FINANCIAL AID UPDATES FOR FOSTER YOUTH

Eligibility Changes, Verification, WebGrants, and More!

December 13, 2018
Today's Presenters

Debbie Raucher
• John Burton Advocates for Youth

Amparo Camacho
• California Department of Social Services

Gina Browne
• California Community College Chancellor’s Office

Ramona Carlos and Santiago Morales
• California Student Aid Commission
Information to Participate

➢ Today’s PowerPoint can be downloaded from the “handouts” section of your control panel

➢ To submit questions, click on the “Questions” panel, type your question, and click “send”

➢ Presentation materials and audio will also be posted at
  o www.jbaforyouth.org
  o www.cacollegepathways.org/webinars-conferences/webinars
Education is essential in today’s economy

Financial Aid Makes a Difference

Students receiving at least $7,500 in financial aid: 49% transferred or graduated

Students receiving $1,000 to $2,500: 17% transferred or graduated
Foster Youth are Missing Out on Aid

First Time Foster Youth Students at CA Community College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>% Receiving Aid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOG fee waiver</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell Grant</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cal Grant</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Legislative Changes

• **Senate Bill 12 (2017)**
  - Automatic verification of foster care status on FAFSA

• **Assembly Bill 1809 (2018)**
  - Expanded eligibility for CalGrant for foster youth
  - $5.3 million budget allocation

• **Assembly Bill 1811 (2018)**
  - Expanded Chafee grant eligibility
  - $3.92 million budget allocation

• **Assembly Bill 3089 (2018)**
  - Provides funding for outreach activities related to Chafee grant and mandates annual reports to the legislature on program.
  - $80,000 budget allocation
2019 Proposed Legislation

Allow upfront “over-awarding” of Chafee grants for more timely distribution

Expand eligibility of Chafee for students not making SAP

Bill author: Senator Jim Beall
CHAFEE EDUCATION & TRAINING VOUCHER (ETV) AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Amparo Camacho
Transition Age Youth Policy Unit
California Department of Social Services
**Challenge**: Verifying foster care status was a barrier to foster youth financial aid access

**Solution**: SB 12 authorized data sharing between CDSS and CSAC to allow financial aid offices to automatically verify foster youth status

- This data will also be used to confirm entitlement for extended CalGrant eligibility

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| In foster care after 13 | = | Independent FAFSA status (no parental information required) | = | More money $$$$$$ |
Brief Background on Chafee ETV

- **Foster Care Independence Act of 1999**
  - *Creates Independent Living Program*

- **The Promoting Safe and Stable Families Amendments of 2001**
  - *Creates Education and Training Vouchers for Youths Aging Out of Foster Care*
  - **Previous Eligibility Criteria**
    - A youth who is/was a dependent or ward of the court living in foster care sometime between the ages of 16-18.
    - A youth who was placed in out-of-home care by a tribe or tribal organization between the ages of 16-18.
    - Under the age of 22 as of July 1st of the award year

- **Family First Prevention Services Act**
  - *Authorizes States to expand Chafee ETV eligibility to age 26.*
Chafee Education and Training Voucher Legislative Updates

- **Assembly Bill 1811: New age extension up to 26 years old**

  Chafee ETV Eligibility Requirements
  - Be a current or former foster youth who was a dependent or ward of the court, living in foster care, between the ages of 16 and 18.
    - Youth who are/were in Kin-GAP, a non-related legal guardianship or were adopted, are eligible only if the youth was a dependent or ward of the court, living in foster care, at some point between the ages of 16 and 18.
  - Not have reached your 26th birthday as of July 1st of the award year.
  - Have not participated in the program for more than 5 years (whether or not consecutive).

- **Assembly Bill 3089: Chafee ETV Outreach**
  - Specified outreach for newly eligible former foster youth who are at least 23 years of age, but are not yet 26
CDSS Transition Age Youth Policy Unit Update

2019 Transition Age Youth Conference

- February 26, 2019
- Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento, CA
- To register go to: [https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07eftzz4468978ac32&osq=&c=a2d99ca0-777b-11e3-bcbfd4ae528440e0&ch=a38aeb40-777b-11e3-bd5e-d4ae528440e0](https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07eftzz4468978ac32&osq=&c=a2d99ca0-777b-11e3-bcbfd4ae528440e0&ch=a38aeb40-777b-11e3-bd5e-d4ae528440e0)
Transition Age Youth Policy Unit, CDSS

If you have any questions, please see contact information below:

Transition Age Youth Policy Unit
Foster Care Support Services Bureau
Child and Youth Permanency Branch
California Department of Social Services
Email: TAYPolicy@dss.ca.gov
Phone No.: (916) 651-7465
California
Student Aid Commission & Department of Social Services

Financial Aid Updates for Foster Youth: Eligibility Changes, Verification, WebGrants and More!
“The California Student Aid Commission shall work cooperatively with the California Department of Social Services to develop an automated system to verify a student’s status as a foster youth to aid in the processing of applications for federal financial aid.”

Implementation Status: COMPLETE
List returns students with your school code listed on their FAFSA that were in foster placement at least one day since age 13 and are under age 26.

If the school code is not listed on the FAFSA or Dream Act, verification can’t be confirmed.

If the student is not on the CDSS list, verification can’t be confirmed.

In these cases, schools will have to use the alternate method for verifying foster youth status.

Individual financial aid staff will need to be granted rights to view screen by their financial aid director.
Senate Bill 12 – Foster Youth Status Verification

Foster Youth Student Lookup

The California Student Aid Commission, in partnership with the State Department of Social Services provides schools the ability to verify a student’s status as a foster youth to aid in the processing of FAFSA or CADAA applications for federal financial aid.

Required:

- Enter the School Code.
- Enter the Student’s Last name.
- Enter the Student’s First name.
- Enter Date of Birth in "MM/DD/YYYY" format.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Code</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00000000</td>
<td>STUDENT</td>
<td>JANE Q</td>
<td>10/01/2001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Foster Youth verification is confirmed.
The California Student Aid Commission, in partnership with the State Department of Social Services, provides schools the ability to verify a student's status as a foster youth to aid in the processing of FAFSA or CADAA applications for federal financial aid.

Required:

- Enter the School Code.
- Enter the Student's Last name.
- Enter the Student's First name.
- Enter Date of Birth in "MM/DD/YYYY" format.

School Code: 0000000
Last Name: STUDENT
First Name: JANE Q
Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY): 10/01/2001

Foster Youth verification cannot be confirmed.
Expands Chafee Grant eligibility to students that:

• Have not reached their 26th birthday as of July 1st of the award year.
• Have not participated in the program for more than 5 years (consecutive or not)

2018-19 Chafee Grant allocation increased to $17,623,700

Allowance for CDSS/CSAC outreach to newly eligible students
AB 1811: Chafee Grant Expansion

Implementation Status

**Complete**
- ✓ Age eligible students are able to submit an application at [chafee.csac.ca.gov](http://chafee.csac.ca.gov)
- ✓ Full allocation has been awarded
- ✓ Update priority awarding process
- ✓ Operations Memo to schools
- ✓ Previously age-ineligible students have been renewed and notified

**In progress**
- ❏ Adding years participated flag
AB1809: Cal Grant B for Foster Youth

Expands Cal Grant B:
• Cal Grant B awards may be renewed for a total of 8 years for current or former foster youth.
• Allows applications to be submitted as long as the student has not reached 26th birthday before July 1 of award year.
• Application deadline for students attending a California community college extended to September 2.

Implementation Status:
Complete
✓ Business requirements written

In progress
☐ Application development
AB1809: Cal Grant B for Foster Youth

- Foster youth defined as in foster care after **age of 13**
- Eligibility will be verified by data match with CDSS (when available)
- Law went into effect July 1, 2018. Once processes are in place, eligible students will be retroactively awarded CalGrants for 2018/2019 academic year
- Students who previously used up four years of eligibility can reapply for additional CalGrant
- Students currently receiving a CalGrant B who otherwise qualify, will be eligible for the eight-year time frame
- GPA eligibility will be determined based on high school GPA, even if already enrolled in college
- Stay tuned! Additional details will be made available once application development is complete
Administered by the Commission through an interagency agreement with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS)

Assists former foster youth to help pay for college or career/technical training

Maximum award amount is $5,000 per academic year

Federal and State funded grant subject to annual availability of funds
To **APPLY**, students must meet the following criteria:

- **Be a current or former foster youth who was a dependent or ward of the court, living in foster care, between the ages of 16 and 18**

- **Youth who are/were in Kin-GAP, a non-related legal guardianship or were adopted, are eligible only if the youth was a dependent or ward of the court, living in foster care, between the ages of 16 and 18**

- **Not have reached their 26th birthday as of July 1st of the award year**

  - For example, a student applying in February 2019 for the 2019/2020 academic year cannot be reaching her 26th birthday as of July 1, 2019.
School Eligibility

New Chafee grant awards will be offered to students only if the student attends either:

- An institution that is eligible to participate in the Cal Grant program
  OR
- An institution that does not participate in the Cal-Grant program or located outside California with a:
  - Three-year cohort loan default rate less than 15.5% and
  - Overall graduation rate greater than 30%

- Paid Chafee recipients that previously received a payment and still meet the student eligibility requirements are not subject to the provisions of AB 2506 as long as they continue at the same institution.
Chafee Grant Processing Flow

1. Student application process and DSS Verification
2. Award based on priority selection criteria
3. Student is placed on school roster
4. School certifies eligibility and requests payment
5. Payments sent to school
6. Second eligibility check and disbursement
7. Institutional reconciliation

*Chafee processing normally happens once per week on Monday nights.*
1. Chafee Grant application (one-time)

2. FAFSA or CA Dream Act Application (every year)*
   - Students should complete the Chafee application, FAFSA or CADAA for the year they plan to enroll.

3. CSAC receives verification of foster care eligibility directly from the Department of Social Services (monthly)

*The March 2\(^{nd}\) deadline does not apply for Chafee eligibility, however it is highly recommended that students apply by March 2 to get maximum aid.
**Priority Awarding Criteria:**

1. Paid renewal students
2. New and non-paid renewal students who will be 25 years as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of the award year
3. New and non-paid renewal students who have dependents
4. New and non-paid renewal students with an unmet need greater than $5,000
5. New and non-paid renewal students with an unmet need less than $5,000

*Within each criteria, awards are made based on date of application and therefore early application is advised.*
**Awarded**: Student has a preliminary award and school can certify eligibility and request payment.

**Pending**: Student is eligible but not awarded. The student is lower on the priority awarding scale and will become Awarded as funds get recycled.

**OR**

There is a pending transaction that will process Monday evening.

**Not Awarded**: Student not eligible
To maximize funding, it is very important for schools to certify eligibility and request payment timely.

- Schools must certify eligibility and request payment each term.
- Schools can certify and request payment in the same transaction but there can only be one transaction per week.
Before schools can request payment, student eligibility must be certified.

Students must:
- Be enrolled at least half-time
- Be in good SAP standing
- Have unmet need

Students do NOT need:
- To have a high school diploma or equivalent
- To meet Selective Service requirements
- To be clear of default or overpayments
Just as important as requesting payment is to let us know if a student is not eligible.

Check the most appropriate reason for ineligibility.

If the student subsequently becomes eligible, school would let us know by removing the check on the roster.
Payment requests are sent to the State Controllers Office weekly for processing.

Checks are made out to the student and sent from the State Controllers Office directly to the school.
Once the check is received, schools must verify that the student:

- Is still enrolled at least half-time
- Is meeting your SAP policy
- Has unmet need greater than the amount of the check

Schools are expected to disburse the check within 10 days of receipt or return it to CSAC.
Returned Checks (Abatements)

- If the student is no longer eligible for their Chafee grant, schools must return the check.

- On the check stub, schools should indicate the reason for return.

- Schools are expected to disburse the check within 10 days of receipt or return to CSAC.
Schools are encouraged to utilize the Institution Reconciliation screen on WebGrants.
Chafee Grant Program Update

As of Monday, December 3, 2018 -

• 2018 Awarded Amount: $17,620,380
• 2018 Awarded Count: 3579
• 2018 Amount Paid: $7,173,740

- Any unpaid students that have been on any roster longer than 30 days will be made ineligible.

- If a student regains eligibility, they will be reconsidered for a current year award.

- Winter term rosters opened November 12, 2018

- Spring term rosters opened December 5, 2018

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Count</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>$12,429,535</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSU</td>
<td>$2,931,195</td>
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<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>$772,115</td>
<td>157</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>$1,194,585</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of State</td>
<td>$374,168</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Weekly emails

Awards that have not been certified, that are more than 30 days old, will be made ineligible.

Notices are sent to the students to let them know they will be made ineligible and to contact the Financial Aid Office if they have questions or to make a school change if they are no longer enrolled at that school.
Chafee Contacts & Resources

Student Support
(888) 224-7268 option 3

Email
chafee@csac.ca.gov

https://chafee.csac.ca.gov
Enter your questions on your control panel by clicking the “questions” arrow, typing your question, and clicking “send.”

For more info:
Debbie Raucher  
John Burton Advocates for Youth  
debbie@jbay.org  
(415) 348-0011

www.jbay.org  
www.cacollegepathways.org