



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR COLLEGE BOUND SENIORS

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**Washington Student
Achievement Council**





REQUIREMENTS TO RECEIVE THE COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP

1. What are the academic requirements to receive the College Bound Scholarship (CBS)?

You must:

- **Graduate** from a Washington State High School
- Have a **2.0 cumulative GPA** (the average of all high school classes)

2. Can I earn a GED instead of a high school diploma?

No. A GED is not accepted.

3. I applied for College Bound when I was in middle school and received a College Bound certificate, doesn't that guarantee that I will receive the Scholarship?

No, there are several more steps you must complete to receive the Scholarship. In addition to the academic requirements (see above) you must also meet the income requirement.

Completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) provides the college's financial aid staff the information to determine if you meet the income requirement. Since the College Bound Scholarship is need-based, it may not be a part of your financial aid award, if your need has been fully met by other grants and scholarships. You must also be accepted to college and complete the college's financial aid paperwork in a timely manner.

4. Do I have to have a Social Security number (SSN) to receive College Bound - I didn't need one to apply?

Although you did not need a Social Security number (SSN) to apply, you must be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen and have a SSN or other documentation such as an Alien Registration Card to receive federal and state financial aid, including the College Bound Scholarship. For more information, follow this link and scroll down to eligible non-citizen. studentaid.ed.gov/glossary#letter_e

5. I do not meet the citizenship requirements now, but I will soon. Can I apply for financial aid and get my College Bound Scholarship after my citizenship status changes?

You may apply for financial aid after your status changes. However, participants in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program are not eligible for federal or state financial aid because their citizenship status is not changed.

6. Do I have to graduate with my high school class to receive College Bound?

No. You may graduate earlier or later than your original high school class.

7. I had detention a couple of times when I was in high school; does that mean I won't get the Scholarship?

Your high school disciplinary record is not considered. However, if you have been convicted of a felony, you are not eligible for the College Bound Scholarship. You are expected to tell the Council or the college if you have a felony conviction.

8. Do I have to enroll in college right after I graduate from high school to receive the Scholarship?

No. However, you must enroll in college no later than the fall term (as defined by the college) one academic year following high school graduation. For example, if you graduate by August 2013 you have until fall 2014 to enroll in college. Be sure you meet all the college's deadlines for class registration to complete enrollment.

9. What must I do to continue receiving my College Bound Scholarship once I'm in college?

You must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), as determined by the college, and meet the income requirement each year as determined by the FAFSA.

10. How many years can I receive my Scholarship?

College Bound is a four-year scholarship (8 semesters, 12 quarters) that must be used within five years of high school graduation. It is to your advantage to complete your degree within four years. A bachelor's degree is the highest degree you can earn using the CBS.

11. Can I attend college part-time?

Yes. However, your College Bound funds will be reduced. For example, 9 to 11 quarter credits is considered 3/4 time and College Bound will be reduced to a 75 percent award. Enrolling in 6 to 8 quarter credits will result in a 50 percent pro-rated award. 3 to 5 quarter credit enrollment will result in a 25 percent award.

Remember College Bound is a 4-year scholarship that must be used within five years of high school graduation so plan to finish your degree within the five years.

12. I may need to take a quarter or semester off school- will I lose my Scholarship?

As long as you are still income eligible, you can "re-start" the College Bound Scholarship. Remember, however, that the College Bound Scholarship is a four-year scholarship that must be used within five years of high school graduation.

13. Who should I contact when I have a question about College Bound?

The College Bound toll-free number is 1-888-535-0747, or email us at collegebound@wsac.wa.gov



COSTS COVERED BY THE COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP

1. What does the Scholarship pay for?

College Bound fills the gap for tuition (at public institution rates) and fees not met by State Need Grant or other state aid and a small allowance for books. College Bound is not a 'full-ride' scholarship. The maximum award is based on tuition and service & activity fees for 15 credits at a public institution, plus the book allowance.

To pay for other costs such as room and board, transportation, personal expenses, etc. your financial aid award may include other grants, loans, scholarships and work-study.

2. What are college fees? Does College Bound pay for them?

There are various fees charged by the college. College Bound covers only service and activity fees which are determined by each college. Check the college website for examples of service and activity fees.

3. How much will I get from College Bound?

The amount of your Scholarship depends on many factors such as your family's income, Expected Family Contribution (EFC), and the costs associated with the college you attend. For example, it will be less expensive if you live at home and attend a community college than if you live on campus and attend a four-year university. The choices you make will affect your financial aid award.

4. How do I get my allowance for books?

It will be included in your College Bound financial aid award.

1. When should I apply to college?

Every college has different application deadlines. For some large universities, you may begin applying up to one year prior to your high school graduation. For community college or technical college, you may need to apply several months before classes begin. For exact dates, check with the colleges you are considering.

2. Where can I use my College Bound Scholarship? Is there a list of eligible colleges?

There are 68 eligible institutions in Washington. They include public community or technical colleges, public four-year institutions, approved, independent colleges or universities, or private career colleges where you may use your College Bound Scholarship. Click here for a list:

wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SNG_EligibleInstitutions2012-2013.pdf

3. What is a college application fee?

Some, but not all colleges, require an application fee when you apply. There are application fee waivers available. If you qualified for an SAT or ACT test waiver, you should also be able to receive the application fee waiver. Ask the Admissions office about waivers or search the college website.

4. Are there other forms and deadlines?

Yes. You will have to complete forms for the college's Financial Aid office, Residential Life (housing and meal plan), etc. Respond to all requests immediately – delaying could affect your financial aid award, your housing assignment, or class schedule. So keep a calendar and check your mail or email often.

5. What type of degree or certificate can I earn?

You may earn any approved degree or certificate offered by the 68 schools listed above. Funds may not be used for a Theology program at any school. The highest degree you can earn using the Scholarship is a bachelor's degree.

6. Can I attend a private college even though the tuition is more?

Yes, however the College Bound Scholarship covers the cost of tuition at public institution rates. This means that the Scholarship for most private four-year institutions will be based on the average award value of Washington's two public research campuses (University of Washington and Washington State University), and for most private two-year institutions it will be based on the award value at community and technical colleges. You will have to make up the difference with other funds.

7. Why should I apply for community college early? I thought you could apply anytime.

Freshman classes fill up quickly so by applying early you can be assured that you will get the classes you want. Whether you are applying for financial aid or applying to college, it is to your benefit to apply early because you will be at the 'front of the line.' You will likely have a designated date and time to register for classes.

1. What is the FAFSA?

It is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and may be found at www.fafsa.gov. There are many resources to help you complete the FAFSA – in your community, at your school, at the website www.fafsa.gov, etc. Never pay someone to help you complete the FAFSA – all resources are free.

2. What is the ‘FAFSA priority filing date?’

February 1st. College Bound students who plan to attend college in the 2013-14 academic year should complete the FAFSA between January 1 and February 1, 2013, to receive priority consideration for the maximum award you are eligible for from all financial aid sources.

3. Do my parents have to file their taxes before I complete the FAFSA?

No. You may use last year's taxes or estimated tax amounts in your initial FAFSA filing. Once your parents have completed their taxes, you will need to log-in to the FAFSA site and update the income portion.

4. If I missed the ‘FAFSA priority filing date’ have I missed out on the Scholarship?

No, but you should still file the FAFSA as soon as possible. You will still be eligible for the College Bound Scholarship if you meet all the requirements. However, other aid sources are limited, which is why you should file by the February 1 FAFSA priority filing date.

5. Should I file the FAFSA if I’m not sure if I’m going to go to college or I’m not sure where?

Yes, the FAFSA is free and takes less than an hour to complete. If there’s any chance you may attend college in the 2013-14 academic year, just file it.

6. Do I have to file a FAFSA every year I am in college?

Yes, file before February 1st, just as you did your senior year of high school.

7. What happens after I file my FAFSA?

The Washington Student Achievement Council (the Council) will match your original College Bound application with your FAFSA and notify you by email (the one listed on your FAFSA) if the match was successful. Your parent/guardian will receive a copy of this email.

If you do not receive an email within two weeks of submitting your FAFSA, call the Council at 1-888-535-0747.

8. How will the colleges know I am a College Bound student – do I have to tell them?

Your name will automatically be shared with the colleges you indicate on the FAFSA. Be sure to list every college you are considering.

9. If I make a mistake on my FAFSA or need to update my information, how do I do that?

If you wrote an incorrect email or mailing address, forgot to sign the FAFSA, or need to update your income, you may log in to make those changes.

However, if you incorrectly reported your SSN, contact the Financial Aid office at the college.

10. Is the FAFSA the only financial aid form I have to complete?

No. The FAFSA is only the first step of the financial aid process. Your college will likely have other financial aid forms for you to complete.

11. How do I know if my family meets the College Bound Scholarship income requirement?

The maximum income for a family of four is 65 percent of the median family income (MFI) which in 2012-13 is \$53,000. To see the MFI chart, with amounts for different family sizes, follow this link wsac.wa.gov/PreparingForCollege/CollegeBound/MFIChart.

12. My family made too much money this year to receive the Scholarship, but my father may lose his job next year – could I receive College Bound then?

Yes. Eligibility can be reevaluated or restarted if you have a valid College Bound application, file the FAFSA, and you met the other requirements.

13. We were selected for “income verification” by the college, what does that mean and why were we selected?

This process is a way for your college to confirm the data you reported is accurate, such as tax returns, on your FAFSA. It is a random process and it is important that you contact the financial aid office immediately. Don't delay – doing so could affect your financial aid award and whether or not you can attend college.

14. How does federal aid (the Pell, SEOG, etc.) affect my financial aid award?

Think of your financial aid as a complete package – it does not matter which grant pays which expense. Grant aid will combine to cover campus charges and anything remaining will pay for other expenses, such as housing or transportation. The college financial aid office will determine which funds pay tuition.

15. I know what the FAFSA is, but what about the other terms? Where can I find more about SAR, EFC, Work Study, grants, institutional aid, private scholarship, loans?

This glossary, provided by the U.S. Department of Education, is an excellent resource. studentaid.ed.gov/glossary#

★ FINANCIAL AID AWARD LETTERS

1. Will I receive my Award Letter(s) (offer of financial aid) in the mail or by email?

It depends on the school. Check the website to see if you will be sent an Award Letter or if you have to login and retrieve it from the business office.

2. I received notification that I filed my FAFSA and that it matched with my College Bound application, but I still haven't received my financial aid award letter, why not?

POSSIBLE REASON	ACTION
Your FAFSA is incomplete.	<i>Check your email for messages from the Department of Education.</i>
You did not include the college name on your FAFSA.	<i>Check the list of schools on your FAFSA. Make updates if necessary.</i>
You have been chosen for the Verification Process.	<i>Contact the college's Financial Aid office and supply the requested information immediately.</i>
Your high school graduation requirements have not been verified.	<i>Contact the Council to find out if a copy of your final transcript is required. 1-888-535-0747.</i>
Your family does not meet the income requirements.	<i>Review the income requirements at wsac.wa.gov/PreparingForCollege/CollegeBound/MFIChart.</i>
You missed the enrollment deadline at the college.	<i>Check the college's website to make sure you met the deadline.</i>
The college has not prepared Award Letters yet.	<i>Check the college's site for when Award Letters will be sent.</i>

3. I don't understand my Award Letter, who can help me?

Check out your college's financial aid web page for an explanation of the Award Letter and an explanation of your options. Also the Northwest Education Loan Association (NELA) hosts several online webinars to explain the 'next steps.' NELA's webinar list can be found here: <https://events.nela.net/>

Many colleges now use the "Shopping Sheet," a standardized financial aid Award Letter. To see an example of a standardized shopping sheet, click here: http://collegecost.ed.gov/shopping_sheet.pdf.

Comparing Award Letters is also recommended, as you decide which school is the best fit for you. You can use an online calculator at www.finaid.org/calculators/awardletter.phtml, or a printed version at www.nasfaa.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=12573

4. I don't see the College Bound Scholarship on my award letter or it's not as much as I expected?

These are a few of the possible reasons; check with your college's Financial Aid office if you have questions.

- ✓ Your family's income does not meet the standard of 65 percent of MFI (\$53,000 for a family of four).
- ✓ Your financial aid award is greater than your 'need.'
- ✓ You did not enroll full-time.
- ✓ Other state financial aid was offered.
- ✓ Your college has included your College Bound award with your State Need Grant award.

5. How do my parents and I decide which kind of loan to take out?

Ask these important questions when considering which kind of loan to take and only borrow what you need. You do not have to accept the total amount of loans offered.

1. Is it a direct federal student loan such as the Stafford or Perkins or is it a private loan? If you qualify, there are advantages to taking out a federal loan and the application is part of the FAFSA.
2. What is the interest rate?
3. When does repayment begin?
4. What is the *total* cost for the degree or certificate I plan to earn?
5. How much debt am I willing to take on?
6. How much can I expect to earn in my profession? Check out www.bls.gov for salary and career information.

For more information, visit: <http://studentaid.ed.gov/repay-loans>