



Tuition and Fee Waiver

Eligibility Requirements:

- The department must have court-ordered legal guardianship for the applicant, the applicant must have aged out of DCFS guardianship at age 18 or older, or the department must have had legal guardianship for the applicant immediately prior to the adoption or guardianship being finalized.
- An applicant must have earned a high school diploma from an accredited institution or a high school equivalency certificate or have met the State criteria for high school graduation before the start of the school year for which the applicant is applying for the waiver.
- An applicant must be enrolled in a qualifying post-secondary education program before the applicant reaches the age of 26.
- An applicant must apply for federal and state grant assistance by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on October 1 each year or as soon after as possible.

Benefits:

- Tuition and mandatory fee waiver available to Illinois public universities or in-district community college. If student is awarded the Illinois MAP grant and/or federal Pell grants, these funds may be applied first.
- Benefits available for up to 5 consecutive years.

Important Plans to Consider

- Seek tutorial assistance through the school and/or request assistance locating academic resources through OETS if your grades are low or if you are having problems in a course.
- Arranging transportation to school.
- Planning for housing, when school is closed for breaks and holidays.

What the Waiver DOES NOT Cover:

- Orientation fee
- Computers or Internet Services
- Room/board costs
- Repayment of Student Loans
- Tuition to private, out-of-state, or for-profit schools or programs
- Study abroad costs (other than for tuition)
- Laboratory fees
- Transportation to and from school
- Supplies
- Library fines

To Apply:

- Submit a complete DCFS Form 438A to DCFS.TuitionWaiver@illinois.gov
- The student schedule must be included with the application form and contain the student's name, school name, term, and student ID number.
- Once approved for the Tuition and Fee Waiver Program, the student remains in the program. A subsequent waiver letter will be sent if the student submits a grade report for the term ending and a new schedule for upcoming term.
- The application and/or grade report and schedules are due by the following dates OR as soon as possible as they are processed on a first come, first serve basis. Fall Term: Aug. 15; Spring Term: Jan. 15; Summer Term: June 15
- https://www2.illinois.gov/dcf/aboutus/notices/Documents/CFS_438-A_Tuition_And_Mandatory_Fee_Waiver_Program_%28Fillable%29.pdf

