

**Massachusetts Assistance for Student Success  
Program**

**XX. MASSGrant PLUS**

## MASSGrant PLUS

### **PURPOSE:**

The Massachusetts Assistance for Student Success Plus (MASSGrant Plus) is a grant assistance program funded by appropriations from the Massachusetts Legislature in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 15A, Section 16. The MASSGrant Plus provides need-based financial assistance to full and part-time undergraduate resident students enrolled in and pursuing an approved program of study at a Massachusetts public two-year or four-year college or university. An extension of the MASSGrant program, the MASSGrant Plus is intended to provide last dollar financial assistance to ensure that all eligible undergraduate students with unmet need have adequate grant resources to fully cover the cost of tuition and fees (related to instructions), as defined.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

#### **ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION:**

An institution within the system of public institutions of higher education as identified in Section 5 of Chapter 15A of the Massachusetts General Laws.

#### **ELIGIBLE PROGRAM:**

Any approved undergraduate degree or certificate program offered by an eligible institution, as defined.

#### **ELIGIBLE STUDENT:**

An undergraduate student enrolled full-time or part-time at a community college, or a Pell-eligible student enrolled full-time or part-time at an eligible four-year public college or university, and meets the following requirements:

- physically reside in Massachusetts for at least one year, as of the start of the enrolled term, with an intent to remain in Massachusetts consistent with Board of Higher Education (BHE) policy;
- be a U.S. Citizen, permanent legal resident, or non-citizen eligible under Title IV regulations; or have an approved eligibility status designated by the Board of Higher Education pursuant to Section 9 of Chapter 15A, as amended by Section 11 of Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2024;
- complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) annually for consideration of assistance by any designated deadline, as may be determined by the Department of Higher Education (DHE), or an alternative application designated by the DHE;
- comply with financial aid verification requirements;
- not be in default on any federal or state student loans for attendance at any institution, or owe a refund for any previous state financial aid program;

- have not earned a prior associate or bachelor’s degree, or the equivalent;
- enroll, as a matriculated student, full-time or part-time basis (minimum of 6 credits, or the equivalent) in an eligible undergraduate program of study leading to a certificate, associate, or bachelor’s degree;
- meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) according to institution’s requirements and federal standards;
- have a remaining balance owed to the institution for the costs of tuition, fees, books and supplies after all other grant and scholarship aid has been accounted for

**AWARD VALUE:**

The MASSGrant Plus shall be awarded to cover the tuition and fees charged to a student for the academic term or year. A modest book allowance is permitted, based on the number of credits as follows:

12 credits or more	\$1,200
9 - 11 credits	\$900
6 - 8 credits	\$600

The semester book allowance is half of the annual amount reflected above.

MASSGrant Plus may be awarded to support trailing summer enrollment if funds are available.

**AWARD CALCULATION (FINANCIAL NEED DETERMINATION)**

In determining eligibility for the MASSGrant Plus, a student must demonstrate “unmet” financial need for each term awarded. As a last dollar grant, the MASSGrant Plus award is determined after all other sources of non-loan aid (grants and scholarships) are considered for the cost of tuition/fees and books, if applicable. In all circumstances, priority is given to Pell eligible students. Institutions may extend MASSGrant Plus to other low-income students after all Pell eligible students are awarded.

As a condition for receiving MassGrant Plus funds, institutions must certify that they have fully met the financial aid need for tuition and fees related to instruction for all eligible undergraduate students, as defined above, using a combination of federal, state, and institutional aid resources.

Institutions may not use MASSGrant Plus funds to supplant institutional aid. Institutions are expected to continue their level of institutional support to students as reported in prior years.

**ANNUAL REVIEW:**

The Department of Higher Education is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the MASSGrant Plus program. Institutions that have signed an agreement to participate in the Massachusetts State financial aid programs are required to share data for all students with the Department of Higher Education or its designee, and the Office of Student Financial Assistance for this purpose. The program may be evaluated annually to determine any immediate impact or to determine if adjustments are required for various processes, such as disbursement of funds.

**PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**

All institutions receiving funds under the MASSGrant Plus Expansion Program must have an active Massachusetts State Financial Aid Participation Agreement on file with the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA).

**AUDIT REQUIREMENT:**

- a. It shall be the responsibility of each college and university to maintain documentation of a recipient student's eligibility for the MASSGrant Plus program.
- b. The Commissioner shall require each campus to furnish annually to the Board of Higher Education a report detailing specific information regarding recipients of the MASSGrant Plus program. OSFA will coordinate specification and procedures for this report.
- c. All financial books, records and documents pertaining to this Program shall, at all times, be open to inspection, review and audit by the Commissioner, the State Auditor or their authorized representatives who shall have access to the premises wherever such books, records, and documents for seven years. An institution may retain such records for a period of five years, if approval is received from the Records Conservation Board in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 30, Section 42.