

EmpowerEd

A Pathway to Higher Education

Communications Toolkit

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**Program Overview:**

EmpowerEd is a state-funded program, administered by the Colorado Department of Higher Education to provide higher education funding and support to individuals who have experienced homelessness and were identified as being McKinney-Vento eligible while enrolled in a Colorado high school.

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**Talking Points:**

* In 2024, legislators created a program to provide higher education tuition assistance to students who experienced homelessness. Colorado has allocated more than $1.5 million to aid students who experienced homelessness with their postsecondary journey.
* EmpowerEd is a state-funded program administered by the Colorado Department of Higher Education to provide higher education funding and support to individuals who have experienced homelessness while enrolled in a Colorado high school. The program allows students who experienced homelessness to receive tuition assistance from colleges and universities in Colorado.
* The program provides financial assistance **to a Colorado resident student who is between the ages of 17 and 26 and who has experienced homelessness in the state at any time during high school.**
* This assistance covers the remaining balance of the total cost of attendance after any private, state or federal financial aid. These costs are split 50/50 by the institution and state.
* The state is dedicated to creating a pathway to postsecondary education or training for unhoused students. CDHE’s EmpowerEd program helps students access financial support.
* To support students’ postsecondary journey, CDHE is introducing EmpowerEd. This program provides students who have experienced homelessness in Colorado an opportunity to attend any institution of higher education at reduced costs.
* EmpowerEd expands opportunities for students across the state, providing substantial financial assistance to students who have experienced homelessness in Colorado.
* EmpowerEd unlocks opportunities for college and high-wage careers for thousands of individuals across the state who have experienced homelessness.
* We know that access to higher education can be transformational. EmpowerEd provides a pathway to higher education to students who experienced homelessness at any time during high school.
* Affordability is at the forefront of providing access to students who otherwise could not attend college. EmpowerEd provides a pathway to college for unhoused students.

**Web Copy/Newsletter Blurb**

To encourage current and former unhoused students to continue their education, the Colorado Department of Higher Education announces EmpowerEd.

Visit the [CDHE website](https://cdhe.colorado.gov/empowered) to learn how the program works.

EmpowerEd (HB 24-1403) is a state-funded program administered by the Colorado Department of Higher Education to provide higher education funding and support to eligible individuals who experienced homelessness while enrolled in a Colorado high school. This assistance covers the remaining balance of the total cost of attendance after any private, state or federal financial aid. These costs are split 50/50 by the institution and state.

To apply, students must:

1. Complete the FAFSA or CASFA and indicate past or current experience of homelessness,

2. Be accepted and enrolled at an accredited Colorado public institution of higher education and

3. Complete the [EmpowerEd Application.](https://forms.zohopublic.com/twylaesquibel/form/EmpowerEdApplication/formperma/5tyMclZoOd4sj5ncixLTwacCvplEmicSaj7Ph7ZG068)

Student Inquiries: eenavigator@dhe.state.co.us

Financial Aid Directors: [empowerfinaid@dhe.state.co.us](mailto:empowerfinaid@dhe.state.co.us)

Graphics: [See Google Drive](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Gr5lMUUzbVI8WnmIyzY98u4FQ1pMMpPh?usp=sharing)

Sample Social Media Posts

* EmpowerEd supports Colorado high school graduates on their path to postsecondary success. If you experienced homelessness in high school and are a Colorado resident, you can apply for financial assistance by visiting the [CDHE website.](https://cdhe.colorado.gov/empowered)
* Are you a Colorado high school graduate who experienced homelessness? If so, (insert institution name here) wants to support your postsecondary journey by helping you cover tuition, fees expenses and books! Visit the [CDHE website](https://cdhe.colorado.gov/empowered) to learn more about EmpowerEd.
* The Colorado Department of Higher Education is partnering with (insert institution name here) to support students who have experienced homelessness. With more than $1.5 million in aid available, we want to help pay for your tuition, fees, expenses, and books! Visit the [EmpowerEd webpage](https://cdhe.colorado.gov/empowered) to learn more.
* The state is dedicated to creating an affordable pathway to postsecondary education or training for students who have experienced homelessness. CDHE’s EmpowerEd program covers the full cost of attendance at participating Colorado institutions. Learn more by visiting the [EmpowerEd webpage](https://cdhe.colorado.gov/empowered).
* Colorado has a new program that helps cover the cost of tuition and other expenses at Colorado colleges and universities. EmpoweEd unlocks opportunities for college and high-wage careers for thousands of individuals across the state who have experienced homelessness. Learn more by visiting the [EmpowerEd webpage](https://cdhe.colorado.gov/empowered).

**Hashtags:**

#EmpowerEd

#EmpowerEdCO

#EdColo

#COLeg

**Official Accounts:**

* Facebook: [Colorado Department of Higher Education](https://www.facebook.com/cohighered)
* X (formerly Twitter): [@COHigherEd](https://twitter.com/CoHigherEd)
* Instagram: [@CoHigherEd](https://www.instagram.com/cohighered/)
* LinkedIn: [COhighered](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cohighered/mycompany/)
* YouTube: [Colorado Department of Higher Education](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgC2ZAEDYb1JRpId9d8os_g)

Other Resources can be found on the CDHE [website.](https://cdhe.colorado.gov/empowered)

* + [Fact Sheet](https://cdhe.colorado.gov/sites/highered/files/EmpowerEd%20Fact%20Sheet%208.8.24%20REMEDIATED%20%281%29.pdf)
  + QR Code