



2020-21 PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Postsecondary Educational Gratuity Program (PEGP)

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2020-21 Program Guidelines

Postsecondary Educational Gratuity Program (PEGP)

Introduction

The Postsecondary Educational Gratuity Program (PEGP) is administered by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA). PEGP recognizes and honors those who lost their lives protecting the citizens of this Commonwealth. The program provides their children a waiver of institutional tuition, fees, and room and board, as charged by designated Pennsylvania public postsecondary schools.

The 2020-21 Program Guidelines are designed to provide guidance for this program year. PHEAA will publish updates to this document if additional changes become necessary.

I. Student Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for a PEGP waiver, the student must meet the following criteria:

- Be a resident of Pennsylvania at time of application.
- Be a child by birth or adoption of a police officer, firefighter, rescue or ambulance squad member, corrections facility employee, or active National Guard member who died after January 1, 1976, OR a child by birth or adoption of a sheriff, deputy sheriff, National Guard member, or other individual who was on federal or state active military duty who died after September 11, 2011, as a direct result of performing his or her official duties.
- Be 25 years of age or younger when first applying for the program.
- Complete a 2020-21 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) and, if a first-time applicant, a 2020-21 PA State Grant Form. All students attending the 2021 Summer term must complete the 2021 Summer PA State Grant Application.
- Complete a 2020-21 PEGP Application by March 31, 2021 (if first-time applicant) or the 2020-21 PEGP Renewal Information Request by August 1, 2020 (if renewal applicant). The application and renewal form are available on [PHEAA.org/PEGP](https://pheaa.org/PEGP).
- First-time applicants must also provide a certified copy of a birth or adoption certificate and a copy of a letter of admission to an approved postsecondary institution.
- Renewal applicants must provide a copy of a letter of admission to an approved institution if attending a different institution than the one attended in the prior year.
- Be enrolled at a Pennsylvania community college, state-owned institution, or state-related institution as a full-time undergraduate student pursuing an associate or bachelor's degree.
- Maintain institutional academic progress requirements (if renewal applicant).

II. Waiver Determination Process

PHEAA is responsible for confirming the initial PEGP eligibility checks:

- The student is attending an approved postsecondary institution.
- The student is a resident of Pennsylvania at time of initial application.
- The student is a child by birth or adoption of a police officer, firefighter, rescue or ambulance squad member, corrections facility employee, or active National Guard member who died after January 1, 1976,

OR a child by birth or adoption of a sheriff, deputy sheriff, National Guard member, or other individual who was on federal or state active military duty who died after September 11, 2011, as a direct result of performing his or her official duties.

- The student is 25 years of age or younger at the time of first applying for the program.
- The student completed a PEGP Application or Renewal Information Request form by the corresponding deadline.
- The student has not exceeded the maximum time-frame of 5 years, defined as 10 full-time semesters or the equivalent.

Upon receipt of eligibility notification from PHEAA, the institution must:

- Confirm that the student is enrolled full time in undergraduate courses leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree. Full-time enrollment is defined as the equivalent of at least 12 semester credits of instruction per term at a semester school or 8 semester credits or 12 quarter credits per term at a quarter school. For clock hour institutions, where the academic year may be defined as 26 weeks in length, a payment period must be at least 13 weeks if two payments per award year are used. Full-time shall be defined as enrollment for a minimum of 900 clock hours in the academic year and at least 24 clock hours of instruction per week.
- Confirm that the student has applied for the PA State Grant, Federal Pell Grant, and all other available scholarships and grants for all terms of full-time enrollment by completing the FAFSA for the current award year.
- If the student is a renewal PEGP recipient, also confirm that the student complies with institutional requirements for continued attendance and degree candidacy.

If the institution confirms that the student meets the above requirements, it must then:

- Waive or apply a credit for all institutional charges for tuition, fees, and room and board which remain after all other scholarships and grants have been applied effective with the current academic year or summer term for which eligibility has been announced. Other scholarships include all gift aid, defined as student aid that is not required to be earned or repaid.
- Refund any money received from the student or the student's parent or guardian for tuition, fees, and room and board within 30 days of receipt of eligibility notification from PHEAA. The legislation prohibits schools from charging the student's parent or guardian for tuition, fees, or room and board once notification of the student's eligibility from PHEAA is received.

III. Waiver Listings & Changes to Enrollment Status

A. Waiver Listings

Institutions with PEGP eligible students are required to certify student eligibility and waiver amounts each term. PHEAA generates waiver listings in the fall, spring, summer term (if applicable), and year-end report. Institutions are required to update expected graduation date, enrollment status (full or part-time), and total waiver amount applied for each term.

B. Changes to Enrollment

If the student ceases full-time enrollment or becomes ineligible after the waiver for the term has been applied, the waiver should remain in place. If the student's change in status results in adjustments to charges and financial aid, the amount of the waiver would need to be increased or decreased to cover all remaining charges.

In the case of students who withdraw, drop to part-time status, or become ineligible before the end of the term and before the waiver has been applied, the student is ineligible for any waiver.

Students who withdraw, become ineligible, or experience changes with enrollment that impact the waiver amount not previously reported on a listing should be immediately identified to PHEAA via the PEGP mailbox at pegp@pheaa.org.

IV. Retention of Records & Program Review

In accordance with these Program Guidelines, institutions are required to retain all records necessary for the certification of the use of the PEGP waiver for eligible students for at least five years from the date the award year was closed in which the waiver was applied. This information may be used for Program Review and audit purposes.

As part of the Program Review process, PHEAA may conduct further examinations of the waiver. Findings in the Program Review of PEGP may result in adjustments to the waiver applied and/or be considered in combination with other PHEAA-administered program findings to determine if four or more administrative findings have been identified. Four or more administrative findings indicate a high error rate, and a follow-up Program Review will be scheduled for the next academic year. Please review [PHEAA.org/Program-Review](https://www.pheaa.org/Program-Review) for more details.

Created in 1963 by the Pennsylvania General Assembly, the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) has evolved into one of the nation's leading student aid organizations. Today PHEAA is a national provider of student financial services, serving millions of students and thousands of schools through its loan guaranty, loan servicing, financial aid processing, outreach, and other student aid programs.

PHEAA's earnings are used to support its public service mission and to pay its operating costs, including administration of the Pennsylvania State Grant and other state-funded student aid programs. As the only major federal loan servicer with a nonprofit public service mission, PHEAA devotes its energy and resources to help ease the financial burden of higher education for its primary stakeholders – Pennsylvania students and families.

PHEAA conducts its student loan servicing operations nationally as FedLoan Servicing and American Education Services (AES). PHEAA operates its digital technology division as Avereo. For more information, visit PHEAA.org.

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