

**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF VIHIGA**

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**MARAGOLI**

**When replying please quote:**

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**Date: 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2018**

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## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **VIHIGA COUNTY EDUCATION FUND (VCEF) BURSARY**

The purpose of this press statement is to inform the leadership and the people of Vihiga County on the direction taken by the County Government of Vihiga regarding the management and administration of the Vihiga County Education Fund (VCEF) that has really stirred up a discussion and unnecessary push and pull between the County Government (Department of Education) and our Honourable County leaders.

Although Vihiga County has the VCEF Act, the basis on which VCEF Bursary is managed and administered, the Controller of Budget in Nairobi rejected the application for the release of the Bursary Fund for the education of our deserving bright and young students. The reasons for this position were:

1. The VCEF Act as is constituted is not in line with the Public Finance and Management Act.
2. The VCEF Act as is now promotes the direct participation of the Bursary funds by the Members of the County Assembly, as opposed to their Oversight role. Therefore, it needs to be amended accordingly.
3. Government policy dictates that all transactions of the County Government have to be carried out through IFMIS (Integrated Financial Management Information System), as such, the law does not allow the County Government to draw bursary cheques as was done by the previous administration, as is not also cost effective due to the additional costs incurred.

According to the Controller of Budget, the disbursements that were done by the previous County Government were unprocedural and have audit queries raised by the Auditor-General. Therefore, she had refused the County Government of Vihiga to disburse the Bursary using the VCEF Act as is. This prompted me to appeal to her to propose an alternative method given the importance of the bursary to our education sector. The method which she proposed is what we have agreed to use.

The procedure of application of VCEF Bursary has been defined and established. My administration is embracing technology, which is why we have the VCEF Bursary forms on our County Government of Vihiga website ([www.vihiga.go.ke](http://www.vihiga.go.ke)) in PDF format. Business in

this day and age is transacted online. This offers a chance to all the deserving students who may not reside or attend school within Vihiga County borders to gain access to the forms.

My Government also recognizes that we have deserving students within Vihiga County who may not have access to the internet thereby limiting their access to the Online VCEF Bursary Form. To address this issue, my Government is offering serialized hardcopies of the same Form at the offices of Ward Administrators. Ward administrators together with the Ward Bursary Committees will issue out these forms to ANY resident of Vihiga County seeking to have a copy.


**I wish to emphasize that; VCEF Bursary application forms are to be issued to ANY applicant from the respective wards in Vihiga County seeking to have a copy. The Ward Administrator and the Ward Bursary Committee DOES NOT decide who has access to the Application Forms. The Ward Administrator and the Ward Bursary Committee will receive ALL FORMS duly filled by applicants (Forms downloaded from the County Government website and those issued by office of the Ward Administrator) and submitted for vetting. Forms that were downloaded from the website; and are duly filled, will be received and serialized upon receipt by the Ward Administrator's office.**

The Ward Bursary Committee will vet all applications received and allocate bursary fairly and impartially in a more transparent and credible manner. The list of successful applicants will be published and displayed at the offices of the Ward Administrators and Sub-County Administrators and presented to the CECM Finance who will then forward it to the Controller of Budget in Nairobi for payment. The County Government of Vihiga, upon direction from the Controller of Budget, has already setup the VCEF Account at the Central Bank of Kenya. Bursary funds will be disbursed into that account and thereafter disbursed to respective institutions under the accounts of the respective successful students through IFMIS.

I wish to share with the people of Vihiga County that, Vihiga County Government does not hold cash within its premises or in the Bank accounts held in our local banks. County Government funds are held by the Exchequer and only released to the Central Bank account held by the County Government after the right procedures are followed.

In conclusion, VCEF Bursary fund is for the children of this county, it is meant to support the parents of bright and deserving students who may not be in a position to fully support the education of their children, it is meant for the orphans whom we have a duty to take care of. Let us not politicize this fund at the expense of the deserving and needy students who are the actual beneficiaries of this fund.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H.E. Dr. Wilber K. Ottichilo', written over a dotted line.

**H.E. DR. WILBER K. OTTICHILO**  
**GOVERNOR VIHIGA COUNTY**