

12.0 Minnesota State Grant Program

The Program objective of the Minnesota State Grant is to provide monetary assistance to undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need in order to continue their education at the Minnesota post-secondary institutions of their choice.

The amount of a student's grant is determined as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Student's actual tuition and fees for the term at the school attended} \\ + & \text{ Standard living and maintenance allowance for the term} \\ = & \text{ State Grant Budget for the term} \\ - & \text{ PELL Grant Award} \\ = & \text{ Maximum Grant eligibility for the student if the amount is less than \$100, no award is given} \end{aligned}$$

In order to receive an award, the student must meet all of the following criteria:

- * Demonstrate financial need.
- * Be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States.
- * Be a Minnesota resident attending an eligible Minnesota institution.
- * Be enrolled for a minimum of three credits for the semester in a program leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate.
- * Maintain satisfactory academic progress.
- * Have a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- * Cannot have completed a baccalaureate degree or the number of semesters or semesters normally required to complete a baccalaureate degree (12 Full-time semesters or 92.4 units). This includes all coursework at any other post-secondary institution.
- * Cannot be in default on any student educational loan.
- * Cannot owe for a State Grant overpayment.
- * Cannot be in arrears on any court ordered child support payments.

St. Cloud Technical and Community Colleges participates in the Decentralized Delivery System (DDS) for administering the State Grant Program. An institutional agreement was signed with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education Office (MOHE), outlining the responsibilities of both the school and MOHE. The application process for the Minnesota State Grant Program begins with the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

12.1 RECORDKEEPING AND PROCEDURES

Under the Decentralized Delivery System the college evaluates the student's eligibility, verifies the data, and determines whether or not the student shows financial need for a state award. The school is responsible for notifying students of their State Grant eligibility and award amount.

The college requests money for the State Grant Program via a secured website, along with a transmittal to MOHE giving information about students for whom the college has calculated a state award. The school is responsible for submitting this batch of DDS records to MOHE on at least a monthly basis. For research purposes, the college also sends data on all Minnesota students who meet the program eligibility requirements but do not demonstrate financial need for an award. Batches for "no need" DDS records must be submitted once per term.

MOHE uses these computer records to run the edit checks on the student data submitted in the transmittal. These edits include:

- * verifying that the students have not completed four years of post-secondary training
- * verifying the Minnesota residency of the student
- * checking for any back child support payments owed
- * checking if the student owes a refund on a State Grant or is in default on a previous SELF Loan

MOHE then sends the institution a series of output reports that can include the following:

- * Roster of rejected records
- * Incorrect SSN problem roster
- * Eligibility problem roster
- * Institutional award advisory roster
- * Roster of accepted payments
- * Roster of rejected payments

As awards are approved or denied, MOHE will record the changes in the college's financial accounting records at MOHE and report that information to the college. The college must adjust its account balances to match MOHE'S totals through reconciliation procedures. At the end of each fiscal year, MOHE requires that all outstanding balances be returned to them. Excess funds must be returned to MOHE no later than August 31 following the end of the fiscal year.

A student's enrollment status may be composed of courses taken at more than one eligible institution. The St. Cloud Technical and Community Colleges recognize and allow this procedure through a Consortium Agreement with the second institution. In this situation, all of the student's financial aid must be awarded by the "home" institution for the term in which enrollment is combined for the purposes of financial aid. The combination of course work between the two State Grant eligible schools must be verified as being the equivalent of an eligible enrollment status by the "home" institution. Satisfactory academic progress must be verified on all course work comprising the enrollment status.

Students are also eligible to receive a State Grant from two different eligible Minnesota schools for the same term, provided the combined credits of payment do not exceed 15 credits.

Financial aid administrators at the St. Cloud Technical and Community Colleges can use professional judgment in special cases. This can occur only when there is written documentation illustrating the student's or their family's economic status during the current or previous tax year.

12.2 DISBURSEMENT

St. Cloud Technical and Community College credits the students' accounts for his/her State Grant disbursements. State Grant is not disbursed prior to the beginning of the attendance period. Documentation must exist regarding date of disbursement for each State Grant award.

In the case of a student's withdrawal, any disbursement made after a student's last date of attendance, must be backed off the student's account and repaid to the State Grant program in full.

A student is eligible to receive retroactive payment for a past term within the current fiscal year, even if not currently enrolled in a subsequent term, provided the student meets the program requirements as of the date of disbursement.

When the College applies State financial aid funds to a student's account and determines that the amount of those funds exceeds the amount of allowable charges the school assessed the student, the College will pay that balance directly to the student within 14 days of the date the balance occurs.

St. Cloud Technical and Community College defines its academic year as Fall and Spring semesters; disbursements are made on a semester basis. Students may receive a State Grant award for up to three full-time semesters within a fiscal year (Fall, Spring, Summer).

12.3 REFUNDS AND ADJUSTMENTS

If a student changes enrollment status after the one-week add/drop period **and** receives a tuition adjustment, the state regulations mandate that an adjustment be made in the State Grant award, as well. The school must return the lesser of the following:

- Difference between State Grant at the student's enrollment level at the time of disbursement and the student's enrollment level after dropping credits, or
- The amount of the school's refund

When a student withdraws from all classes, a last date of attendance is determined from the classroom attendance records.

When the school's refund policy results in a refund, and after all Title IV programs from which the student received aid have been repaid in accordance with the Return to Title IV Refund Policy, a proportional share of any remaining refund not to exceed the amount of the State Grant payment initially received for the term, must be returned to the State Grant program. St. Cloud Technical and Community College uses the MOHE Refund Calculation Worksheet as documentation.