



U. S. Department of Education: 2016-17 Financial Aid Consumer Information / Policy and Procedures

The CTHSS offers Title IV/Pell Grant financial student assistance to **eligible students ONLY** and does not participate on federal loans. The student may seek a private loan from a financial institution of their choice. The CTHSS will complete the "Private Education Loan Application Self-certification" form upon request from the loan applicant. For the 2016-17, the maximum Pell Grant award is \$5,815.00, an increase of \$40.00 from the \$5,775.00 maximum Pell award for the 2015-16 Award Year. **The maximum Pell Grant eligible Expected Family Contribution (EFC) for 2016-17 is \$5,235.00 in order to be eligible for at least 10% of the Pell Grant. Students with an EFC of \$5,236.00 or higher are not eligible for a Pell Grant.** Students seeking funds to help defray the cost of attendance may apply for a private loan through a financial institution of their choice. Payment Plan options are offered to LPN students only through the school business office at no additional costs. The information below is addressed to Title IV Pell Grant Financial Aid recipients.

CTHSS Financial Aid Application Process

Upon student receipt of notification of acceptance into a CTHSS program and completion of the 2016-17 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at www.fafsa.ed.gov, the prospective student may complete and submit the 2016-17 CTHSS Financial Aid Application Packet ([link](#)). The submission of the financial aid packet will initiate the review and award process and/or verification process if the student is selected by the federal government for verification process if the student is selected by the federal government for verification of information. In order to avoid delays on the award process, it is recommended that the student submits a complete and accurate financial aid packet. It is also important that the student maintains contact information such as telephone/cellular numbers, e-mail and mailing addresses updated in order for the Financial Aid Office send notifications needed for the review and award expedition. New changes for 2016-17 FAFSA – Parental Information Collection are noted below:

- *Dependent students will be required to include on the FAFSA income and other information from the dependent student's legal parents (biological or adoptive) regardless of the parents' marital status or gender, if those parents live together.* The information provided on the FAFSA will be used in the calculation of the student's expected family contribution (EFC), which in turn, will determine the student's eligibility for aid from the federal Title IV, HEA need-based student financial assistance programs (i.e. the Federal Pell Grant Program, Federal Direct Subsidized Loan Program, and Federal Campus-based programs).
- Response of "Unmarried and both parents living together" will be included as a response to the questions about the marital status of the **dependent** student's parents. Thus, the possible responses to the question: "As of today, what is the marital status of your legal parents?" will be, in this order, "Never married," "Unmarried and both parents living together," "Married or remarried," "Divorced or separated," and "Widowed." The FAFSA will instruct a dependent student to provide information about both of the student's legal parents regardless of the parents' marital status or gender, **if the parents live together.** The FAFSA instructions will define a legal parent as the student's biological or adoptive parent.

The federal "Defense of Marriage Act" provides that for federal purposes, including for the federal student aid programs, the word marriage means "a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife." Therefore, a student's same sex parents who are married under the authority of a state or foreign country would respond to the question about parents' marital status as "Unmarried and both parents living together" if the parents are the student's legal (biological or adoptive) parents and they live together.

Because of the "smart logic" capabilities of FAFSA on the Web (FOTW), responses other than the new "Unmarried and both parents living together" will result in the same customized follow-up questions and instructions. Only if the response to the parents' marital status question is "Unmarried and both parents living together" will FOTW present newly worded follow-up questions, instructions, and help. For example, because unmarried parents may be of the opposite sex or of the same sex, when the response to the parents' marital status question is "Unmarried and both parents living together," follow-up questions will refer to the parents as "Parent 1 (father/mother)" and "Parent 2 (father/mother)" or simply "parents."

Verification Process

During the 2016-17 Award Year, **the CTHSS will continue to complete verification process ONLY for students randomly selected for verification** by the U. S. Department of Education Secretary or to verify conflicting information. The Financial Aid Director has the authority to request copies of documents to complete the verification process or resolve any conflicting information. *If a student is selected for verification, the CTHSS must complete the verification process prior to awarding any student aid funds.* In this case, the Financial Aid Director will notify and guide the student on the documentation needed to complete the verification process in accordance with the verification group flag indicated by the federal government. *Applicants selected for verification either by the U. S. Department of Education or the financial aid office must provide the requested information or documentation to the financial aid office no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the verification notification. Any extension of time will be on an individual basis and based on extenuating circumstances.*

Student Award Notification Policy

During the 2016-17 Pell grant recipients will be issued an award notification letter including a "passive acceptance" language and disclosures not requiring a student acceptance signature return and thereby reducing the turnaround time and expediting issuance of disbursements to the student. In addition, the award letter includes the program name and approximate disbursement release dates to the SDE Fiscal Office for check issuance. Likewise, students determined not eligible by the federal government during the FAFSA application will be sent a non-eligibility letter.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirement (SAP) Policy

In compliance with federal regulations, a student receiving Federal Title IV financial aid directly administered or certified by the CTHSS must maintain satisfactory academic progress towards the completion of a certificate or degree program of study.

Satisfactory academic progress for students is measured by using a quantitative (minimum standard numerical grade) and qualitative standard (completion pace) and is an assessment of a student's cumulative academic record at the school. The minimum satisfactory academic progress grade is specified for each trade/occupation in the Adult Education Student Handbook. **The CTHSS will verify SAP/numerical grade at the Central Office level through the Power School student information system and a copy of the Power School transcript will be placed in each student Financial Aid file for auditing purposes.** The numerical grade must be consistent with the academic performance requirements outlined under the Audit Education Handbook/Program requirements specifications.

Quantitative & Qualitative Satisfactory Academic Performance Evaluation (SAP) Prior to the End of a Financial Aid Payment Period

In order to ensure that students are meeting both quantitative (time-based) and qualitative (grade-based) standards, below are the evaluation points prescribed for the full-time adult education health and career technology programs. Satisfactory academic and clinical performance and attendance are evaluated at mid-point during each semester/payment period. The mid-point evaluation measures both quantitative and qualitative standards in alignment with the standards required by the technical high school system board and accreditation associations and governing boards. If a student is found at-risk during the mid-point evaluation, a Financial Aid Warning is issued for either academic, attendance or clinical performance. The teacher will arrange a meeting with the student to establish objectives and timelines for remediation.

If the minimum required transcript grade required and/or attendance required for the program is not met in either academics or clinical, the student will be dismissed

from the program. Students may appeal within three (3) days of the dismissal to the district's program consultant in writing. The program consultant will meet with the CTHSS Superintendent to review the appeal; the CTHSS Superintendent reaches a decision of upholding the dismissal decision or reinstatement on the program via a written communication to the student.

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN): Passing Grade is 75 or higher in order to continue in the program; Program completion is no more than 150% of the required standard length of the program. Student must complete 67% of the scheduled hours required each payment period. The academic year definition is based on 900 hours. SAP will be reviewed at 450, 900, 1450 and 1800 hours. As stated under adult education student handbook LPN program requirements ([link](#)), evaluation is used as a method to determine the extent to which a student is achieving the goals of a learning experience. It also assesses the growth of the student. There are two types of evaluation, Academic and Clinical.

Aviation Program/Aircraft Maintenance Technician: 2400 hours per the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Program completion is no more than 150% of the required standard length of the program. Student must complete 67% of the scheduled hours required each payment period. The academic year definition is based on a 1200 hours. SAP will be reviewed at 600, 1200, and 1800. As stated under the adult education student handbook Aviation program requirements ([link](#)), are strictly based on FAA regulations.

Bristol Technical Education Center Technical Career Post-Graduate Programs (900 hours, Automotive, Culinary, Electronics, HVAC, Manufacturing, and Welding): Passing Grade of 70 or better to maintain approved status. Program completion is no more than 150% of the required standard length of the program. Student must complete 67% of the scheduled hours required each payment period. The academic year definition is based on a 1,080 hours. SAP will be reviewed after completion of 540 hours. Each program requirement can be accessed under the adult education student handbook program requirements ([link](#)).

Financial Aid Warning – End of Payment Period

The CTHSS will continue to issue "Financial Aid Warning" letters as necessary. Per federal regulations, a school may assign a warning status to a student who is failing to make satisfactory academic progress without appeal or any other action by the student. The warning status lasts for one payment period, during which the student may continue to receive FSA funds. Students who are still failing to make satisfactory progress after the warning period lose their aid eligibility and are dismissed from the program as noted under each program requirement unless they successfully appeal and are placed on probation. Schools do not need to have warnings; they can instead require students to immediately appeal to be placed on probation. Probation can be used for one year programs if deemed necessary.

Program Dismissal Appeal Process (only applied after student appeal/approval; granting may be approved or denied based on the academic program pacing requirements)

Due to program pace completion and standard norm requirements, the CTHSS does not place students on probation periods and students are dismissed if not meeting the program qualitative and quantitative requirements. However, dismissed students may appeal the decision as noted previously under each program SAP. The student may appeal failure to meet satisfactory progress that resulted on the basis of: an injury or illness, the death of a relative, or other special circumstances. The student appeal must explain why he or she failed to make satisfactory progress and what has changed in his or her situation that will allow the student to make satisfactory progress at the next evaluation. Eligibility for aid after the appeal if granted is reinstated for one payment period if the school determines that the student should be able to meet the program's SAP standards by the end of the subsequent payment period or the school develops an academic plan for the student that, if followed will ensure that the student is able to meet the program's SAP standards by a specific point in time. Appeal granting placement will be based on the academic program requirements and if determined that the student should be able to meet the standards by a specific time. The school and the student should develop a plan that ensures the student is able to meet the school's satisfactory progress standards by a specific time, though an academic plan could instead take the student to successful program completion. *The school will provide a copy of the academic warning notification/plan to the financial aid office immediately after issuance in order to issue a financial aid warning to the student and disburse for the current payment period.*

Pell Grant Disbursements

Pell grant disbursements will be made in accordance with the student award letter. Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) and satisfactory attendance will be verified at mid-point of the payment period centrally at the CTHSS Financial Aid Office through the student information system. Placement of a grade/attendance

transcript on the student financial aid file at the CTHSS Central Office. Pell Grant funds will be distributed as follows:

Tuition Funds: Pell grant funds are credited directly to the school account to cover outstanding tuition costs.

Student Pell Grant Refunds: Pell credit balances will be issued to the student name c/o the school for any remainder Pell Grant Funds.

Student Ledger: The SDE Fiscal and CTHSS Office is working to develop a student ledger reflecting payment history for placement in the student financial aid file. In the meantime, each school maintains records or receipts and credits for each student.

Withdrawal Policy

Students intending to withdraw from the CTHSS must notify the Dept. Head/Guidance Office at their school in writing using the withdrawal form found in the Adult Education Student Handbook. The official withdrawal date is the date the student initiates the withdrawal process. The Dept. Head Guidance Office will notify Central Office of a student's official withdrawal date, numerical grade at time of withdrawal, and reason code.

For students who fail to "officially" withdraw from the CTHSS, the Financial Aid Office, upon receipt of the withdrawal form, will calculate the return of Title IV aid using the student's last date of attendance as the official withdrawal date.

Withdrawals/Dismissal Process

A student withdrawing from academic program must notify the instructor. The program Department Head must complete and submit the official Withdrawal form included in the Adult Education Student Handbook ([link to Adult Student Withdrawal Form](#)) to the Financial Aid Director, a copy to the school Financial Aid Liaison and the school business manager as soon as student withdrawal is officially determined, even if the student has completed 60% or more to include withdrawal worksheet calculations in the student financial aid file for audit purposes. The CTHSS Financial Aid Director needs to complete *calculations to determine earned/unearned funds and return of unearned funds to Title IV needs completion within 45 days after withdrawal.*

Post-withdrawal Disbursements (PWD)

- Students who are eligible to receive Title IV aid, but who did not receive their aid prior to making a complete withdrawal, may be eligible to receive a disbursement of financial aid funds, even though they have withdrawn. This is referred to as a "post-withdrawal disbursement (PWD)." **To be eligible to receive a post-withdrawal disbursement, student must have a complete and accurate financial aid file in the Financial Aid Office and meet all eligibility requirements for the disbursement of Title IV funds (Federal Pell grant program).**

The PWD will be applied outstanding tuition charges on the student account at the time of withdrawal for the current payment period and any remaining Pell funds will be refunded to the student. The CTHSS is required to determine the earned and unearned portions of Title IV aid as of the date the student ceased attendance based on the amount of time the student spent in attendance or, in the case of a clock-hour program, was scheduled to be in attendance. **Up through the 60% point** in each payment period or period of enrollment, a pro rata schedule is used to determine the amount of Title IV funds the student has earned at the time of withdrawal. **After the 60% point** in the payment period or period of enrollment, a student has earned 100% of the Title IV funds he or she was scheduled to receive during the period. For a student who withdraws after the 60% point-in-time, there are no unearned funds. However, the CTHSS must still determine whether the student is eligible for a PWD.

- Students who are eligible to receive Title IV aid and have received a disbursement prior to withdrawal date, the difference between the two amounts will be treated as a post-withdrawal disbursement. In the event that there are outstanding charges on the student's account, all or part of the amount of the post-withdrawal disbursement of Federal Pell grant funds will be used to credit a student's outstanding tuition and/or fee charges. If after the charges have been settled there are remaining earned Pell Grant funds, a refund check of these funds will be within 30 days of the date of the financial aid office's notification that the student withdrew. The student will be notified by the school business

office when to come to the school to receive the Pell refund check in the amount of their portion of the post-withdrawal disbursement. Likewise, within 30 days of the date of determination, the student will be notified if a grant overpayment is due to the school. The school will require repayment of the full amount of the overpayment within two years of the date of determination.

Returns to Title IV Policy

If a recipient of Title IV grant funds withdraws from a school after beginning attendance, the amount of Title IV grant assistance earned by the student must be determined. If the amount disbursed to the student is greater than the amount the student earned, the unearned funds must be returned to Title IV within 45 days after the date of determination.