

Applying for Financial Aid and Determining Aid Eligibility

Applying for Federal Student Financial Aid

To apply for federal financial aid, student and parents (if applicable) are required to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or provide a copy of the Student Aid Report (SAR) if the student previously completed a FAFSA with the award year. FAFSA on the Web is available online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>. Students can also use the FAFSA on the Web worksheet to assist them in collecting information needed to complete the application. The FAFSA4caster is also available at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/> and can be used to get an early start on the financial aid process by providing an early estimate for federal student aid, providing the user with an experience similar to FAFSA on the Web, allowing for transfer of information to the FAFSA on the Web once a student is ready to apply for aid, providing the option to apply for a Federal Student Aid PIN, increasing knowledge of the financial aid process and providing information about other sources of aid. Student and parents may obtain a FSA PIN at www.pin.ed.gov.

The financial aid office will utilize the results of the FAFSA to estimate and determine the student's financial aid eligibility.

A student may be selected to participate in a *verification* process; this requires verification of the information submitted on the FAFSA by the U.S. Department of Education. A student may be selected by the U.S. Department of Education's Central Processor (CPS) or by the school, following procedures established by federal regulation. If, during the application process, the file is selected for "verification", the student and their family must submit all documents required to validate the information listed on the FAFSA application. Students who fail to provide all required documentation to the financial aid office will not be eligible to receive federal student aid. Students should refer to www.studentaid.ed.gov website which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education for more detailed information.

Student Aid Eligibility

The school financial aid office reviews information provided by the student, school enrollment information and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid to assist in determining eligibility for Federal Student Aid. Details of the eligibility requirements are given to students during the financial aid appointment.

Eligibility for federal student aid is based on financial need and on several other factors. The Financial Aid Administrator at the school you attend or plan to attend will determine your eligibility.

To receive aid you must

- Demonstrate financial need (with some exceptions).
- Have a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) certificate, or complete a high school education in a home school setting that is treated as such under state law.
- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a regular student working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program. You may be able to receive aid for distance education courses as long as they are part of a recognized certificate or degree program.
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- Have a valid Social Security number.
- Register with the Selective Service if required (males).
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress while in school.
- Certify that you are not in default on a federal student loan and do not owe money on a federal student grant.
- Certify that you will use federal student aid only for educational purposes.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended (HEA) suspends aid eligibility for students who have been convicted under federal or state law of the sale or possession of drugs, if the offense occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving federal student aid (grants, loans, and/or work-study). If you have lost federal student aid eligibility due to a drug conviction, you can regain eligibility if you pass two unannounced drug tests conducted by a drug rehabilitation program that complies with criteria established by the U.S. Department of Education.

Civil Commitment for Sexual Offenses - A student subject to an involuntary civil commitment after completing a period of incarceration for a forcible or non-forcible sexual offense is ineligible to receive a Federal Pell grant.

Students who receive a Pell Grant are subject to a life-time aggregate that they cannot exceed. As of 7/1/12, the aggregate limit is 600% of the student's total Pell Grant eligibility; students can monitor their aggregate balance on the NSLDS website at http://www.nsls.ed.gov/nsls_SA.

In addition, in the Department of Education's attempt to prevent fraud and abuse in the Federal Pell Grant program, students with unusual enrollment (UEH) histories may be flagged during the application for Federal Student Aid process.

Some students may have legitimate reasons for their unusual enrollment history, so institutions are required to request documentation from students, to determine if there are valid reasons for the unusual enrollment history. This UEH flag needs to be resolved before students can receive additional Federal Student Aid.

The information you report on your FAFSA is used to determine your Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is calculated by a formula established by law. The EFC is not the amount of money that your family must provide. Rather, you should think of the EFC as an index that schools use to determine how much financial aid (grants, loans or work-study) you would receive if you were to attend their school. If your EFC is below a certain number, you'll be eligible for a Federal Pell Grant assuming you meet all other eligibility requirements.

The amount of your Pell Grant depends on your EFC, your cost of attendance and your enrollment status (full-time, three-quarter time, half-time, or less than half-time).

For most other aid programs, the financial aid administrator at your school takes your cost of attendance and then subtracts your EFC, the amount of a Federal Pell Grant you are eligible for, and any other sources of financial assistance you may have. The result is your remaining financial need:

Cost of Attendance

- EFC

- Federal Pell Grant Eligibility

- Aid from Other Sources

= Remaining Financial Need

If you're attending at least half-time, your cost of attendance is the sum of the following, for each academic year that you enrolled in school;

- Your actual tuition and fees (or the school's average tuition and fees),
- The cost of room and board,
- The cost of books, (the cost of books are included in the tuition and fees at Dorsey Schools)
- Supplies,
- Transportation,
- Loan fees, and
- Personal expenses

Costs unrelated to the completion of a student's course of study are not included in calculating that student's cost of attendance.

The financial aid office can consider special or unusual circumstances such as unusual medical expenses, tuition expenses, or unemployment and can adjust your cost of attendance or some of the information used to calculate your EFC. The financial aid administrator at your school also can change your status from dependent to independent, but only under specific circumstances the aid administrator will explain. You'll have to provide your school with documentation to justify any change. The decision to change or not to change your dependency status is based on the aid administrator's judgment, and it's final. It cannot be appealed to the U.S. Department of Education.