



Date of Receipt: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge through a signature that I received a copy of the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Handbook. As a recipient of the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Grant, I recognize my responsibility to maintain the program's requirements.



## FY23 Handbook

**ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY-NEWPORT (ASUN)**

**CAREER PATHWAYS INITIATIVE**

**SITE LOCATIONS**

**ASUN Newport Career Pathways Initiative**

Walton Hall, Room 119  
7648 Victory Blvd. Newport, AR 72112  
870.512.7856

**ASUN Jonesboro Career Pathways Initiative**

Adult Education Center  
2601 Martin Luther King Drive  
Jonesboro, AR 72401  
870.512.7882

**ASUN Marked Tree Career Pathways Initiative**

33500 Hwy 63 East  
Marked Tree, AR 72365  
870.358.8615

**FY 23**  
**Career Pathways Staff**  
**Contact Information**

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## **Mission**

The Career Pathways Initiative's mission at Arkansas State University - Newport is to assist eligible parents in completing an educational degree and enter a high-wage, high-demand career.

## **Program Description**

The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) is a federally grant-funded program started in 2005 administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) in association with several other state agencies and institutions. Career Pathways provides funding for participating public two-year colleges to offer educational and support services for Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) eligible recipients students. The Career Pathways program allows participants to earn high-demand academic credentials for immediate entry into high-wage occupations and further educational attainment.

Expectations of Career Pathways Participants:

- Gain education and employability skills
- Find a career pathway and ultimately a career job
- Set and reach educational and personal goals
- Utilize support services that will help lead to personal and professional success
- Have good class attendance and attitude
- Keep in close contact with Career Pathways Case Manager and Career Pathways staff
- Gain employment and stay employed
- After gaining employment, use the Career Pathways program as a way to gain support, problem solve, remain employed, and complete further steps on the Career Pathways plan

**Career Pathways Goal:** Improve educational and employment outcomes for TANF-eligible adults.

Key individual goals include:

- Improve work participation
- Enhanced basic skills
- Wage progression
- Reduced welfare recidivism
- Increased self-sufficiency
- Increased employability

## **Program Eligibility**

### **Student Eligibility Criteria**

A student must be:

- An Arkansas resident
- Have dependent child(ren), under 21 years of age, living in or outside the home
- Enrolled at or in a program administered at a two-year public college

- Eligible Participants include current TEA, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid (and former TEA recipients) whose income is less than or equal to 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPL) guidelines (see chart below).

**Worksheet on Family Income  
Eligibility for TANF-Funded Services**

Family Size	2023 Federal Poverty (100%)	(Yearly Total) (250%)
1	Less than \$13,590	\$33,975
2	Less than \$18,310	\$45,775
3	Less than \$23,030	\$57,575
4	Less than \$27,750	\$69,375
5	Less than \$32,470	\$81,175
6	Less than \$37,190	\$92,975
7	Less than \$41,910	\$104,775
8	Less than \$46,630	\$116,575

**Required Documentation to Prove Eligibility**

- Copy of applicant's Driver's License or State Issued ID
- Social Security Cards (Applicant and child(ren))
- A signed copy of the most recent Federal Tax Return (Forms 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ, tax transcript, etc.), tax transcript, or paystubs/check stubs
- Copy of child(ren) Birth Certificate or proof of hospital birth or adoption papers, if applicable

*Disclaimer: All documentation and requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the Career Pathways Program, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Department of Workforce Services, and Department of Human Services.*

**Program Guidelines**

*Enrollment Process*

Attending Career Pathways Orientation is required for all program participants. Any applicant who fails to submit the required eligibility documents or complete Orientation promptly will have to reapply to the program. Applicants will receive written notification regarding the status of their application.

The Career Pathways Case Manager, or other available staff, will walk each student through the necessary steps to enroll in the Career Pathways program. ASUN's Career Pathways staff will ensure students understand that CPI funding is contingent upon the availability and

appropriation of TANF funds. CPI staff will work hard to make the student's educational journey enjoyable and rewarding.

Current students will have to re-certify annually to continue to receive funding. The re-certification process begins in July, and returning students must provide their previous year's tax forms and submit a new application packet. Upon review of requested documents, applicants will receive written notification of their eligibility.

### **Intake Process**

During the intake process, the student submits all documents requested for verification and completes an application packet. Next, the students will connect with the CPI staff to work on goal setting and learning more about the Career Pathways program's rules. Upon determining eligibility and completing the student file, CPI will mail the student a letter of eligibility. Next, the student will identify the type of funding they need by completing a benefits worksheet. Finally, CPI will inform the student of the funding benefits approved.

### **Denial of Admission into the Career Pathways Program**

Career Pathways reserves the right to deny admission to the program even if the student meets the criteria for admission. Reasons for possible denial include, but are not limited to:

- A student has a history of abysmal academic performance
- Alteration or falsification of documents
  - Denial determination is with the falsification of CPI documents only.
  - Altered or falsified documents from other departments, such as admissions, will not be used to determine denial
- Violated ASU-Newport's Code of Conduct
- A student does not attend class regularly
- A student does not provide information and documents to the Career Pathways Staff on time
- A student is not an active job seeker
- Student failed school background check
- A student has sufficient funding

### **Probation/Suspension from Career Pathways**

Noncompliance with the Student Handbook will lead to probation or suspension. They will not receive CPI funds and services for the remainder of the enrolled semester and the following semester. The Career Pathways Director may discontinue funding based on the area(s) of noncompliance. The student will receive a notification containing the following information:

- Placement on probationary status,
- Area(s) of noncompliance, and
- Corrective action(s) required
- Excessive noncompliance (will result in immediate suspension from the CPI program)

Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA per semester. Students with less than a 2.0 for the semester but a cumulative GPA above 2.0 will be required to meet with a case manager to determine if

they will be allowed a probationary semester. Withdrawing from credit courses without consulting with the case manager will result in being placed on probation. In addition, alteration or falsification of documents will result in immediate suspension. Students placed on suspension will be notified in writing and will not be eligible for continued assistance through the Career Pathways program. Students requesting readmission to the program must meet with the CPI Director to determine eligibility.

### **Counseling & Academic Advisement Process**

Participants must meet with the Career Pathways Case Manager before beginning the semester to ensure everything is clear. The student is required to meet with the Case Manager monthly. The Career Pathways Case Manager will review student schedules, discuss degree plans, and refer students to academic advising and financial assistance if needed. Students must also meet with their CPI Case Manager to discuss educational changes, difficulties or barriers encountered, and graduation plans.

### **The advisement process includes:**

- (1) Assessments**
- (2) Remediation programs**
- (3) Financial literacy**
- (4) CPI funding process.**

Our main goal is to help establish a clear picture of each student's skill level to ensure success in the program. The following assessments test, ACT or ACCUPLACER, can be used to determine skill levels. If the student has not taken a recent assessment, they are required to take the evaluation.

Students should take the assessment test within one year of applying to college. The assessment test scores allow for better placements. Students may be placed in the College Prep course through ASUN Adult Education Center to improve skill levels to enroll in college-level classes.

Students will receive continuous advisement during their enrollment time in the program. In addition, the program works to ensure that students have adequate academic support while seeking an education.

The staff of Career Pathways asks that each student follow the program guidelines:

- All students enrolled in college credit courses should maintain a 2.0 GPA or risk suspension.
- A student who earns less than 2.0 may be allowed one semester of probation at the director's judgment. The student must meet with a case manager at least twice a month during the probationary semester.
- Students who have tuition or courses paid by Career Pathways must see a Career Pathways Case Manager or staff member before changing their schedule.

## Tuition & Fees

The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative is a federally funded program, and all students must complete a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Eligible students who receive Pell or scholarships will not receive any Career Pathways funds until their Pell and Scholarships are exhausted. If a student receives a Pell denial, students must submit a denial letter from financial aid designating the denial reason.

Students who do not complete a FAFSA are not eligible for CPI funding. Funding requests for tuition/fees, books, fuel, and childcare, must be submitted each semester. CPI requires students to submit a Benefits Worksheet, which identifies their requested funding.

The following funding guidelines are:

- The student enrolls at ASU- Newport campuses (Newport, Jonesboro, and Marked Tree).
- The student completes a CPI application
- The student must have and maintain a 2.0 GPA.
- The student attends class regularly.

Career Pathways understands there are external factors while attending school. Therefore, CPI will review the situation and decide to assist with funding to give students a second chance.

This decision is on a case-by-case basis. For example, suppose Career Pathways cannot assist with funding; in that case, our goal is to help the student find assistance through various partnerships with other agencies who help students. Likewise, CPI can't assist anyone who has defaulted on a loan.

## Books & Supplies

To relieve the financial burden of buying textbooks, students who do not receive enough funds from either Pell or scholarships may be allowed assistance if they submit a benefits worksheet requesting help with books. Career Pathways will attempt to have funding for textbooks and supplies available. **Note: Funding is contingent on TANF fund availability.**

## Fuel Assistance

TANF funding allows Career Pathways to assist students with transportation through the issuance of fuel cards. Students will not receive fuel assistance for the first and last week of the semester. In addition, the CPI case manager verifies class attendance for all students.

TEA-eligible students (**must**) submit an employment/work verification form to receive fuel assistance. TANF-eligible students (**do not**) need to present an employment/work verification form to receive fuel assistance. The CPI case manager will share a fuel disbursement schedule each semester to inform students of the disbursement schedule. Fuel allotment for the semester depends on availability of funding. The Career Pathways director will evaluate fuel funding to determine if an increase is allowable for subsequent semesters. Class/clinical attendance is required for fuel assistance.

## Transportation Assistance Guidelines are as follows:

- The student must have a valid driver's license.



- Students must attend class/clinical according to their schedule.

### **Childcare Assistance**

Childcare assistance is available for students with children under the age of thirteen. Applicants must first submit a request for childcare assistance through the Department of Human Services (DHS) to determine their eligibility through the agency. If DHS denies childcare services to the applicant, CPI will determine if childcare funding is available. If approved for childcare funding, the student must attend class regularly. The CPI case manager will verify class attendance with the childcare center days before CPI submits payment. Career Pathways will pay \$20.00/day for childcare for the days the student attends class.

### **Career Pathways Services**

Students must know that funds are limited and Career Pathways services are not entitlements. Services available to Career Pathways students may include:

Childcare Assistance	Individualized Counseling	Workshops
Mentoring services	Fuel assistance	Job placement assistance
Lab/clinical/technical supplies	Resume writing workshops	Tuition, Books, and Fees
Career Counseling	Case Management	
Tutoring	Referrals for additional aid	

Skills to be covered, but not limited to:

Interviewing Skills	Communication	Time Management
Self-Esteem	Dress for Success	Workplace Skills
Workplace Safety	Follow Directions	Work Ethics
Dependability	Filling out Forms	Skill in helping to apply for jobs

### **Career Assessments**

Part of the CPI enrollment process is to assist students with career interests. Therefore, compass and ACT scores will be reviewed, along with current GPAs and TABE scores for adult education students. These test help identify academic basic skills needs.

### **College Prep Program**

The General Adult Education College Prep Program design assists students interested in college; however, they may not have the necessary skills to attend. The College Prep Program design helps students achieve the academic skills level that ASU-Newport requires to succeed in college courses. The program offers one-on-one teacher interaction to assist students in areas deemed inefficient according to their test scores. The core emphasis areas are reading, math

and language. Computer literacy and employability skills are integrated parts of the curriculum. All classes are free and open to adults aged 18 or older. The main goal is to help a student go directly into college credit courses.

### **Change of information**

All eligible students receiving CPI funds must provide current contact information to the Career Pathways staff. For example, if there is a change in their mailing address, phone number, etc. In that case, the student must report the updated information to the office of this change as soon as possible so CPI staff can make necessary corrections in the database.

### **Withdrawal/Completion**

Students will be withdrawn from the program if they do not maintain contact with the Case Manager. If a student drops out or is withdrawn administratively before completing a degree or certificate, the student can reapply for the CPI program one more time. Re-enrollment after withdrawal is at the discretion of the Career Pathways Director and on a case-by-case basis. No student will be allowed to "enroll in" the program more than twice.

A student earning a certificate or degree will be a "Completer." However, the Case Manager will continue to offer employment-related support services for one year from degree completion. The employment support services will allow the Case Manager direct contact with the student to ensure that the student has completed finding employment in a high-wage, high-demand field.

Revise 8/29/22