

How Much Federal Aid Can I Get?

After you file your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) through the USDE's web site at www.fafsa.ed.gov, the institution will receive an Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). This report contains the results of your application and will also determine your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Your EFC is the amount of money you, and your spouse or parent(s), are expect to pay towards your educational expenses.

The EFC will be used to determine your eligibility for federal aid. Your financial aid is determined annually, for each school year. The institution determines that a full school year (also referred to as an academic year) is a period that includes 900 clock hours and 26 weeks of instruction for clock hour programs; and 36 quarter (24 semester) credit hours and 30 weeks of instruction for programs measured in credit hours. You may be eligible to receive a full annual award for each school year/academic year. If your program is more than one year but less than 2 years, you may be eligible for a full year's financial aid for the first academic year and potentially a prorated amount of aid for the partial second academic year. For enrollment in a program that is less than a full academic year, you may be eligible only for a prorated annual award.

Federal Pell Grants

The maximum annual award for the Federal Pell Grant program is determined annually by Congress and is \$5,920 for the 2017-2018 award year. Eligible applicants with an EFC of zero (0000) on their ISIR may be eligible for this award amount. Award amounts decrease as the EFC value increases, and EFC values in excess of 5328 are not eligible for Federal Pell Grants. You are also ineligible for a Pell Grant if you already possess a bachelor's degree.

Federal Direct Student Loans

Students may also be eligible to obtain loans through the U.S. Department of Education. Loan eligibility is based in part on dependency status. Students who are considered by law to be "independent" can qualify for up to \$9,500 for their first full academic year of training. Dependent students may be eligible to obtain student loans up to \$5,500 for their first academic year. Low income students who qualify may have up to \$3,500 of the maximum amounts shown above subsidized by the USDE. Subsidized loans are those for which the interest is paid by the USDE while a student is completing their training. Your loan counseling material will more fully explain the details of subsidized and unsubsidized loans. The amount of subsidized and/or unsubsidized loans for which you may qualify is based on the Cost of Attendance (COA) for the academic year less your EFC value and any other financial aid you may be receiving. Your award letter will provide you with the COA and the total amount of your federal aid eligibility for the school year. You should contact a financial aid officer at the institution for more details about your financial aid package.

Example:

An otherwise eligible independent student files a FAFSA and receives a calculated EFC value of 0000. This means that the family is not expected to contribute towards the cost of attendance, and the student is fully eligible for federal aid. The school determines that the COA for the first academic year is approximately \$20,000 including tuition, fees, books, materials, tools, and allowances for living costs such as room, board, personal expenses, and transportation.

Based on this COA, and an EFC of 0000, the student would be eligible for full Pell Grants and Direct Student Loans for the academic year. The Pell Grant would equal \$5,920 and the Direct Loans would equal \$9,500. These awards would be disbursed in 2 payments, half near the beginning of the academic year and the second half after the midpoint of the academic year. See your financial aid officer about the additional rules governing disbursement of federal aid.