



GEN-15-02

January 29, 2015

Subject: 2015-2016 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedules

Summary: The attachments to this letter contain the 2015-2016 Award Year Federal Pell Grant Program Payment and Disbursement Schedules.

Dear Colleague:

Attached are both PDF and Excel versions of the Payment and Disbursement Schedules for determining Federal Pell Grant awards for the 2015-2016 Award Year (July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016) for full-time, three-quarter-time, half-time, and less-than-half-time students. All 2015-2016 Federal Pell Grant awards must be based on the attached schedules, with the exception of students enrolled in an eligible career pathway program as discussed below. We are continuing our practice of presenting the PDF version in two parts for each of the four schedules.

The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA), incorporated as part of Public Law 111-152, provides for an automatic annual increase, based on changes in the Consumer Price Index—through award year 2017-2018—to the appropriated Federal Pell Grant maximum award, resulting in a 2015-2016 maximum award of \$5,775. This maximum Pell Grant award for the 2015-2016 Award Year is an increase of \$45 from the \$5,730 maximum Pell Grant award for the 2014-2015 Award Year. The corresponding maximum Pell Grant eligible expected family contribution (EFC) for 2015-2016 will be 5198.

Section 401(b)(4) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) establishes the minimum Pell Grant award to be ten percent of the maximum award amount for the award year. Thus, for the 2015-2016 Award Year, the statutory minimum Pell Grant scheduled award amount will be \$577. However, because we use mid-points in both the EFC columns and the cost of attendance (COA) rows in constructing the schedules, the actual 2015-2016 Award Year minimum scheduled award amount will be \$588.

**Federal Student Aid**  
An OFFICE of the U.S. DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

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As a reminder, in using the attached schedules for awarding a Federal Pell Grant to a student, the full nine-month EFC must always be used regardless of the actual period of attendance of the student. Also, the COA to be used is always based on the costs for a full-time student for a full academic year, regardless of the actual enrollment status or actual time the student will be enrolled during the award year. It is important to note, that the statutory restrictions of using only certain cost components in constructing a COA in some circumstances still apply. For example, for a less-than-half-time student, the COA includes only cost components for tuition and fees, books, supplies, transportation, room and board for a limited time period, and dependent care expenses. For more information on these COA restrictions please refer to Volume 3, Chapter 2, of the Federal Student Aid Handbook.

Also, note that a student's eligibility to receive a Federal Pell Grant award may be limited by the statutory provision in section 401(c)(5) of the HEA that sets a lifetime Pell Grant eligibility limit of 12 semesters (or its equivalent). Institutions should review previously posted information on Pell Grant eligibility determinations and the Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU) limit posted on our Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. For additional information on the LEU limitation see Dear Colleague Letter [GEN-13-14](#) and Volume 3, Chapter 3 of the Federal Student Aid Handbook.

In future electronic announcements, we will provide institutions with important information about system, Web, and software modifications that reflect the 2015-2016 payment and disbursement schedules. These include changes to: the Central Processing System (CPS), the ISIR Analysis Tool, the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System, and the EDExpress for Windows software.

### **Eligible Career Pathway Programs**

Pub. Law 113-235 includes a provision that reinstates the ability of a student who does not have a high school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) or completed a secondary education in a home-school setting to be eligible for Title IV student aid through the traditional "ability to benefit" options (i.e. passing an ATB test approved by the Secretary, completing at least 6 credit hours at an eligible institution, etc.). However, this provision only applies to students who are enrolled in an "eligible career pathway program". Additionally, the law provides for alternate maximum and minimum Pell Grant award amounts for students enrolled in such programs. We will provide more information on eligible career pathway programs in a subsequent communication which will include separate Pell Grant Program Payment and Disbursement Schedules.



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We appreciate your continued support in making Federal Pell Grant Program assistance available to students. If you have any questions regarding the 2015-2016 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedules, please contact our Research and Customer Care Center (Care Center) staff. Staff members are available Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM (Eastern Time) at 1-800-433-7327. After hours calls will be accepted by an automated voice response system. Callers leaving their names and phone numbers will receive a return call within two business days. Alternatively, you may e-mail the Care Center at [fsa.customer.support@ed.gov](mailto:fsa.customer.support@ed.gov).

Sincerely,



Jeff Baker, Director  
Policy Liaison and Implementation  
Federal Student Aid  
U.S. Department of Education

Attachments: PDF and EXCEL versions of the 2015-2016 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedules