

Facts About California's New Rules Regarding the Chafee Education and Training Voucher (Senate Bill 150)

Effective January 1, 2020, California adopted new rules regarding the distribution process and eligibility requirements for the Chafee Education and Training Voucher program. Provided below is an explanation of the pertinent provisions of the bill (SB 150) that enacted these changes.

WHAT IS THE CHAFEE EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHER?

The Chafee Education and Training Voucher (Chafee ETV) is administered by the California Student Aid Commission and provides financial assistance for current and former foster youth attending college. Students who were in foster care after the age of 16 can receive up to \$5000 annually for up to five years or until age 26 while enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program.

WHAT DID SB 150 CHANGE ABOUT THE PROGRAM?

SB 150 included the following provisions.

- Beginning with the 2021/2022 award year, CSAC is authorized to award up to 200% of the Chafee ETV allocation amount during the first award cycle, allowing a greater number of students to receive funds at the beginning of the school year, when funds are needed the most.
- The bill replaces the Chafee ETV's existing satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements with more flexible standards and requires each school to offer an appeal process that accounts for the unique circumstances of foster youth.
- Colleges are required to provide grant recipients with information about support services available on campus with their first grant payment.

WHAT ARE THE NEW SAP STANDARDS?

If a student fails to demonstrate SAP, as defined by the institution where the student is enrolled, for two consecutive semesters (or equivalent enrollment), the student may continue to receive a Chafee ETV grant but must meet with an appropriate college staff member to develop a plan for improving academic progress in order to receive their remaining Chafee ETV grant funds.

If a student subsequently fails to meet SAP standards for a third consecutive semester (or equivalent) the student must meet with an appropriate college staff member to

update their plan in order to receive their remaining Chafee grant funds.

A student who fails to update their plan or who fails to meet SAP for a fourth semester (or equivalent) loses eligibility for subsequent awards but may appeal to retain eligibility.

WHAT NEW APPEAL REQUIREMENTS MUST BE PUT IN PLACE?

Colleges must update their appeal processes to include the following provisions:

- A student who loses eligibility may appeal the loss of the Chafee ETV grant during any subsequent term following the loss of eligibility.
- Institutions must provide a student written notice of the process for appealing the loss of a Chafee ETV grant.
- In reviewing the appeal of a student, institutions must automatically reinstate a student's Chafee ETV eligibility if one of the following applies:
 - The student achieves either a 2.0 GPA during the previous term or a cumulative GPA of 2.0.
 - The student demonstrates the existence of an extenuating circumstance that impeded successful course completion in the past but that has since been addressed such that the student is likely to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress in the future.
 - The student provides evidence of engagement with a supportive program, either on or off campus, that is assisting the student to make continued academic progress.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT LEAVES SCHOOL AND RE-ENROLLS?

Under SB 150, a student who loses Chafee ETV eligibility due to SAP who disenrolls for one or more terms regains eligibility for a Chafee ETV grant upon reenrollment.