



Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program

What is the Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program?

The Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program, one of four financial assistance programs that comprise the Florida Student Assistance Grant Program, provides need-based financial aid to eligible full- and part-time students enrolled in public postsecondary career certificate programs offered by Florida College System (FCS) institutions and career centers operated by district school boards.¹ For the 2010-11 academic year, the minimum annual grant award is \$200 and the maximum is \$2,235.²

The program is administered by the participating postsecondary institutions in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education.³

What is a public postsecondary career certificate program?

A public postsecondary career certificate program is a postsecondary program that consists of 450 or more clock hours; is offered by a FCS institution or by a career center operated by a district school board; and terminates in a career certificate.⁴

What are the student eligibility criteria for a Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant?

To be considered for a grant, a student:

- ❖ Must have resided in Florida for at least one year prior to receipt of the grant and must be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen.
- ❖ Must enroll in a public postsecondary career certificate program at least half-time per term, which means enrollment in at least 180 clock hours (the equivalent of six credit hours) per term.
- ❖ May not have previously received a bachelor's degree.
- ❖ Must apply for a Federal Pell Grant by completing the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA), which determines the amount of the student's estimated family contribution (EFC). A student is not, however, required to receive a Pell Grant in order to be eligible for a grant award.
- ❖ Must demonstrate a minimum unmet financial need of \$200.

¹ Section 1009.505(3)(a), F.S.

² Specific Appropriations 5, s.1, and 68, s. 2, ch. 2010-152, L.O.F.

³ Section 1009.505(1), F.S.

⁴ Section 1009.505(2)(c), F.S.

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- ❖ May not owe a repayment or be in default on any state or federal grant, loan, or scholarship program unless satisfactory arrangements for repayment have been made.
- ❖ Must meet any application procedures and deadlines established by the participating institution.⁵

What are the renewal criteria for a Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant?

A student's eligibility to renew the grant is determined at the end of the second semester or third quarter of each academic year. To be considered for renewal, a student must have earned a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale and:

- ❖ 360 clock hours for each term for full-time enrollment;
- ❖ 270 clock hours for each term for three-quarter time enrollment; or
- ❖ 180 clock hours for each term for half-time enrollment.

Clock hours earned during the previous summer may be counted toward the total number of clock hours required. The student must also annually complete the FAFSA and demonstrate unmet financial need.⁶

Students should consult with their postsecondary institutions for renewal application procedures and deadlines.⁷

How is a student's unmet financial need calculated?

A student's unmet financial need is determined by the institutional cost of attendance, less the EFC as determined by the FAFSA, and less aid from other sources such as federal grants, state grants, and institutional aid (excluding loans).⁸ A demonstrated unmet need of less than \$200 renders the student ineligible for a grant.⁹

<p>Cost of Attendance</p> <p>- Expected Family Contribution</p> <p><u>- Other Aid (excluding loans)</u></p> <p>= Unmet Financial Need</p>

⁵ Sections 1009.40(1) and 1009.505(2) and (3), F.S.; rule 6A-10.444, F.A.C.; Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2010-2011 Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program Fact Sheet*, <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/factsheets/FSAG-CE.htm> (last visited September 16, 2010) [hereinafter *Public Career Education Grant Fact Sheet*].

⁶ Sections 1009.40(1)(b)1. and 1009.505(2), (3), and (4), F.S.; rule 6A-20.031, F.A.C.; *Public Career Education Grant Fact Sheet*, *supra* note 6.

⁷ *Public Career Education Grant Fact Sheet*, *supra* note 6.

⁸ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *Annual Report to the Commissioner, 2008-09*, at 11 (October 2009), available at <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/pdf/annualreportcurrent.pdf>.

⁹ Section 1009.505(3)(a), F.S.

How are grant recipients selected and award amounts determined?

Florida College System institutions and district-operated career centers are required to determine the eligibility of each student applicant for an initial or renewal grant award and to calculate the award amount.¹⁰ The award amount is based on an eligible student's unmet financial need and must be between \$200 and the average annual cost of tuition and registration fees for the career certificate program, unless a different maximum award amount is established in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).¹¹ The 2010-11 GAA establishes a maximum award amount of \$2,235 for the 2010-11 academic year.¹² Grant awards are distributed to eligible students according to a selection process developed by the institution or center until funding for the program is depleted.¹³

Where may a student use a Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant?

The grant may be used at the 28 institutions in the FCS and at 47 district-operated career centers located throughout the state.¹⁴ A list of participating institutions is available on the DOE's website.¹⁵

How is the Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program funded?

The GAA annually establishes the total amount of funding available statewide for the program. These funds are distributed by the DOE among participating institutions in accordance with a formula approved by the State Board of Education.¹⁶

The GAA for the 2009-10 FY provided \$2,152,840 for the program and specified a maximum grant award amount of \$2,069.¹⁷ In that year, a total of 4,493 students were eligible for the grant statewide. Of this number, 3,615 students received grant awards with 3,150 students receiving initial grants and 465 students receiving renewal grants. The average grant award amount was \$597.57.¹⁸

The GAA for the 2010-11 FY provides \$2,192,251 for the program and specifies a maximum award amount of \$2,235.¹⁹

¹⁰ See s. 1009.505(1), (3), and (4), F.S.; *Public Career Education Grant Fact Sheet*, *supra* note 6.

¹¹ Section 1009.505(3)(a), F.S.

¹² Specific Appropriations 5, s. 1, and 68, s. 2, ch. 2010-152, L.O.F.

¹³ See s. 1009.505(1), (3)(c), and (4)(d), F.S.; Email, Florida Department of Education, Director of the Bureau of Student Financial Assistance (Sept. 27, 2010).

¹⁴ Section 1009.505(2)(c) and (3)(a), F.S.

¹⁵ Section 1009.50(2)(a), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1009.505(4)(a), F.S.

¹⁷ Specific Appropriations 5, s. 1, and 67, s. 2, ch. 2009-81, L.O.F.

¹⁸ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *End of Year Report 2009-2010 – Florida Student Assistance Grant Postsecondary*, (Sept. 1, 2010) available at https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/EOY_Reports.asp?year=2009.

¹⁹ Specific Appropriations 5, s. 1, and 68, s. 2, ch. 2010-152, L.O.F.

Where may I obtain additional information?

Florida Department of Education

Office of Student Financial Assistance

(850) 410-5160

Student Hotline: (888) 827-2004 (toll-free)

<http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org>

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(850) 488-7451

<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>