

Community College Opportunity Grant

Frequently Asked Questions

If a student chooses to attend an out-of-county college, would those students be eligible for CCOG awards?

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 64A-23, institutions have developed partnerships and agreements with one another to allow out-of-district students to receive in-district rates under special circumstances. This guidance seeks to clarify the instances under which students who live outside of the service area of an institution may be eligible for CCOG awards.

(a) CCOG is available for eligible students enrolled in the county college that serves the student's county of residence.

(b) The sole exception in which students are eligible for CCOG awards at a county college that does not serve their county of residence is when the student had already been enrolled and approved to attend an out-of-county program for the fall of 2018. The student must have provided the institution with a letter from the New Jersey county college serving their county of residence stating that the institution did not offer the curriculum that the student chose to study, or that the institution could not admit the student into the desired program of study due to lack of available space, which was expected to exist for at least one academic year.

(c) In cases fitting the parameters of section (b) above, the CCOG award amount for a student attending a county college serving a county other than the student's county of residence shall be computed as though the student were a resident of the county served by that college.

Are students eligible for CCOG if they are taking remedial courses?

A student is considered eligible for State financial aid, including CCOG, provided s/he meets the institution's published definition of part time to full time enrollment in accordance with N.J.A.C. 9A:9-2.10 Verification of Enrollment and Academic Performance.

TAG recipients who are required to enroll in remedial, bilingual, and/or developmental courses to increase the probability of success in college-level work may not be receiving credit toward a degree for these courses. These students are, however, considered eligible for TAG and CCOG if they meet the institution's definition of part-time or full-time enrollment.

How does a student apply for CCOG?

For the Fall 2020 CCOG award, all students (renewal and new students) must complete and file the FAFSA or New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application by September 15, 2019, in order to apply for all other available forms of federal and state need-based grants and merit scholarships. This includes the student satisfying all requirements to determine his or her eligibility to receive payments of these state and federal grants and scholarships within established state deadlines.

The FAFSA can be completed at www.fafsa.gov or for the NJ Alternative Financial Aid Application at <https://www.hesaa.org/Pages/NJAlternativeApplication.aspx>.

Are students eligible for CCOG if they are in a dual enrollment program?

Students who are in a dual enrollment program and still in high school would not be eligible for CCOG. They must be matriculated students with a high school diploma or GED.

What is the Adjusted Gross Income requirements?

The Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) requirements are no less than \$0 to no more than \$45,000.

- For a dependent student the AGI refers to parental AGI as reported on the financial aid application.
- For an independent student AGI refers to the AGI reported on the financial application for the student and, if applicable, the student's spouse.

Do students have to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements?

To remain eligible for State financial aid, including CCOG, students must meet the minimum standards for academic performance and progress as defined by the college or university in the institution's catalog.

To determine eligibility for State financial aid, including CCOG, HESAA recognizes the same standards for academic performance and satisfactory academic progress an institution adopts to determine eligibility for Federal student aid programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, and its implementing regulations and rules.

For purposes of CCOG, students must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress in the semester immediately prior to receiving an award. Students who failed to make Satisfactory Academic Progress in a semester other than the semester immediately prior to applying for a CCOG award will regain CCOG eligibility.

Each institution is required to monitor academic progress at least once a year, prior to the fall semester. Institutions may not credit a student's account if it has been determined that a student is not making satisfactory progress.

Students who fail to meet institutional standards for academic performance and progress are not eligible to receive State financial aid through the programs administered by HESAA until such time as the institution is able to certify they are in good academic standing and are making satisfactory academic progress.

What fees are acceptable to be paid under the CCOG award?

Acceptable fees are featured on the initial term bill and include the following:

- General fees
- Registration fees
- Facility fees
- Technology fees
- Lab fees
- Program/Course fees
- Student Activity fees

Fees that are excluded from the definition include the following. If you are not sure, please email ccog@hesaa.org for clarification.

- Books (purchase or rental fees)
- Equipment/Supplies/Uniforms (purchase or rental fees)
- insurance/health fees
- application fees
- library fees
- late fees/fines
- testing/portfolio audit fees
- licensing/certification fees
- criminal background check fees
- parking fees
- gym/fitness center fees
- flight time fees
- change fees
- graduation/diploma fees
- transcript fees
- international fees
- out-of-state or out-of-county fees
- curriculum review fees
- payment plan fees

How will the student be notified of eligibility of the CCOG award?

The New Jersey county college the student attends shall notify the student of eligibility as part of the financial aid award information, as well as any supplemental methods the college determines appropriate. Such notification by the county college will include the amount of the scholarship.

What happens if the student feels they were eligible but did not receive the award?

If, for any reason, a student, his or her family, or an institution feels that the application of these policies results in an unfair determination of eligibility, an appeal shall be filed with the Authority within 60 days of initial notification of eligibility or ineligibility for a CCOG award. All appeals shall be in writing, and if appropriate shall include any supporting documentation. Appeals shall be addressed to the Director of Grants and Scholarships at the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, PO Box 540, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0540 or submitted electronically, and shall contain the student's full name, NJHESAA ID number, college of attendance, and a description of the basis for the appeal. The Director of Grants and Scholarship will respond with the Authority's final determination of the appeal