

# The Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance



## ***ACTION LETTER***

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Action Letter #2  
September 2005

### **2005-2006 PROGRAMS GUIDELINES UPDATES**

Dear Colleague:

This Action Letter provides updates to existing Massachusetts State financial aid programs and/or policies. The changes to policies and guidelines contained therein are effective with the academic year 2005-2006. The updates are in the following areas:

1. Change in Enrollment Status and Eligibility for Massachusetts State Financial Aid Programs
2. Students affected by Hurricane Katrina and their eligibility for Massachusetts State financial aid programs

#### **Change in Enrollment Status and Eligibility for Massachusetts State Financial Aid Programs**

Our office has received an inquiry from the financial aid community seeking further clarification vis-à-vis students' eligibility for funds from Massachusetts State financial aid programs that require full-time enrollment. Specifically, the inquiry sought guidance on how to handle a student's eligibility when certification of eligibility for and /or receipt of such funds occur after a student's enrollment status has fallen below full-time levels. The Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance offers the following guidance:

*A student who has dropped to below full-time status can, on a term by term basis, remain eligible for a Massachusetts State Financial aid program that requires full-time enrollment status when the following conditions are true:*

- *Student has not withdrawn from the institution*
- *Student has dropped to below full-time enrollment status after he/she had begun attending his/her classes during a specific term*
- *Changes in student's enrollment status occur after the date for such changes to affect the charges that the student incurs at the institution for that specific term*
- *Institution continues to charge the student on a full-time enrolled basis after he or she has officially dropped to below full-time enrolled status*
- *Institution has fully defined and published policies and guidelines that guide its treatment of changes to enrollment status*

- *Student meets all other eligibility criteria of the Massachusetts State financial aid program*

**Students Affected by Hurricane Katrina and their Eligibility for Massachusetts State Financial Aid Programs**

Students who are affected by Hurricane Katrina and are attending Massachusetts public colleges or universities may be eligible for the Commonwealth Hurricane Katrina Emergency Tuition Waiver. The Hurricane Katrina Emergency Tuition Waiver guidelines are available on OSFA's website at [www.osfa.mass.edu](http://www.osfa.mass.edu)

Students, who are affected by Hurricane Katrina and attending a Massachusetts institution of higher learning and wish to apply to any other Massachusetts State financial aid program, are subject to Massachusetts residency requirements.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office at 617.727.9420, if you have any questions or need assistance.

Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance