

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 their Student Aid Report (SAR) if the student previously completed a FAFSA for the specified award year(s). FAFSA on the Web is available online at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>. Students can also apply using the **MyStudentAid** mobile app available on the App Store for IOS or Android phones. Students can also use the FAFSA on the Web worksheet to assist them in collecting information needed to complete the application. The FAFSA on the Web Worksheet available at <https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/2020-21-fafsa-worksheet.pdf> provides a preview of the questions students and parents may be asked while completing the FAFSA form. Students and parents may obtain a Federal Student Aid ID at <https://studentaid.gov/help/create-fsa-id>.

The financial aid office will utilize the results of the completed FAFSA to estimate (during the preliminary appointment) and determine the student's financial aid eligibility once the student has completed their financial aid packaging appointment.

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. This is a process by which a student is 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 specific questions listed on the FAFSA application. Students who fail to provide all required documentation to the financial aid office may 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.

Students enrolling at HCI College are provided with a Cost Estimate that outlines their estimated financial aid for each payment period of the program of study they are enrolling in. This estimate is based on projected full-time enrollment; students that do not follow the planned enrollment schedule, will receive a revised Funding Estimate with any updates. Student should visit their financial aid office if they are unsure how their change in enrollment status will affect their financial aid.

Students whose enrollment drops to less than half time for any term or payment period will not be eligible to receive Direct Loan funds for that term or payment period.

Student Aid Eligibility

The school financial aid office reviews information provided by the student, school enrollment information and the results from the student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) submission, to assist in determining eligibility for Federal Student Aid. Details of the eligibility requirements are provided to students during the financial aid appointment and is always available online at <https://studentaid.gov/>.

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 if 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.
- 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.

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 Federal Student Aid website at <https://studentaid.gov/>.

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 will 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 are 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, (included at no cost in tuition)
- 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 will 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 is final. It cannot be appealed to the U.S. Department of Education.

Students will receive a Funding Estimate that lists their estimated awards. Students are only required to sign or respond to it, if they wanted any changes or have questions about the awards. However, Funding Estimates that include a PLUS Loan (parent loan to assist the student) must be signed and accepted by the parent borrower, to confirm the amount of loan they are requesting.