

Facts about the California Foster Youth Cal Grant Expansion

On July 1, 2018 California adopted new, expanded eligibility requirements for the State's largest financial aid program, the Cal Grant, to make the program more accessible to foster youth. These policy changes were included in [Assembly Bill 1809](#), which was signed by Governor Brown on June 27 and went into effect on July 1, 2018. Here are some facts about the law.

WHAT ARE THE CHANGES TO THE CAL GRANT?

1. **Application window:** The first provision extends the time to apply for an entitlement Cal Grant. Instead of having to apply within a year after high school graduation, foster youth are able to apply for an entitlement Cal Grant if they meet other eligibility criteria and have not reached their 26th birthday as of July 1 of the award year.
2. **Time limit:** The second provision extends the maximum length of time a foster youth is eligible for a Cal Grant from 4 years to 8 years of full-time status enrollment.
3. **Application deadline:** The third provision extends the deadline for the Cal Grant entitlement application from March 2nd to September 2nd for foster youth attending community college.

WHAT DOES A CAL GRANT PAY FOR?

A Cal Grant can be used at a California Community College, California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) campus or at certain qualifying private institutions in California.

The Cal Grant award amount has been set to pay up to full tuition costs at a CSU (\$5,742) or UC (\$12,630) and up to \$9,084 for tuition at a private non-profit university. The grant also provides up to \$1,672 for non-tuition costs for students attending community college or a four-year university.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR THE NEW ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

- Students must otherwise meet the criteria to qualify for a **Cal Grant B** including:
 - ✓ Submitting a FAFSA or CA Dream Act Application
 - ✓ Being a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen or meeting AB540 eligibility criteria
 - ✓ Being a California resident
 - ✓ Qualifying as low-income and having financial need
 - ✓ Enrolling at least half time
 - ✓ Meeting certain GPA requirements – either a 2.0 high school GPA if entering college for the first time or a 2.4 GPA if already enrolled at community college or transferring.

Consult <https://www.csac.ca.gov> for complete information regarding Cal Grant B eligibility.

- The law defines foster youth as students who were in foster care any time at or after age 13. This aligns with the question asked on the FAFSA form: "At any time, since you turned age 13, were both parents deceased, were you in foster care, or were you a dependent or ward of the court?"

WHEN WILL THE NEW PROVISIONS TAKE EFFECT?

The California Student Aid Commission administers the Cal Grant and will oversee the implementation of this new policy. It is expected that students who apply for a Cal Grant during the 2018/2019 FAFSA cycle will be considered based on the new eligibility criteria.

It is also expected that students who have utilized their four-year maximum will be eligible to renew their Cal Grant for additional years beginning in 2018/2019. This timeline may be subject to change.

WHO DO I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS?

JBAY will work closely with CSAC and provide up-to-date information as the implementation proceeds. If you have questions, please contact [Debbie Raucher](#).