

Federal Pell Grant

Information adapted from Federal Student Aid (studentaid.gov).

Eligibility

Federal Pell Grants are generally awarded to undergraduate students who show significant financial need and who have not previously earned a bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree. In limited situations, students enrolled in certain post-baccalaureate teacher certification programs may also qualify.

Students who are incarcerated or confined may be eligible if they are enrolled in an approved Prison Education Program. Students who are under an involuntary civil commitment after serving a sentence for a sexual offense may also qualify.

Federal Student Aid also warns students not to accept unexpected or suspicious offers of financial aid—such as “pandemic grants” or “Biden loan forgiveness”—without confirming with their school that the offer is legitimate.

Unlike loans, Pell Grants usually do not need to be repaid, unless certain conditions apply (such as withdrawing from classes or receiving more funds than allowed). Students may only receive Pell Grant funds from **one school at a time**.

How to Apply

To be considered for a Pell Grant, students must complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)** each year. Schools use the FAFSA information to determine whether a student qualifies and how much they can receive.

Understanding the **cost of attendance (COA)** at your school is important because COA—such as tuition, fees, housing, meals, and other expenses—helps determine how much financial aid you may need.

Award Amounts

Pell Grant amounts change each year.

- For the **2025-2026 award year** (July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026), the **maximum Pell Grant** is **\$7,395**.

Your exact amount depends on:

- your Student Aid Index (from your FAFSA)

- your school's cost of attendance
- whether you attend full-time or part-time
- whether you attend for a full academic year or a shorter period

Some students may qualify for **up to 150%** of their scheduled Pell Grant in one academic year. This is sometimes called **“year-round Pell.”** For example, if you normally receive \$2,000 for the full year, you could receive an additional \$1,000 for extra terms if eligible.

Students can receive Pell Grants for **no more than 12 full-time terms** (about six years). Federal Student Aid notifies students who are approaching their limit.

If a student qualifies for Pell, the school receives enough federal funding to award the full eligible amount. Other forms of aid do **not** reduce Pell Grant eligibility.

Additional Eligibility

Students whose parent or guardian died while serving in the military or working as a public safety officer may be eligible for additional Pell Grant funds.

How Funds Are Delivered

- Pell Grant funds will be directly applied to the Student's Account balance
 - They will disburse for full term students on the 11th day of class and for part of term students on the 5th day of class.
 - Any excess funds after the grant has been applied to the balance will be sent to the student in the form of a refund by the Treasurer's Office
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Maintaining Eligibility

To continue receiving Pell Grants, students must:

- stay enrolled in an undergraduate program at an eligible institution, and
- complete a FAFSA form every year.

Students become ineligible once they earn a bachelor's or professional degree or once they use all 12 terms of Pell Grant eligibility.

Revision #2

Created 2025-12-01 17:47:33 UTC by Janelle Esposito

Updated 2025-12-01 18:00:55 UTC by Janelle Esposito