

# College Planning Timeline

## AUGUST OF YOUR SENIOR YEAR

- Request applications** and information from colleges.
- Visit school campuses** throughout the fall to help narrow your choices.
- Look into **overnight or weekend college visitation programs**.

## SEPTEMBER

- Mark your calendar for **college fairs** and visits from **admissions representatives**.
- Meet with your school counselor** to develop a college admissions plan.
- Talk to your school counselor about taking **Advanced Placement (AP) courses** for college credit.
- Visit [EducationPlanner.org](http://EducationPlanner.org) for free test prep and practice exams for the SAT, PSAT and ACT.
- Register for the SAT** or the **ACT**.
- Consider **early decision/early action** programs.

## OCTOBER

- Create a schedule of admission** and student aid deadlines.
- Begin completing** college applications and essays.
- Request transcripts** and **letters of recommendation**.
- Explore college or scholarship information and apply** to colleges online. Some schools may charge an extra fee; however, some schools waive fees, since online applications simplify processing.

## NOVEMBER

- Follow up to ensure **letters of recommendation** are submitted.
- Complete and submit essays and applications** for early decision/early action programs.
- If you plan to apply for a **Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) scholarship**, remember your application is due by **December 1**.

## DECEMBER

- Contact the college's financial aid office to see what student aid programs exist on a state or campus level.** These programs may involve forms and deadlines that are separate from federal programs and may require additional applications or information from you or your parents.
- Complete, photocopy and submit college applications.**
- Obtain any other financial aid forms** that may be required by your target schools. Check with the financial aid offices to see if they have specific financial aid requirements and/or deadlines.

## JANUARY

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).** This is required to be considered for most federal, state and college-based aid. The FAFSA serves as the application for the Pennsylvania State Grant Program. You can access the FAFSA online at [PHEAA.org/FAFSA](http://PHEAA.org/FAFSA).

**NOTE:** To complete the FAFSA, you will need your family's federal income tax information from the previous year. (If necessary, you and your parent(s) may estimate your tax information since you do not have to file your tax return before you send your FAFSA.) You will also need copies of other financial statements for verification of asset values at the time you fill out the FAFSA. You and your parent(s) should complete your tax returns early to help in filling out the FAFSA. Keep a copy of this information, as school officials may request to see it later.



MAKING PENNSYLVANIA SMARTER

## FEBRUARY

- Submit all the necessary paperwork or applications** for any **private or outside scholarships** you may have identified.
- Be sure that you have submitted all required forms:** the college admissions application, the FAFSA, any private scholarship applications, and any state or school-specific forms required for student aid programs.
- Watch your email for your Student Aid Report (SAR).** The SAR is the U.S. Department of Education's reply to your submitted FAFSA and summarizes your financial aid eligibility for federal programs.
- Watch your email for notices from the Pennsylvania State Grant Program.** You may be asked to complete the online **State Grant Form (SGF)** or provide other information needed to complete your application for State Grant consideration.

## MARCH

- Ask your high school counselor about **Advanced Placement (AP) exams** offered for college credit and about the cost of the exams. Contact the registrar's office at the college or school you plan to attend to **find out what score is necessary to receive college credit.** If you will be taking an AP exam, consider starting an AP preparation course for the tests, which are given in May.

## APRIL

- Receive admission notification(s).**
- Compare your student aid awards** to the cost of school attendance.
- Make a final enrollment decision** and submit the enrollment deposit, if requested.
- Sign and return student aid forms** for the school you will be attending.
- If a school accepted you but you will not be attending,** notify that school of your decision not to attend.

## MAY

- The deadline for the Pennsylvania State Grant (FAFSA application) is May 1** for students attending colleges, universities, college-transferable programs and all renewal students. Check with the financial aid office to see if they have specific FAFSA application requirements and/or deadlines.
- Take any applicable **AP exams.**
- Send final high school transcript** to your chosen school.
- Select a lender and complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN)** to obtain a Federal Stafford or PLUS Loan.
- Contact the college's financial aid office to **check the status of your student aid.**
- After you have submitted your FAFSA and any additional information that is requested, **you can check your eligibility for a Pennsylvania State Grant by visiting Account Access at [PHEAA.org](http://PHEAA.org).**

## JUNE

- Complete any remaining student aid forms.**
- Plan for college orientation, transportation and housing.**

## JULY

- Finalize college transportation and housing** for the fall.

## AUGUST

- The deadline for the Pennsylvania State Grant (FAFSA application) is August 1** for first-time students at business, trade or technical schools, hospital schools of nursing, or two-year, non-transferable degree programs at a community, junior or four-year college. Check with the financial aid office to see if they have specific FAFSA application requirements and/or deadlines.

PHEAA/AES is one of many Guarantors participating in the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP). A student or parent borrower may obtain a FFELP loan from a lender that uses PHEAA/AES as the Guarantor or any other participating lender. These materials have been developed and paid for by PHEAA/AES for informational purposes. The information contained herein is believed to be accurate at the time of printing. Due to the rapidly changing nature of the law and the industry, information contained in this document may become outdated and PHEAA/AES does not guarantee the accuracy of the information herein. You should verify that this information is correct.