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Federal Pell Grants are usually awarded only to undergraduate students.

The amount of aid you can receive depends on your financial need, the cost of attendance at your school, and more.

Federal Pell Grants usually are awarded only to undergraduate students who display exceptional financial need and have not earned a bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree. (In some cases, however, a student enrolled in a postbaccalaureate teacher certification program might receive a Federal Pell Grant.) [You are not eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant if you are incarcerated](#) in a federal or state penal institution or are subject to an involuntary civil commitment upon completion of a period of incarceration for a forcible or nonforcible sexual offense.

A Federal Pell Grant, unlike a loan, does not have to be repaid, except under certain circumstances. [Find out why you might have to repay all or part of a federal grant.](#)

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Try This Resource

[Federal Student Grant Programs](#)—Lists federal student grant programs with program details and award limits.

How do I apply?

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You should start by submitting a [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA®\) form](#). You will have to fill out the FAFSA form every year you're in school in order to stay eligible for federal student aid.

How much money can I get?

[SHARE LINK](#)

Amounts can change yearly. The maximum Federal Pell Grant award is \$6,345 for the 2020–21 award year (July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021).

The amount you get, though, will depend on

- your [Expected Family Contribution](#),
- the cost of attendance (determined by your school for your specific program),
- your status as a full-time or part-time student, and
- your plans to attend school for a full academic year or less.

[View the tables for 2020–21 award year, based on the factors above, that are used to determine Pell Grant award amounts.](#)

In certain situations, an eligible student can receive up to 150 percent of his or her scheduled Pell Grant award for an award year.

For example, if you are eligible for a \$2,000 Pell Grant for the award year and are enrolled full-time for both the fall term and spring term, you'll likely receive \$1,000 in the fall and \$1,000 in the spring. However, under certain circumstances, you may be eligible to receive up to an additional \$1,000 for attendance in an additional term within that award year (resulting in your receiving 150% of your original award). You might hear this situation being referred to as “year-round Pell.” For details, contact your school's financial aid office.

You may not receive Federal Pell Grant funds from more than one school at a time.



Please note that you can receive the Federal Pell Grant for no more than 12 terms or the equivalent (roughly six years).

You'll receive a notice if you're getting close to your limit. If you have any questions, contact your financial aid office.

If you're eligible for a Federal Pell Grant, you'll receive the full amount you qualify for —each school participating in the program receives enough funds each year from the U.S. Department of Education to pay the Federal Pell Grant amounts for all its eligible students. The amount of any other student aid for which you might qualify does not affect the amount of your Federal Pell Grant.

I heard I might get a larger Federal Pell Grant if my parent died in Iraq or Afghanistan or in the line of duty as a public safety officer. Is that right?

 SHARE LINK

It depends. If your parent or guardian was

- a member of the U.S. armed forces and died as a result of military service performed in Iraq or Afghanistan after the events of 9/11 or
- a public safety officer and died as a result of active service in the line of duty, then

you may be eligible for additional Federal Pell Grant funds if, at the time of your parent's or guardian's death, you were

- less than 24 years of age or
- enrolled in college or career school at least part-time.

If you meet these requirements and are eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant, your eligibility will be recalculated as if your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) were zero. Payments are adjusted if you are enrolled less than full-time.

Students whose parent or guardian was a member of the U.S. armed forces and died as a result of military service performed in Iraq or Afghanistan after the events of 9/11: If you meet the requirements above but aren't eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant due to your EFC being too high, you might be able to get an [Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant](#).

How will I get paid?

 SHARE LINK

Your school can apply Federal Pell Grant funds to your school costs, pay you directly, or combine these methods. [Learn more about how \(and when\) you'll be paid.](#)

What should I do to maintain the grant?

[SHARE LINK](#)

In general, you must maintain enrollment in an undergraduate course of study at a nonforeign school to receive a Federal Pell Grant. Additionally, you will have to [fill out the FAFSA form](#) every year you're in school in order to stay eligible for federal student aid.

Once you have earned a baccalaureate degree or your first professional degree or have used up all 12 terms of your eligibility, you are no longer eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant.

[Learn more about staying eligible for federal student aid while you're in school.](#)

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