

Restrictive Endorsement of McKay Scholarship Checks

Background

The Department of Education makes McKay Scholarship payments in four equal installments (September 1, November 1, February 1 and April 1). McKay Scholarship payments are made by individual warrant (check) payable to the student's parent or guardian and mailed by the Department of Education to the private school of the parent's choice. [s. 1002.39\(10\)\(e\), F.S.](#)

In order to qualify for a scholarship payment, the parent of a scholarship student must have a signed, notarized affidavit on file with the Department which affirms the validity of the parent's signature. [Rule 6A-6.0970\(5\)\(c\)3., F.A.C.](#) The first scholarship payment that could be affected by this Rule will be the September 1, 2010, payment.

The parent of a scholarship student must restrictively endorse the warrant to the private school for deposit into the account of the private school. [s. 1002.39\(9\)\(f\), F.S.](#) Subsequent to each payment, the Department of Education reviews a sample of endorsed scholarship warrants to confirm compliance with the restrictive endorsement requirements. [s. 1002.39\(10\)\(f\), F.S.](#)

Private schools that receive McKay Scholarship warrants should follow the restrictive endorsement procedure described below.

Restrictive Endorsement Procedure

1. When a private school receives the McKay Scholarship checks, the school should immediately stamp the first three of the following lines on the back of each check in the proper area:

For Deposit Only
(Name of School's Bank)
Into the account of (Name of School/Account Number)
Parent Signature

2. The private school should notify the parents that the checks have arrived and ask the parents to come in to the school to restrictively endorse (sign) the warrant.
3. It is strongly recommended that the scholarship checks not leave the possession of the private school, and students should not take scholarship checks home for a parent endorsement (signature).
4. The parent should make sure that the back of the scholarship check states that the money is to be deposited into the private school's account. If not, the parent should write the statement "**For deposit only into the account of (name of private school)**" before signing the check. The parent should also verify that the information on the front of the check is correct.
5. It is essential that the parent whose name is on the scholarship check be the individual that endorses the check when received by the private school. [s. 1002.39\(9\)\(f\), F.S.](#)

- a. Under law, power of attorney cannot be given from the parent to the private school. [s. 1002.39\(9\)\(f\), F.S.](#)
 - b. If a household needs to change the parent or guardian who is listed on the scholarship checks, the private school should:
 - i. File a McKay Guardian Change Form with the Department of Education (available online for participating private schools);
 - ii. Submit the applicable supporting documentation, such as the adoption documentation, new social security number, marriage/death certificate, or power of attorney documentation; and
 - iii. File a new McKay Scholarship Parent Affidavit Form with the Department of Education (available online for participating private schools).
6. Failure of the designated parent to sign the check may result in the student's forfeiture of the scholarship. [s. 1002.39\(9\)\(f\), F.S.](#)
 7. The private school should reconcile all payments received from the Department of Education against intended payments to be collected each payment period. [Rule 6A-6.0970\(5\)\(d\), F.A.C.](#)
 8. If a private school receives a check for a student in error, they must return the un-cashed check to the Department of Education immediately, indicating the student's name. The Department may also require the school to provide an explanation for how the private school claimed funds that were erroneously obtained. [Rule 6A-6.0970\(5\)\(d\), F.A.C.](#)

Questions and Answers

1. **When does a parent need to submit the McKay Scholarship Parent Affidavit Form to the Department of Education?**

When a student begins participating in the McKay Scholarship Program, the parent should file a signed, notarized affidavit with the Department which affirms that the parent understands the responsibilities of the program, including the restrictive endorsement of the scholarship warrants. The student may not qualify to receive scholarship payments until this form has been filed. [Rule 6A-6.0970\(5\)\(c\)3., F.A.C.](#) If the guardian of a participating student changes, the new guardian should also file a McKay Scholarship Parent Affidavit Form.
2. **Should a parent use a blank endorsement in signing only his or her name on the back of a McKay Scholarship check?**

No, the back of the McKay Scholarship check should always include a restriction that indicates the intent to deposit the check into the account of the private school. It is recommended that the back of the McKay Scholarship check state the following:

For Deposit Only
(Name of School's Bank)
Into the account of (Name of School/Account Number)
Parent Signature
3. **When a private school receives the scholarship checks, may the school send the checks home with the students to obtain the parent or guardian's signature?**

No, the parent or guardian should come to the private school to sign the scholarship checks. The scholarship checks should not leave the possession of the school. If the

check were sent home to the parent, the parent could potentially endorse a check and deposit it into his or her personal account in violation of the law.

4. May the student sign the check for his or her scholarship payment?

No, the ONLY individual who may sign the scholarship check is the parent whose name is on the check. In addition, the parent cannot give a power of attorney to anyone associated with the private school. [s. 1002.39\(9\)\(f\), F.S.](#)

5. What happens if a student's parent or guardian changes?

If the name or social security number of the parent or guardian changes, the private school should file a McKay Guardian Change Form with the Department of Education, along with supporting documentation, which may include adoption documentation, new social security number, marriage/death certificate, or power of attorney documentation. A new McKay Scholarship Parent Affidavit Form should also be filed. [Rule 6A-6.0970\(5\)\(c\)3., F.A.C.](#)

To access these forms, log in as a private school at <http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org>. The McKay Guardian Change Form and McKay Scholarship Parent Affidavit Form are listed under "Forms" on the Quick Navigation bar on the left side of the screen.

6. If a student has transferred to another private school, may the scholarship warrant be endorsed by a parent to the new private school?

No, the scholarship check may not be taken to another private school if the student has transferred. If a private school receives a scholarship payment for a student who is no longer enrolled at the school and who did not attend the school for at least 10 school days during the payment period, the payment should be returned to the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice immediately. The new private school must enroll the student in order to receive his or her scholarship payments. [Rule 6A-6.0970\(5\)\(e\), F.A.C.](#)

7. What should a private school do if a McKay Scholarship payment for a student is not received?

If the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice (IEPC) knows why a payment is not issued for a student prior to the payment shipment, the private school will receive a Reconciliation Report in the payment packet which identifies the student and explains why a payment was not issued. However, if a payment was not received and the student was not identified in the payment packet, the private school should contact IEPC as soon as possible after the payments for that period have been received. All claims by private schools for missed scholarship payments must be made by June 1 of the fiscal year in which the scholarship payment was originally due. [Rule 6A-6.0970\(5\)\(f\), F.A.C.](#)

8. What should a private school do if it receives a McKay Scholarship check for a student who is not currently attending the school?

If a private school receives a payment for a student who does not attend the school, the payment should be immediately mailed back to the address listed below. The school should include the name of the student and an explanation of why the funds were received in error.

Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
Attention: Payment Specialist

Additional Resources and Information

[Section 1002.39\(9\), Florida Statutes](#)- Parent and Student Responsibilities for Program Participation

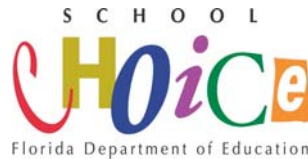
[Section 1002.39\(10\), Florida Statutes](#)- John M. McKay Scholarship Funding and Payment

[Section 1002.421\(2\), Florida Statutes](#)- Accountability of private schools participating in state school choice scholarship programs

[Rule 6A-6.0970\(5\), Florida Administrative Code](#)- Timeframes, eligibility, and departmental procedures for McKay scholarship payments

For additional information on the McKay Scholarship Program, contact the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice: <http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org>
Toll-Free Information Hotline: 1-800-447-1636

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Improving K-12 Educational Choice Options

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Education and Parental
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