

Community College Opportunity Grant Policy and Procedures for Spring 2019

Purpose and Scope

This document establishes the policies and procedures for participation in the Community College Opportunity Grant (CCOG) program administered by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority in conjunction with the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. These grants shall be awarded to eligible students enrolled for a minimum of six credits at an approved New Jersey county college. The purpose of these grants is to increase the total number of students attending county college statewide by removing financial barriers to attendance.

1) Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this policy, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“AGI” means adjusted gross income per the United States I.R.S. tax return, which can be filed using either a Social Security Number (SSN) or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)

“Approved county college” means a New Jersey county college selected for participation in the pilot Community College Opportunity Grant program. For Spring 2019 the approved county colleges are: Atlantic Cape Community College; Bergen Community College; Camden County College; Cumberland County College; Hudson County Community College; Mercer County Community College; Middlesex County College; Ocean County College; Passaic County Community College; Rowan College at Gloucester County; Salem Community College; Union County College; and Warren County Community College.

"Approved educational fees" means general fees; student service/activity fees; technology fees; and required course fees paid by all students. A list of approved educational fees and a list of fees that are excluded from eligibility are attached as Appendix A.

"Authority" means the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:71A-3.

“CCOG” means the Community College Opportunity Grant first funded through Public Law 2018 chapter 54.

"Remedial or developmental curriculum" means a non-credit course or a course for which credits earned are not applicable to minimum credit requirements leading to a degree or certificate.

2) General Provisions

General provisions for the Tuition Aid Grant and Garden State Scholarship Programs that pertain to residency set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:9-2.2, noncitizens and resident aliens set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:9-2.3, eligibility and repayments set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:9-2.4, dependent/independent student set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:9-2.6, verification of family income set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:9-2.7, payments set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:9-2.11, award adjustments, refunds and collections set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:9-

2.12, check endorsements set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:9-2.14, and accounting and auditing standards set forth in N.J.A.C. 9A:9-2.16 shall be in effect for CCOG.

3) Eligibility Requirements

(a) In order to qualify for a CCOG award a student must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. For the Spring 2019 CCOG award, all students (renewal and new students) must complete and file the FAFSA or New Jersey Alternative Application by February 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;

2. Enroll in approved county college for a minimum of 6 credits; and

3. Have an AGI of no less than \$0 and no more than \$45,000:

i. for a dependent student AGI refers to parental AGI as reported on the financial aid application.

ii. for an independent student AGI refers to the AGI reported on the financial aid application for the student and, if applicable, the student's spouse.

(b) A student is eligible to receive a CCOG award at one of the approved county colleges for the Spring 2019 semester.

(c) County colleges participating in the CCOG program may not impose additional eligibility requirements, other than the requirements set forth in this section, for students to receive CCOG awards.

4) Verification of enrollment and academic performance

(a) Before payment may be made to an eligible student, the institution shall have satisfactory evidence that the student is eligible for state grant and/or scholarship assistance, has registered for a minimum of six credits, and that the student is meeting minimum standards for academic performance and academic progress.

(b) Students receiving state financial assistance under the student assistance programs administered by the Authority shall remain in good academic standing as defined by the institution which they are attending.

(c) For purposes of determining state financial assistance eligibility, the Authority shall recognize the same standards for academic performance and satisfactory academic progress that 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.

(d) The academic standing and progress of all students receiving state financial assistance must be monitored by institutions at least once a year, prior to the fall semester.

(e) Students who fail to achieve the standards set forth in this section shall be ineligible to receive state financial assistance under the programs administered by the Authority until such time as the institution certifies that they are in good academic standing and are achieving satisfactory academic progress.

(f) The institution shall share with the Authority any material findings or audit exceptions related to the determination of academic progress at any time they are revealed in the course of an audit or program review.

(g) The institution must certify that for any students that do not reside in the county it serves that the institution has received a letter from the New Jersey county college serving the students' county of residence stating that the institution does not offer the curriculum that the students chose to study, or that the institution cannot admit the students into the desired program of study due to lack of available space, which will exist for at least one year.

5) Amount of scholarship

A grant under CCOG shall cover up to the full cost of tuition and approved educational fees for up to 18 credit hours. All CCOG grants are subject to the prior application of other state, federal, institutional, and community grants and scholarships against those costs. CCOG is a last-dollar scholarship, therefore, the full amount of all state, federal, institutional, and community aid received by the student shall be applied to the tuition and approved educational fee charges to reduce the amount of the CCOG award.

6) Out-of-county students

(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 where the student had already been enrolled and attended an approved out-of-county program during or prior to the fall of 2018. Following the procedure set forth in section 4(g) above, 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 choose to study, or that the institution could not admit the student into the desired program of study due to lack of available space, which will exist for at least one academic year.

(c) In cases where the student provided such a letter from the county college serving their county of residence, 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.

7) Student notification

The New Jersey county college the student attends shall notify the student of eligibility for CCOG. All county college award letters or notifications must include all state award amounts listed individually by their program name. CCOG awards shall be referred to as the Community College Opportunity Grant.

8) Appeals

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.

Appendix A
Community College Opportunity Grant Pilot
Applicable Fees for Spring 2019

Below is the breakout of approved educational fees and unapproved non-educational fees for the purpose of reimbursement with the Community College Opportunity Grant pilot.

Educational Fees:

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

Non-Educational Fees

- Books (purchased or rental)
- Equipment/Supplies/Uniforms (purchase or rental)
- Insurance/Health Fees
- Application Fees
- Library Fees
- Late Fees or Fines
- Testing/Portfolio/Audit Fees
- Licensing/Certification Fees
- Criminal Background Check Fees
- Parking Fees
- Gym/Fitness Fees
- Aviation/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