

**Massachusetts Assistance for Student Success Program**

**VII. MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC SERVICE GRANT  
PROGRAM**

## **MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC SERVICE GRANT PROGRAM**

### **PURPOSE:**

In recognition of the hardship that a family experiences upon the loss of a parent and/or spouse who is killed or missing in the line of public service duty in the Commonwealth, a grant program has been established to provide educational opportunity to the remaining family members. This important program is the only Grant Program not based on demonstrated financial need, but rather on entitlement.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

#### ***INSTITUTIONAL ELIGIBILITY:***

Shall mean a public or independent college or university in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts which is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and is authorized by the Commonwealth to offer undergraduate degree programs.

#### ***ELIGIBLE STUDENT:***

An eligible student must meet all of the following conditions:

- a) 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 policy;
- b) 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 2023;
- c) Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), or another state-approved equivalent form, annually for consideration of assistance by any designated deadline, as may be determined by the Department of Higher Education, and comply with financial aid verification requirements in either the FAFSA or the alternative state-approved form, as applicable;
- d) Has not yet received a first bachelor's degree and is currently pursuing a course of study in an eligible institution;
- e) Will be enrolled full-time (at least twelve credits or its equivalent) in an eligible institution;
- f) Is maintaining satisfactory academic progress in accordance with federal regulations as established by the college or university the student is attending;
- g) Is not in default of any federal or state loan or owe a refund for any previous financial aid received;
- h) Will provide the necessary documentation to evidence one of the following conditions:
  - Child or widowed spouse of a Massachusetts Police Officer, Firefighter or Corrections Officer who was killed or died from injuries received while performing their duties. This shall also include authorized training duty.
  - Child of a Prisoner of War or Military Service Person Missing In Action in Southeast Asia whose war time service was credited to the Commonwealth and whose service was between February 1, 1955 and the termination of the Vietnam campaign.

- Child of a Veteran whose service was credited to the Commonwealth and who was killed in action or died as a result of such service;
- i) If enrolled in a clock hour program, the student must
- Complete a minimum of 24 clock hours per week
  - Complete a minimum of 320 hours during the period of July 1 – December 31 to qualify for a Fall disbursement
  - Complete a minimum of 320 hours during the period of January 1 – June 30 to qualify for a Spring disbursement.

### **ACADEMIC YEAR:**

Shall mean the period of time between July 1 of one year and June 30 of the subsequent year.

### **AWARD DISBURSEMENT**

Awards made under this program shall be as follows:

- a) For a student attending a Massachusetts Public College or University, the award shall be equal to the cost of the institution's full time annual tuition and mandatory fee charges.
- b) For a student attending a Massachusetts Independent College or University, the award shall be equal to the full-time annual tuition charge to the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Awards granted under the Public Service Grant Program will be disbursed as follows:

- a) At the beginning of each academic semester a Certification/Payment roster will be sent to each Massachusetts institution with eligible Public Service Grant recipients.
- b) The Institution must certify the student eligible according to the Massachusetts Public Service Grant Guidelines and return the roster to OSFA.
- c) Payment will be sent directly from the Treasurer's Office to the institution.

### **REFUNDS**

All refunds must accompany the completed Certification/Payment roster.

### **APPEAL**

OSFA maintains an open and fair process for students, parents and institutions. Therefore, an institution or applicant may, at any point in the process, appeal in writing to the OSFA Appeals Committee for reconsideration. The appeals committee will meet periodically and will inform all concerned parties in writing. The OSFA maintains the right of final approval on all appeals.

### **PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**

All institutions participating in The Public Service Grant Program must file a State Financial Aid Participation Agreement to be maintained on file in the OSFA.

## **AUDIT REQUIREMENTS**

All financial books, records and documents pertaining to this program shall, at all reasonable times, be opened to inspection, review and audit by the Commissioner, the State Auditor or their authorized representative who shall have access to the premises wherever such books, records and documents are located. The institutions shall retain such financial books, records and documents for seven years.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

- a) Complete a Public Service Grant Application and submit the necessary documentation.
- b) Applicant must also file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid Application (FAFSA) or another state-approved equivalent form.
- c) For a child or widowed spouse of a Massachusetts Police Officer, Firefighter, or Corrections Officer whose death occurred in the line of duty, submit a certificate from the Massachusetts Retirement Board.
- d) For a child of a Prisoner of War, Military or Service person missing in action in Southeast Asia between February 1, 1955 and the termination of the Vietnam campaign, or veteran who was killed in action or who died as a result of such service, submit the following:
  - Copy of your birth certificate.
  - Copy of Veteran's death certificate.
  - DD214 Form to show Veteran's service was credited to Massachusetts. You may obtain this form from your local Veterans Administration Office.
  - Proof that Veteran's death was service connected. You may obtain this from:

The Veterans Administration Regional Office  
J.F.K. Federal Building  
100 Cambridge Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02203

## **FIRST TIME APPLICANTS ONLY**

All first time applicants must complete the application and provide all the supporting documentation that is requested. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide all the necessary information. The Office of Student Financial Assistance reserves the right to request additional documentation if necessary.

## **RENEWAL APPLICANTS ONLY**

To renew the Public Service Grant, recipients must annually, contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance for a renewal application for the Public Service Grant Program.

**The application and all supporting documentation must be submitted to:**

**DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
Office of Student Financial Assistance  
Massachusetts Public Service Grant Program  
75 Pleasant Street**

**Malden, MA 02148**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE IS MAY 1, 2024**

**The May 1st deadline applies to new applicants only**