duty" death for purposes of the federal Public Safety Officers Benefit Program, 42 USC §§ 3796 et. seq. An employee who is employed or re-employed by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and possesses an Honorable Discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States shall also, upon entry on duty with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, be considered to be a Qualifying Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Employee.~~
7. An Eligible Individual may apply for Metro Memorial Scholarship funds at any time after the Eligible Individual has been accepted at an Eligible Institution and before the Eligible Individual has attained the age of ~~twenty-six (26)~~ twenty-seven (27) years. Funds may be applied for the semester or quarter beginning after receipt of the scholarship application.

* Deletions shown as ~~delete~~. New language is underlined.