



FINANCIAL AID GUIDANCE MEMO

REFERENCE:	FA 27-002
TOPIC:	SECOND CHANCE GRANT
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RELEVANT STATUTE:	OHIO REVISED CODE, SECTION 3333.127

Ohio Revised Code

The Ohio Revised Code for the Second Chance Grant (SCG) can be found at: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3333.127>.

SCG provides financial assistance to students who had previously attended a postsecondary institution but left before completing a bachelor's degree and are now re-enrolling at a qualifying institution to obtain a degree or credential.

Eligibility Standards

- SCG recipients are required to be current Ohio residents as described in the Ohio Student Residency Administrative Rule, found at: <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/3333-1-10/>.
- SCG recipients may not have obtained a bachelor's degree from any institution of higher education.
- SCG recipients must be disenrolled from a qualifying institution and did not transfer to a qualifying institution or an institution of higher education in another state in the two semesters or eight months immediately following the disenrollment. Qualifying institutions that do not use a semester calendar shall use eight months as the metric for determining a student's disenrollment period.
- SCG recipients must have been in good standing at the time of disenrollment. For the purposes of this division, "good standing" includes being in good academic standing and not having a record of disciplinary issues, including being suspended or expelled from the institution.
- SCG recipients are enrolling at a qualifying institution within five years of disenrolling from their most recent previous institution.
- SCG recipients are required to complete the FAFSA and accept any federal and state need-based grants to which they are entitled.
- SCG recipients who possess a credential or degree must be seeking a higher credential or degree. Such credentials and degrees are noted in order from low to high, below.
 - Industry-Recognized Credential
 - Certificate
 - Associate's Degree
 - Bachelor's Degree
- The re-enrollee must not be a recipient of one of the following state-supported scholarships: Choose Ohio First Scholarship, Ohio Safety Officers College Memorial Fund, Ohio Work Ready Grant, War Orphans and Severely Disabled Veterans' Scholarship Program, or Ohio National Guard Scholarship.

Qualifying Institutions

SCG funds may be utilized at any of the qualifying institutions listed below. The list of qualifying institutions applies to SCG recipients' previous and current institutions.

- A state institution of higher education, as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code
- A private nonprofit institution of higher education that holds a certificate of authorization pursuant to Chapter 1713. of the Revised Code
- An institution with a certificate of registration from the state board of career colleges and schools under Chapter 3332. of the Revised Code
- A private institution exempt from regulation under Chapter 3332. Of the Revised Code as prescribed in section 3333.046 of the Revised Code
- An Ohio technical center, as defined in section 3333.94 of the Revised Code

College Credit Plus

For the purposes of the SCG, participation in College Credit Plus is not considered when determining past or current enrollment.

Award Amount

For the 2026-2027 academic year, the award amount for SCG is a one-time award of **\$3,000**. Grants are awarded on a rolling basis until such time that allocated funds are exhausted. While grants are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis, ODHE reserves the right to make modifications to the grant award process to better attain the goals and objectives of the program and the State of Ohio. This may result in distribution of awards to achieve an appropriate balance of geographical region, institutional sector, and/or demographic factors.

Influence of other Financial Aid

SCG funds are available to be used toward an institution's published cost of attendance (COA). In such cases where an institution does not have a published COA, SCG funds shall be restricted to tuition and student fees. Student fees are defined as general fees, course fees, and special fees.

SCG funds shall be applied **after** any federal or state need-based aid (e.g.: Pell, OCOG) has been applied. If any amount of SCG remains after applying it to the re-enrollee's COA for the academic year, the remainder shall be applied to any future year in which the student is enrolled, and the SCG program is operating.

Utilization

Students receiving SCG funds must be pursuing postsecondary education at the undergraduate level. Students may be enrolled in degree-granting or non-degree programs. Students may be enrolled full- or part-time.

Application and Certification

Institutions may make an offer of an SCG to qualifying students as soon as they apply for admission. When institutions make an offer of a grant, the student should be informed that there are a limited number of grants available and receiving the award may be dependent upon the date of the student's acceptance into the institution.

When a qualifying student is accepted, the institution will notify ODHE through the SCG application portal. Only one designated employee per institution will be provided with access to the SCG application portal. SCG application portal instructions are available at: <https://highered.ohio.gov/initiatives/affordability/second-chance>. As SCG is provided on a first-come, first-serve basis, it is recommended that applications be **submitted immediately following successful admission to the institution** by the re-enrollee. Upon receipt of the information, ODHE will reserve an

award for the admitted student. All fields within the web portal are required to be completed for an application to be considered submitted.

It is the responsibility of the Institution to verify the student's eligibility. **Institutions must collect and maintain documentation to confirm that all eligibility criteria have been met.** This includes, but is not limited to, proof of Ohio residency, FAFSA completion (even if the institution does not utilize Title IV funding), and evidence of previous enrollment, such as transcripts from the prior institution. *Please do not forward this documentation to ODHE. In keeping with federal guidelines, the institution must keep this documentation in the event of an audit.*

Disbursement of Funds

Funds will be disbursed after the institution verifies that a SCG applicant is enrolled at the point of census. The census date is for the individual applicant and should reflect that applicant's first term (semester or quarter) of attendance. The census date is NOT the first date of attendance; it is the point at which 20% of the course or program has been completed. Institutions participating in SCG must verify applicants' enrollment through the online application portal within two weeks of the census date. Institutions will need to indicate a census date for each application submitted via the online portal.

When an application has reached its census date, the institutional contact will need to log in to the SCG Application Portal to verify enrollment. After enrollment has been verified, ODHE will be able to process the payment and disburse the funds. Once enrollment has been verified, ODHE will disburse funds. Only one disbursement may be made to an institution in any calendar month. SCG will be disbursed from ODHE's subsidy system. The funds will come from the State of Ohio and will reference BOR01, which is ODHE's business unit. There is typically a comment that will say, "subsidy." It is recommended that SCG points of contact alert the accounting department or treasurer of the amount to be received (\$3,000 x number of verified applications) to help match up the payment.

Voiding Applications

If an application has not had enrollment verified within 10 business days of the census date, the application will be voided. After 30 days, all voided applications will be deleted from the SCG application portal. If an application needs to be deleted for any reason, the institution's SCG point of contact should email secondchancegrant@highered.ohio.gov and indicate which application should be deleted by referencing the date/time stamp. Personally Identifiable Information (e.g.: student names, social security numbers, student identifiers) should not be sent via email; the date/time stamp of the application serves as a unique identifier.

***UPDATE* Selective Service**

Ohio Revised Code (ORC) section 3345.32 still requires compliance with the selective service law for a student to be eligible for any of Ohio's state grants and scholarships, subsidy, and in-state tuition. ORC 3345.32 Student Noncompliance with Selective Service can be found here: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3345.32>.

As such, ODHE still requires institutions verify that students comply with selective service registration before requesting state grant and scholarship funding for the term, submitting to be included in the subsidy calculations (publics only), and charging in-state tuition (publics only).

The institution must keep this documentation in the event of an audit. If a student falls into one of the exceptions according to ORC for selective service, the documentation for this exception must also be provided to ODHE in the case of an audit. For birthdays that fall after the FAFSA filing and before a term start date, an institution is required to check registration prior to requesting any state aid for a term after the 18th birthday.

If the Ohio General Assembly chooses to amend this legislation, ODHE will inform the campuses.

Posting of Funds

In alignment with federal policy, the institution should apply the funds requested as soon as administratively feasible but no later than three business days following the date the institution received those funds. SCG funds must be applied towards a student's account for tuition and student fees and any overage can be refunded to the student, up to COA (if applicable). If SCG exceeds these charges, the institution may retain the excess to be applied to the applicant's charges for the subsequent term. If the applicant does not enroll in the subsequent term, the institution will need to refund the excess funds to ODHE.

Refunds

It is possible that an SCG applicant may withdraw from an institution after enrollment has been verified, or an applicant may not make use of their full \$3,000 award toward their COA. If this occurs, funds may need to be returned to ODHE, depending on the timing of the withdrawal.

- If the student drops before the 100% refund withdrawal date, then the institution will need to return the funds to ODHE.
- If the student drops after financial aid awards have been applied to their account and refunds issued, the amount of the SCG award that needs to be returned will be determined by the refund schedule of the institution.

To return funds, first contact ODHE through the SCG email (secondchancegrant@highered.ohio.gov) referencing the student's application date/time stamp. Funds may be returned via check or ACH payment. Checks should be payable to Treasurer, State of Ohio and mailed to the address below:

Ohio Department of Higher Education
Attn: Second Chance Grant
25 South Front Street, 7th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Financial Aid Audits

The Ohio Revised Code authorizes the Chancellor to conduct financial aid audits of state-supported colleges and universities, proprietary, and non-profit private colleges and universities. All Ohio institutions with financial aid errors based on their prior year audit results will automatically be audited in an upcoming calendar year. Additional institutions may be audited by random selection to maintain our goal of auditing a set number of institutions yearly. Every institution will be audited *at least* once every three years. Separate guidance can be found here: <https://highered.ohio.gov/educators/financial-aid/sgs-guidance-memos>.

Financial aid personnel should direct questions to secondchancegrant@highered.ohio.gov.