

2011-2012 Questions & Answers

General Information and Application

Q: What is the College Bound Scholarship Program?

A: It is a commitment to 7th and 8th graders whose families are unable to pay for college. Eligible students apply for the College Bound Scholarship Program, which promises annual college tuition and a small book allowance. The scholarship is a state-funded program administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB).

When you apply, you pledge to:

- Do well in school, and graduate with a cumulative high school grade point average of 2.0 or higher;
- Be a good citizen and not commit a felony; and
- Apply for financial aid by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in a timely manner in your senior year of high school.

Q: How much is the scholarship award?

A: The scholarship amount will be based on tuition rates at Washington public colleges and universities. It will cover the tuition and fees (plus a small book allowance) that are not covered by other state financial aid awards such as the State Need Grant. You will receive your scholarship through your college or university as part of your financial aid award.

Q: Where can I use the College Bound Scholarship?

A: You can earn an approved certificate or degree at a Washington public community or technical college, public four-year institution, an approved independent college or university, or private career school. For a complete list go to: www.hecb.wa.gov/Paying/waaidprgm/documents/SNGEligibleInstitutions2010-11.pdf

Q: How do I sign-up?

A: You and your parent/guardian must complete and sign the College Bound Scholarship Program application by June 30 of your 8th grade year.

You may apply online or request a paper application at www.hecb.wa.gov/collegebound. The online application is secure, fast, and helps to ensure accuracy. Either application requires you mail the signature page to the HECB.

Q: Do I have to have a Social Security number (SSN) to apply?

A: To receive the scholarship, you will be required to provide your SSN to the HECB. If you do not yet have a SSN, use your school's State Student Identification Number on the application. Ask your school for this number or find it on your Measure of Student Progress (MSP) scores. By law, the HECB is required to keep this number secure. No other agency has access to this number.

When you complete the financial aid application (FAFSA) in your senior year, you will need to have a Social Security number. In order to receive the scholarship, you must be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen based on the standards for federal student financial aid.

Q: Are home-school students and private school students eligible?

A: Yes. Write in the name of your school or “home school” for the name of the school.

Q: How will I know if my College Bound Scholarship application was accepted by the HECB?

A: You will receive a certificate within six weeks of submitting your application. If you do not hear from us please call 1-888-535-0747 or e-mail collegebound@hecb.wa.gov.

Family Income and Financial Eligibility

Q: What is the family income requirement to apply to the program?

A: You are eligible to apply if you meet one of these requirements when you sign up:

- You are eligible for the federal free- or reduced- price lunch program.
- Your family receives basic food/TANF benefits.
- You are a foster youth.
- Your family meets the income standards (see the income chart on the application).

Q: What if my family’s income is greater than the income standard, can I apply anyway?

A: Sorry, no. For other ways to pay for your college education visit www.hecb.wa.gov/paying.

Q: How do I know what my family income is?

A: Income is defined by USDA free- and reduced-price lunch guidelines as any money received on a recurring basis including **gross** earned income. Gross earned income means all money earned before deductions (income taxes, social security taxes, insurance premiums). **Income** includes but is not limited to:

- Salaries, tips, commissions
- Unemployment and worker’s compensation
- Child support and alimony
- Social Security, disability, veterans’ benefits, supplemental security income
- Net rental income, cash from savings, regular contributions from persons not living in household

Family size is everyone for whom your parent/guardian is responsible and provides more than half of their support.

Q: What if my parents are separated/divorced or I live with someone else?

A: If your parents are divorced or separated, you are generally part of the household of the parent that has custody of you. If you live with each parent equally and one parent meets the income eligibility, you are eligible. If you live with other relatives or family friends, you are considered a member of that household.

Q: I am a foster youth. Whose income should I use and who should sign the application?

A: You are automatically eligible to apply and do not have an income requirement. The adult who is legally responsible for you (foster parent, social worker, or custodial parent) should sign the application. Regardless of where you live, if you are the legal responsibility of a welfare agency or court, you are eligible.

Q: What will the income requirement be to receive the scholarship when I graduate from high school?

A: Your eligibility for the scholarship will be based on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which you must complete in a timely manner in your senior year. Your financial circumstances during your senior year will determine which parent(s) should be included on the FAFSA. Your family’s income during your senior year of high school must fall within 65% of the state’s median family income. For 2011-2012, the income cutoff for a family of four would be \$53,000. If your family has questions, contact the financial aid office of the college you plan to attend.