

RCW 28B.92.200 Washington college grant program. (1) The Washington college grant program is created to provide a statewide free college program for eligible participants and greater access to postsecondary education for Washington residents. The Washington college grant program is intended to increase the number of high school graduates and adults that can attain a postsecondary credential and provide them with the qualifications needed to compete for job opportunities in Washington.

(2) The office shall implement and administer the Washington college grant program and is authorized to establish rules necessary for implementation of the program.

(3) The legislature shall appropriate funding for the Washington college grant program. Allocations must be made on the basis of estimated eligible participants enrolled in eligible institutions of higher education or apprenticeship programs. All eligible students are entitled to a Washington college grant beginning in academic year 2020-21.

(4) The office shall award Washington college grants to all eligible students beginning in academic year 2020-21.

(5) To be eligible for the Washington college grant, students must meet the following requirements:

(a) (i) Demonstrate financial need under RCW 28B.92.205;

(ii) Receive one of the following types of public assistance:

(A) Aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits under chapter 74.62 RCW;

(B) Essential needs and housing support program benefits under RCW 43.185C.220; or

(C) Pregnant women assistance program financial grants under RCW 74.62.030; or

(iii) Be a Washington high school student in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade whose parent or legal guardian is receiving one of the types of public assistance listed in (a) (ii) of this subsection and have received a certificate confirming eligibility from the office in accordance with RCW 28B.92.225;

(b) (i) Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment for at least three quarter credits or the equivalent semester credits at an institution of higher education in Washington as defined in RCW 28B.92.030; or

(ii) Be enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program approved under chapter 49.04 RCW;

(c) Be a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a) through (e);

(d) File an annual application for financial aid as approved by the office; and

(e) Must not have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher from a postsecondary institution.

(6) Washington college grant eligibility may not extend beyond five years or one hundred twenty-five percent of the published length of the program in which the student is enrolled or the credit or clock-hour equivalent.

(7) Institutional aid administrators shall determine whether a student eligible for the Washington college grant in a given academic year may remain eligible for the ensuing year if the student's family income increases by no more than three percent.

(8) Qualifications for receipt and renewal include maintaining satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible program as determined by the office and established in rule.

(9) Should a recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the grant shall be returned to the state educational grant fund by the institution of higher education according to the institution of higher education's policy for issuing refunds, except as provided in RCW 28B.92.070.

(10) An eligible student enrolled on a part-time basis shall receive a prorated portion of the Washington college grant for any academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a part-time basis.

(11) The Washington college grant is intended to be used to meet the costs of postsecondary education for students with financial need. The student shall be awarded all need-based financial aid for which the student qualifies as determined by the institution.

(12) Students and participating institutions of higher education shall comply with all the rules adopted by the council for the administration of this chapter. [2022 c 214 § 5; 2019 c 406 § 19.]

Intent—2022 c 214: See note following RCW 28B.77.300.

Findings—2019 c 406: "(1) The legislature finds that individuals with a postsecondary credential have a greater chance of earning a wage that can support themselves and their families than if they do not obtain a postsecondary credential. At the same time, Washington employers are in need of many more individuals who possess postsecondary qualifications. Access to postsecondary opportunities are vital to ensure that more Washington high school graduates and working adults can enter and complete a postsecondary program and compete for the job opportunities available in the state.

(2) The legislature further finds that a statewide free college program, for students who demonstrate financial need as defined in section 20 of this act, is necessary to significantly reduce the financial costs of obtaining a postsecondary credential. The Washington college grant program is intended to increase access to postsecondary opportunities for Washington residents." [2019 c 406 § 18.]

Short title—2019 c 406: "This act may be known and cited as the workforce education investment act." [2019 c 406 § 80.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.79.195.

Findings—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.216.135.