Hope Scholarship Program

Provider & Vendor FAQs

Table of Contents

Last Updated: July 22, 2024

Hope Scholarship Program: Provider & Vendor FAQs

I. Platform Overview and Transition

1. What are the main changes in the new Hope Scholarship platform?
Answer:

- Transition from EMA to a new platform managed by Student First Technologies
- Introduction of two modules: Closed Marketplace and TheoPay
- Enhanced user experience for schools, vendors, and families
- Simplified process for entering services and products

2. When will the new platform be available?
Answer:

- Providers will receive an email to claim their profile within 48 business hours after the onboarding webinar
- Families can start using the platform on July 31st for carryover funds
- Main funding for the 2024-25 school year will be available on August 15th

3. Will our previously approved services in EMA automatically transfer to the new system?
Answer:

- Unfortunately, service offerings from EMA could not be automatically transferred due to data limitations

Last Updated: July 22, 2024

- All service providers will need to re-enter their services in the new Closed Marketplace module

4. If we had an account in EMA but never submitted products, do we need to reapply?
Answer:
- If you were approved in EMA, you'll have a profile on the new platform
- You don't need to reapply, but you will need to claim your account and enter your services or products

II. Program Participation and Eligibility

5. How many families are currently participating in the Hope Scholarship Program?
Answer:
- As of July 2024, there have been over 10,000 applications for unique students for the 2024-25 school year
- The exact number of families may vary, as some families may have multiple students

6. Are there any restrictions on the types of services we can offer?
Answer:
- All services and products must be educational in nature and comply with Hope Scholarship Program guidelines
- Services are subject to approval before being listed in the Closed Marketplace
- For TheoPay purchases, the system will automatically filter out ineligible items

7. Can we charge Hope Scholarship students more than other students?
Answer:
- No, you cannot charge Hope Scholarship students more than you would charge any other student for the same services or products

8. Are we required to offer refunds?
Answer:
- Yes, you are required to offer refunds for unused services
- For ongoing services, you can only retain funds for services actually rendered

9. Can we offer services if we're located outside of West Virginia?
Answer:
- Yes, providers do not have to be located in West Virginia to offer services to Hope Scholarship students

Last Updated: July 22, 2024

III. Account Setup and Management

10. How do we set up our Provider account?

Answer:

- Check your email for the invite link
- Click on the "claim profile" button in the email
- Enter your first and last name and create a password
- Complete your organization profile, including address and logo
- Connect your bank account using Plaid

11. Can we have multiple business admin users for our account?

Answer:

- Yes, you can add multiple business admin users
- Go to your name at the top right > Manage Users > Invite New Admin
- Each admin should have their own account in the Hope Scholarship Platform for security purposes

12. How do we ensure our organization is listed as approved?

Answer:

- All providers who claim their profile will be listed in the family-facing drop-down list
- Providers will be listed as "Provider Name - City" to avoid confusion

13. What's the difference between the Closed Marketplace and TheoPay?

Answer:

- **Closed Marketplace:** For educational services and products that need pre-approval
- **TheoPay:** For educational goods and commodities purchased through your existing online store

14. How do we enter our services or products in the new system?

Answer:

For Closed Marketplace:

- Go to the Products tab > Add Product
- Enter name, select category, set price, and provide a detailed description
- Submit for pre-approval

For TheoPay:

- No need to enter products; families will shop directly on your website

Last Updated: July 22, 2024

IV. Closed Marketplace Specific Questions

15. How do we handle services with varying durations or intensity of participation?

- Create separate product listings for different service packages (e.g., 30-minute sessions, 60-minute sessions)
- Clearly describe the terms and conditions in the product description

16. Is there a minimum or maximum price amount for services like tutoring?

Answer:

- There's no official minimum or maximum price amount for services
- Pricing should be reasonable and in line with market rates
- Unusually high rates may be subject to additional review

V. TheoPay Specific Questions

17. How does TheoPay work?

Answer:

- Families can shop on your existing online store
- They use the TheoPay app to submit items in their cart for approval. The app scans the cart to ensure requested products are eligible for purchase in the Hope Scholarship Program
- Our fulfillment team orders the items from your store
- You process the order as you normally would for any customer

18. Do we need to do any integration for TheoPay?

Answer:

- No integration is required for TheoPay
- It works with any online shopping cart system (e.g., Shopify, Big Commerce, Recurly)

19. How does TheoPay work with varying product eligibility on our website?

Answer:

- You don't need to create a separate store or product list for Hope Scholarship students
- The TheoPay system will automatically filter out ineligible items during the checkout process

20. How do we get whitelisted for TheoPay?

Answer:

- Claim your profile and fill out your organizational information completely

Last Updated: July 22, 2024

- Ensure your website URL is included in your profile
- The Hope Scholarship team will review and whitelist eligible providers

21. Can TheoPay handle digital downloads or email-delivered products?

Answer:

- Yes, TheoPay can work with one-time digital download purchases
- Our fulfillment team will handle sending the download information to the family

22. If we have multiple websites under the same vendor account, can we use TheoPay for all of them?

Answer:

- This situation requires further review
- Please email vendors@studentfirsttech.com with details about your specific use case for guidance

VI. Additional Services and Products Questions

23. Can we offer subscriptions or recurring services?

Answer:

- Subscriptions and recurring services should be offered through the Closed Marketplace
- Set up each subscription option (e.g., 3-month, 6-month, 12-month) as a separate product
- Clearly describe the terms in the product description

24. How do we handle varying product rates or discounts?

Answer:

- Enter the maximum rate in your product listing
- You can apply specific discounts or varying rates when invoicing

VII. Invoicing and Payments

25. How does the invoicing process work in the Closed Marketplace?

Answer:

- Go to Purchases tab > Generate Invoice
- Select the orders you want to invoice
- Submit the invoice for approval
- Invoices are reviewed within 7 days, with payment processed within 24 hours of approval

Last Updated: July 22, 2024

26. How often can we submit invoices?

Answer:

- You can submit invoices as frequently as needed
- For ongoing services, you can invoice after each service or on a regular schedule (e.g., weekly, monthly)

27. What is the turnaround time for receiving payments?

Answer:

- **For Closed Marketplace:** 5-7 days for approval, then payment within 24 hours
- **For TheoPay:** Payment is processed through your normal online payment system

28. Are there any fees associated with using the platform?

Answer:

- There are no additional fees or revenue sharing for using the Hope Scholarship platform or TheoPay

VIII. Financial Management

29. How does Hope Scholarship funding work for families?

- Families receive their funding in two installments:
  - First installment on August 15th
  - Second installment on January 15th
- Unused funds can carry over from year to year as long as the student continues in the program

30. How do we see student information for orders?

Answer:

- You'll see the family's email address and shipping address (if applicable) when an order is placed
- Phone numbers are not shared at this time

31. How do we handle student withdrawals or refunds?

Answer:

- **For Closed Marketplace:** Contact the Hope Scholarship team for guidance on processing refunds
- **For TheoPay:** Process refunds through your normal online store procedures

32. Can families prepay for services?

Answer:

- Generally, prepayment for services is not allowed
- Families can place orders to reserve funds, but providers should only invoice after services are rendered
- Exceptions may be made for certain types of services (e.g., full semester courses) with the provider's understanding that they can only retain the funds for services actually rendered if the student leaves the program early.

IX. Support and Resources

33. Are there plans to expand the program or add new features?

Answer:

- The Hope Scholarship team is continuously working to improve the program
- Future enhancements may include more promotional opportunities for providers and improved communication tools
- Providers are encouraged to check the Hope Scholarship website and emails for updates on new features and program changes

34. Will there be any resources to help promote our services?

Answer:

- The Hope Scholarship team is considering options such as online vendor fairs and vendor spotlights in newsletters
- More information will be provided as these initiatives are developed

35. Where can we find more information about the program?

Answer:

- Check the West Virginia Hope Scholarship Program website for updates
- Look for emails from the Hope Scholarship team with important announcements and resources

X. Need More Help?

For detailed, step-by-step instructions with screenshots, refer to our comprehensive Provider Portal User Guide.

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Still have questions? Contact the Hope Scholarship Engagement Center by phone at (681)-999-HOPE (4673) or email help@hopescholarshipwv.com