***FINISH LINE GRANT***

*(A* ***W****orkforce* ***I****nnovation &* ***O****pportunity* ***A****ct Initiative)*

**INTRODUCTION**

Too often, financial emergencies like unexpected healthcare costs, childcare expenses, or car breakdowns prevent community college students who are on the cusp of completion from that milestone. On July 12, 2018, Governor Cooper announced the Finish Line Grant program, a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) initiative that will help students complete their training when facing unforeseen challenges. The Finish Line Grant will be administered by the Cumberland County NCWorks Career Center in partnership with the local community college, FTCC.

As part of the goal to provide services to community college students to assist them in achieving postsecondary educational success, the Finish Line Grant is set up to provide support services to students on the path toward degree completion by removing unforeseen financial obstacles from their path, which if not resolved quickly, could cause students not to complete their training.

# WHAT CAN FINISH LINE GRANT FUNDS BE USED FOR

Categories of eligible expenses under the Finish Line Grant include, housing/rent, medical needs, dependent care, or other financial emergencies that students face through no fault of their own. Finish Line Grant funds are not intended to provide ongoing relief for recurring expenses.

Finish Line funds **may not**:

Be used to cover school expenses (parking, fees, tuition, books, etc.)

Be used to pay prior balances owed to the school

Be paid directly to the student

Be released without a completed application and required supporting documentation

Be used for any reason outside the program guidelines

# WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR FINISH LINE GRANTS

Students enrolled in community colleges across North Carolina are eligible. Students must be in good academic standing and have completed *(or be enrolled in)* at least 50% of their degree or credential program.

Students should also be referred to additional campus, community and financial literacy resources to supplement the aid, address root causes or contributing factors to the financial emergency.

Students meeting the eligibility requirements for the Finish Line Grant may be eligible for up to a maximum grant of $1,000 per semester.

**Eligible students must:**

* Be in good academic standing
* Be enrolled in an approved curriculum/course
* Have completed at least 50% of their degree/credential
* Complete a Finish Line Grant Application Form (*available in the FTCC Financial Aid Services Center in Room 2 of the Tony Rand Student Center*)
* Provide supporting documentation of the financial need *(i.e. automotive repair estimate, documented notice of unexpected change in housing or utilities* *expense, etc.)*.
* Provide documentation that they are unable to get assistance from another resource to address the need
* Provide proof of citizenship
* Provide proof of date of birth
* Provide proof of residency
* Provide social security number
* Provide proof of selective service registration *(for males age 18 and older only)*
* Complete application for enrollment into a WIOA Title I program

# WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE STUDENT REQUEST IS RECEIVED

Once the student has completed the application, they will return the application with acceptable supporting documentation to the FTCC Financial Aid Services Center in Room 2 of the Tony Rand Student Center. The three-day *(business days/72 hours)* window begins when the Finish Line Grant Application Form and acceptable required supporting documentation is received by the NCWorks Career Advisor from the Financial Aid Services Center staff.

**Community College:**

* Complete community college portion of Finish Line Grant Application Form
* Review the Finish Line Grant Application Form for completeness
* Ensure proper supporting documentation of the financial need is provided
* Ensure the student is aware of the additional documentation to be provided to the NCWorks Career Advisor
* Forward the Finish Line Grant Emergency Assistance Application and supporting

documentation of the financial need to the NCWorks Career Advisor *(this may be done electronically or in person)*

* Provide supporting documentation of the student’s progress and completion toward obtaining their degree or credential (e.g., transcripts, grades, etc.).
* Allow access to community college facilities for local workforce development board/NCWorks Career Center Staff as they make every effort to meet with students in a location convenient to that student in order to determine WIOA

eligibility and collect related documentation from the student.

**WIOA Title I Career Advisor:**

* Upon receipt of the Finish Line Grant Application Form, immediately contact the student to begin the enrollment process into NCWorks Online
* Make sure that all required documentation has been provided
* Prepare documentation for payment disbursement to vendor *(payments are never made directly to any student/participant)*
* Provide case management (i.e. counseling, individual employment plan, etc.)
* Provide job placement assistance
* Responsible for WIOA Title I performance outcomes