



Financial Aid **Applications** are now available!

The Office of Student Financial Assistance within the Maryland Higher Education Commission would like to remind students to submit the 2021-2022 **FAFSA or MSFAA by March 1, 2021** in order to be considered for the **Guaranteed Access Grant** and **Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship**.

Free Application for Student Aid

How to access the FAFSA:

- **Mobile App-** Students and parents may now download the myStudentAid mobile app from both the Apple App Store (iOS) and Google Play (Android).
- **Online-** Students and parents can visit StudentAid.gov to create an account (FSA ID) and submit the 2021-2022 FAFSA.

Reminder: It is extremely important that each parent and each student create his or her own FSA ID and that they do not share it with ANYONE, not even with each other.

MD State Financial Aid Application

How to access the MSFAA:

- **MDCAPS-** Students can access the MSFAA application through MDCAPS. Initial applicants must create a student login.

Students should not complete both the FAFSA and the MSFAA. The MSFAA should **only** be completed by students who are **ineligible** to receive federal financial aid **and** qualify for in state tuition.

The [MSFAA User Guide](#) provides further information, and step-by-step guidance for completing the MSFAA.

What's next?

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) receives 2021-2022 FAFSA or MSFAA information from Maryland applicants who list at least one Maryland institution on their application. Students who meet the required criteria will have their FAFSA imported into the Maryland College Aid Processing System (MDCAPS).

Students identified as potentially eligible for the Guaranteed Access Grant or Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship, will be notified by email based on the contact information reported on their FAFSA or MSFAA. OSFA will request the student to submit **all** required documentation needed to complete the verification process and confirm the students eligibility.

Guaranteed Access Grant

A student who submits a FAFSA or MSFAA by the **March 1 deadline** is identified by MHEC as potentially eligible for consideration of the **Guaranteed Access (GA) Grant** award if they:

- are a senior in high school with an cumulative unweighted GPA of 2.5 **and** under the age of 22; **or** successfully completed their GED with a minimum score of 165 per module **and** under the age of 26
- meet the annual income requirements
- report that they will be entering a 2 or 4 year Maryland College or university in the Fall 2021 semester
- eligible for in-state tuition

A student identified by MHEC as potentially eligible for the GA Grant will be notified by email of the required documentation that must be submitted to MHEC by April 1, 2021.

Important Reminders

Students must submit all required documents to MHEC by the April 1 deadline. Documentation submitted after the deadline, will not be considered.

High school transcripts **must** include all grades earned while in high school as well as includes grades earned from the **first semester (Q1 and Q2)** of the senior year of high school. Students who fail to provide this information by the deadline will be deemed ineligible for an award.

High Schools that participate in the GPA Upload tool can report the students unweighted GPA information directly in MDCAPS, and the student will not need to submit the transcript to MHEC.

Required Documents

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) will continue to accept a signed 2019 1040 Tax Form form in lieu of the 2019 IRS tax return transcript for 2021-2022 award year. If the student/parent is unable to obtain the IRS tax return transcript.

Students and parents who were not required to file taxes for the 2019 tax year, can now submit the new MHEC Verification of Non-Filing Form. This form will disply of the students MDCAPS To Do List if the student is required to submit a non-filer statement. By submitting this form, students will no longer be required to request a Non-Tax Filer Statement from the IRS. Students can access and download the Verification of Non-Filing Form through their MDCAPS account.

New Fillable Forms

Students can now save time and resources with the NEW and improved 2021-2022 OSFA fillable pdf forms! The forms can conveniently be downloaded from MDCAPS, completed and submitted electronically. Students will no longer be required to print and scan their completed verification documents.

All requested forms and documents must be submitted via email at documents.mhec@maryland.gov.

Important Dates

October 1, 2020

FAFSA available

November 2, 2020

MSFAA available in MDCAPS

March 1, 2021

*Deadline to submit
2021-2022 FAFSA/MSFAA*

April 1, 2021

*Deadline for students to submit all required documents to MHEC for the **Guaranteed Access Grant Program***

June 30, 2021

*Deadline for students to submit all required documents to MHEC for the **Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship***

Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship

The **Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship** is a last dollar award that is available to eligible students who enroll at a Maryland community college. Eligible students can receive up to \$5,000 annually to cover any remaining tuition and mandatory fee expenses **after** Federal or State Financial aid has been applied.

A student who submits a FAFSA or MSFAA by the **March 1 deadline** is identified by MHEC as being potentially eligible for consideration of the Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship award if they are:

- Eligible for in-state tuition, as determined by the community college in accordance with Title 15 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, **and** at least one of the following:
 - A Maryland high school senior with with an unweighted cumulative GPA of at least 2.3 at the end of the first semester of their senior year
 - A Maryland high school graduate with an unweighted cumulative GPA of at least 2.3 upon completion
 - A current or previous Maryland community college student with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5
 - A Maryland GED recipient
- Planning to enroll, or is currently enrolled at a Maryland community college as a candidate in:
 - a credit-bearing vocational certificate;
 - a credit-bearing certificate;
 - an associate degree program;
 - a sequence of credit or non-credit courses that leads to licensure or certification; or
 - a registered apprenticeship program
- Meet the income requirements
 - \$100,000 if the applicant is single or resides in a single-parent household; or
 - \$150,000 if the applicant is married or resides in a two-parent household for the 2019 tax year
- Have not earned an associate or bachelors degree



A student identified by MHEC as potentially eligible for the Promise Scholarship will be notified by email of the required documentation that must be submitted to MHEC by **June 30, 2021.**

Non-Credit (Continuing Education Students Only)

The Maryland Community College Scholarship is also available to students who plan to enroll at a community college in a sequence of non-credit "Continuing Education" courses that leads to licensure or certification, or a registered apprenticeship program. Students must complete the application in MDCAPS, and meet all other requirements for consideration of the Promise award.

Please note: The Non-Credit Promise Scholarship has a rolling application deadline for the academic year. However a **2021-2022 FAFSA or MSFAA must be submitted by March 1** in order to meet the eligibility requirements. Students should monitor the MHEC website for updates concerning the final deadline date for the academic year.

All requested documents must be submitted via email at documents.mhec@maryland.gov

Don't forget to sign up for the GPA Upload Tool!

High School staff can utilize the Maryland College Aid Processing System (MDCAPS) to verify and report the first semester cumulative unweighted GPA for their high school seniors. This will eliminate the need for the student to submit a hard copy of their transcript to MHEC. Utilizing the GPA upload tool will also save time and resources, while ensuring required information is accurately submitted by the deadline!

For more information, or to sign up for the GPA Upload Tool, you may contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance by email at fafsa.mhec@maryland.gov.