**Application, Funding, and Reporting Process**

1. Valley Outreach Client Services Staff identify a client with a need (through intake assessments, case management visits, or other inquiries).
2. Staff and client complete application form together.
3. Application form is reviewed by two Valley Outreach staff.
4. Any additional information or clarification needed is identified and gathered.
5. Using the application, criteria below, and staff assessment/consultation – VO Staff will approve or deny the application.
   * Approved 🡪 funds are distributed by Valley Outreach directly to the vendor
   * Denied 🡪 VO staff helps connect client to any other available resources
6. Funds are distributed through Valley Outreach and reimbursed by the United Way.

**Criteria**

Applications will be considered if they meet the following criteria:

* Individual lives in Washington County.
* Household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
* Is a client of Valley Outreach or referred from partner agencies: Tubman, Solid Ground, or St Andrews Resource Center.
* Priority will be placed on single parents or young adults, but parents of minor children will be considered.
* Individual is facing financial barriers to either
  + finishing a degree/certificate/license etc. that is near completion.  
    OR
  + beginning a degree/certificate/license.
* The degree/certificate/license the individual is working on will help with future employability, job opportunities, or improved wages.
* The individual is employed or has employment history and income.
* The individual has applied for and used all available financial aid grants.
* The individual has demonstrated drive and initiative to pursuing further education and employment opportunities.
* The individual commits to sharing their story and the impact of the Education Assistance Funds either through writing or a verbal interview. No names or identifying information will be used.