

Federal Student Aid Eligibility for Students Confined in Adult Correctional or Juvenile Justice Facilities

Below you'll find answers to questions you may have about how being incarcerated in an adult correctional facility or committed to a juvenile justice facility affects your eligibility for federal student aid for college or career school.

1. Am I eligible for federal student aid while I'm confined in a correctional or juvenile justice facility?

If you are confined in a correctional or juvenile justice facility, there are limits on your eligibility for federal student aid based on where you are confined.

Note that most of these limitations apply only while you are confined. Upon your release, these limitations will be removed unless the circumstances discussed in question 6 of this document apply. You may apply for financial aid while you are confined in anticipation of being released so that your application may be processed in time for you to start school following your release.

Important note: Even if you are not eligible for federal student aid, you may still be eligible for aid from your state or school.

2. Am I eligible for federal student loans while I'm confined in a correctional or juvenile justice facility?

No. Any individual who is considered incarcerated may not receive federal student loans. For purposes of loan eligibility, you are considered incarcerated

if you are serving a criminal sentence in a penitentiary, prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, or similar correctional institution, whether it is operated by a government agency or by a contractor to a government entity. You are also considered to be incarcerated if you have been delinquent and are committed to a juvenile justice facility. You are not considered to be incarcerated if you are in a halfway house or in home detention or are sentenced to serve only on weekends, or if you are confined in a correctional or juvenile justice facility prior to the imposition of a criminal sentence, such as while you are awaiting trial.

3. Am I eligible for Federal Pell Grants while I'm confined in a correctional or juvenile justice facility?

It depends on where you are confined. Individuals incarcerated in federal or state penal institutions may not receive Federal Pell Grants. However, if you are incarcerated in a local, municipal, or county correctional facility and you otherwise meet eligibility criteria, you are eligible for a Federal Pell Grant. If you are committed to a juvenile justice facility and you otherwise

meet eligibility criteria, you are eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant, regardless of whether the juvenile justice facility is administered by a federal, state, or local government or agency.

4. Am I eligible to receive Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) and Federal Work-Study (FWS) funds while I'm confined in a correctional or juvenile justice facility?

Although incarcerated individuals may be technically eligible to receive an FSEOG and FWS, you are unlikely to receive either type of funds due to the limited amount of those funds available to the school and because of the logistical difficulties of a student performing an FWS job while confined in a correctional or juvenile justice facility.

5. Am I eligible for federal student aid if I am released on probation or on parole?

As noted in question 1, the restrictions that apply while you are confined in a secure facility are removed when you're released, even if you are released on probation or parole, unless any of the circumstances in question 6 apply to you.

6. What types of convictions will continue to affect my eligibility for federal student aid after my release?

If you were convicted as an adult for the possession or sale of illegal drugs, your federal student aid eligibility may be suspended if the offense occurred while you were receiving federal student aid. When you complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®), as

discussed in question 7 below, you'll be asked whether you had a drug conviction for an offense that occurred while you were receiving federal aid. If your answer is yes, you'll be provided with a worksheet to help determine whether the conviction affects your eligibility for federal student aid.

If you have been convicted of a forcible or nonforcible sexual offense and you are subject to an involuntary civil commitment upon completion of a period of incarceration for that offense, you are ineligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant.

7. How do I apply for federal student aid?

To apply for federal student aid, and for most state and institutional aid, you must complete the FAFSA, either online at www.fafsa.gov or on paper. You do not have to pay to apply for federal student aid. Contact the education coordinator at your correctional or juvenile justice facility or the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend for more information and help accessing the FAFSA. Remember that even if you're not eligible for federal student aid, you may still be eligible for aid from your state or school.

8. What address do I provide when applying for federal student aid?

When applying for federal student aid while confined, use the mailing address of your current correctional or juvenile justice facility. Once released, you must update your mailing address, which you can do at www.fafsa.gov or by calling 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

9. How can I get help applying for federal student aid?

If you have questions about federal student aid, including the application process, contact the education coordinator at your correctional or juvenile justice facility, the school you plan to attend, or the e-mail or toll-free number provided on page 4 of this document.

10. How do I make sure that any federal student loans that I have do not go delinquent or default?

You may be eligible for a deferment or forbearance of your federal student loans if you are unable to make payments on those loans while you are confined. During a period of deferment or forbearance, you would not be required to make payments, but interest may continue to accrue. It is important to make sure that you do not go into default on those loans, as doing so could have serious repercussions after your release and will affect your eligibility for Pell Grants or future loans.

For information about deferments and forbearances, visit StudentAid.gov/deferment-forbearance, contact your loan servicer, or call or e-mail the Federal Student Aid Information Center using the contact information on page 4 of this document. You also may visit www.nsls.ed.gov.

11. What do I do if I have defaulted federal student loans?

Work with your loan servicer to resolve the default. Options for getting out of default include full repayment of the loan, loan rehabilitation, and loan consolidation upon release. Learn more about getting out of default at StudentAid.gov/end-default.

12. Am I eligible for loan consolidation while I am confined in a correctional or juvenile justice facility?

No. Individuals who are confined in correctional or juvenile justice facilities may not consolidate their federal student loans into a federal consolidation loan while they are confined.

13. How can I receive publications about federal student aid?

To receive a FAFSA or any other Federal Student Aid publications, all of which are free, contact your correctional institution's education coordinator; call or e-mail the Federal Student Aid Information Center (see page 4 of this document); order online at www.edpubs.gov; or download them at StudentAid.gov/resources.

Get More Information About Federal Student Aid

Student Website

Visit StudentAid.gov for information about types of aid, student eligibility, how to apply, and repaying loans.

Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC)

Get answers to your questions.

Toll free: 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)

Toll: 319-337-5665

TTY for the hearing impaired: 1-800-730-8913

E-mail: studentaid@ed.gov