High Cost Fund Application Information

2024-2025

Texas Education Agency

APEX Application

APEX, via the **Texas Education Agency Login (TEAL)** system, is the web application that must be used to submit the following applications:

➢ High Cost Funds (HCF)
- Additional optional funding for high need students with disabilities

➢ Nonpublic Day
- Required for Nonpublic or Non-District Operated Day Placements 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §89.1094

➢ Nonpublic Residential
- Required for Nonpublic Residential Placements 19 TAC §89.1092

View the **APEX User Manual** for step-by-step instructions on how to apply for an APEX user account and how to complete and submit APEX applications.

APEX Applications Window for 2024–2025

Due to technical issues with the APEX application, the closing date for HCF has been extended to May 15, 2025.

Application Type	Application Opens	Application Closes
High Cost Funds	3/3/2025	5/15/25
Nonpublic Day	9/3/2024	7/1/2025
Nonpublic Residential	9/3/2024	7/1/2025

HCF Purpose and Qualifying Cost Amount

- **High Cost Funds** (HCF) are dedicated to help **reimburse** local educational agencies (LEAs) for allowable expenses for a high need student with disabilities to help offset the financial impact on the LEA's budget.

- **High need student eligibility criteria:** Costs of **direct** special education and related services exceed three times the State average per-pupil expenditure (APPE).

2024-2025 HCF:

State APPE $12,951 x 3 =

$38,853 HCF Qualifying Cost Amount

HCF: Three Student Placement Types

Nonpublic Residential Placement Type

- Data from **finalized** Nonpublic Residential application **automatically ports over** into HCF application (during HCF application window).

- Residential Set-Aside amount being applied toward the specific student's costs must equal or exceed the HCF Qualifying Cost Amount.

Nonpublic Day Placement Type

- Data from **finalized** Nonpublic Day application **automatically ports over** into HCF application (during HCF application window).

- Contract (tuition) cost (including additional costs **identified in the IEP**, if applicable) must equal or exceed the HCF Qualifying Cost Amount.

In District Student

- LEA **manually adds** student and costs into the HCF application.

- Costs associated with providing **direct** special education and related services, **identified in the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP)** must equal or exceed the HCF Qualifying Cost Amount.

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- If **Nonpublic Day or Nonpublic Residential APEX applications** are **not** submitted within **required notification timelines**, the APEX system will automatically prorate the contract cost to adjust to the date of application submission versus the contract start date.

- Prorated contract costs will port over into the HCF application, if applicable.

★ **Notification Requirement:** LEAs are required to notify TEA annually of all placements of students with disabilities in nonpublic/non-district operated day or residential programs by submitting the Nonpublic Day and Nonpublic Residential APEX application within 30 calendar days.

- **19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §89.1094(c)**
- **19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §89.1092(c)**
- **Special Education in Nonpublic Programs** webpage

HCF Eligible Costs

Only costs associated with providing **direct** special education and related services that are **identified in the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP)** may be considered for a High Cost Fund request.

✓ The cost type must be clearly and explicitly reflected in the student's IEP, such as:

- Bus monitor: IEP must indicate the need for a bus monitor, and whether group or individual.
- Paraprofessional or teacher one-on-one assignment: Must be indicated in the IEP; vague descriptors such as "support throughout the day" are not sufficient for HCF eligibility purposes.

✗ Indirect services or consult services are **not** eligible costs for HCF.

HCF Expenditures

- All costs entered in the HCF application must be incurred for the student between 8/1 through 7/31 of the current school year.

August 1 → Expenditures & Contract Dates ← July 31

- **Extended School Year (ESY):** Expenditures and contract dates beyond the regular LEA school year **through July 31** may only be included in the HCF application if the student's IEP recommends summer ESY for that timeframe.

School Health and Related Services (SHARS)

If a cost has been submitted by the LEA for **SHARS** reimbursement via the SHARS program, the LEA must report the SHARS request amount applicable to the specific student in the HCF application.

- ✔ The APEX system will subtract the SHARS amount entered by the LEA from the total amount being requested for HCF to ensure the LEA is not reimbursed for the SHARS amount from both the HCF and SHARS programs.

- ✔ It's important for the individual completing the HCF application to communicate with their SHARS personnel to identify the SHARS amount to enter in the HCF application.

Definition of Excess Transportation Costs:
The remaining amount of the student's transportation costs after subtracting the estimated state transportation allotment expected to be received from State Funding.

The APEX system calculates the excess cost amount based on LEA data entry.

Changes effective 2023-2024

Personnel Pro-Rating Calculator:
- LEAs enter an **hourly rate** for personnel or contracted service costs.
- Number of students served **includes** the HCF student.

Excess Transportation Costs Calculator:
- Help tips are available by selecting the question mark icon in the specific column heading.
- Mileage data is for the specific student's **Round Trip**.
- Type of Transportation options:
  - **Special Route Services:** LEA provides transportation using LEA vehicle.
  - **Private Route Services:** LEA contracts with the parent/designated agent to transport the student, or the LEA uses commercial transportation.

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HCF Application Reminders, continued

- Application **Home Page** displays:
  - Number of HCF applications submitted & eligible for each placement type
  - Dollar amount requested & eligible for each placement type
    - Eligible amount is **not** the award amount
  - Final Pro-Rated Award Amount
    - Displayed by first business day in July

- **Student-Specific Application Page** displays:
  - Review status of each cost item (approved or not approved)
    - Ineligible reason if cost not approved
  - Total amount requested and total amount approved for the specific student
    - Approved amount is **not** the award amount
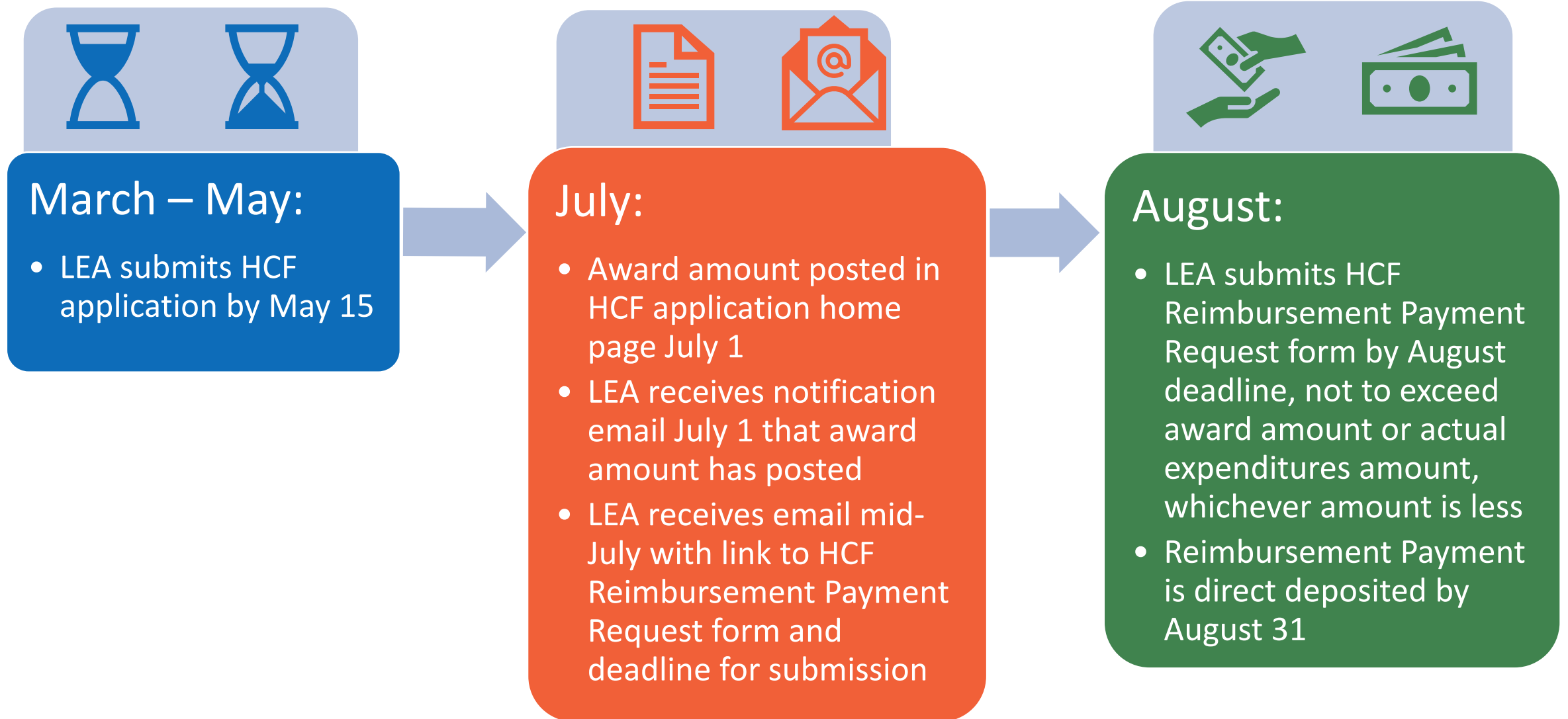
Notification of HCF Award in July

- Award amounts will be posted by the first business day in July
    - No award letters are generated.
    - LEAs receive a notification email that the award amount is posted.
    - The notification email will **not** contain award specifics.
    - LEAs **view the award amount** posted on their **HCF application home page.**

- Notification emails are provided to the:
    - LEA superintendent and/or special education shared services arrangement (SSA) fiscal agent superintendent, if applicable,
    - LEA special education director or APEX contact, and
    - Education Service Center (ESC) special education contact.

HCF Award Process 2024–2025

March – May:
- LEA submits HCF application by May 15

July:
- Award amount posted in HCF application home page July 1
- LEA receives notification email July 1 that award amount has posted
- LEA receives email mid-July with link to HCF Reimbursement Payment Request form and deadline for submission

August:
- LEA submits HCF Reimbursement Payment Request form by August deadline, not to exceed award amount or actual expenditures amount, whichever amount is less
- Reimbursement Payment is direct deposited by August 31

HCF Awards and Student Placement Type

If the total amount of funds requested by all LEA application submittals exceed the available amount of High Cost Funds, the allocations will be **prorated** with a weighted formula **based on least restrictive environment placement**:

- In District Students will carry the highest weight,
- Followed by Nonpublic or Non-District Operated Day Program placements,
- Followed by Nonpublic Residential Program placements.

HCF Award at Student Level Detail

New Report became available with 2023–2024 application

To view HCF award at the specific student level detail:
- Select 'Reports' on APEX Home page
- Select 'HCF Student Level Award Detail Report'
- Select the applicable 'School Year'
- View the portion of the award for each student

Contact Information

✉ hcf@tea.texas.gov

💻 High Cost Funds webpage