

TENNESSEE EDUCATION LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP
Frequently Asked Questions
www.TN.gov/CollegePays

Do I have to reapply each year to receive my award?

Yes. You must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year. This can be done at www.fafsa.gov. To review your eligibility status, go to www.TN.gov/CollegePays and click on the “TSAC Student Portal” to create an account. Be sure to have your Social Security number available and use your legal name as shown on your Social Security card when creating a Student Portal account.

Do I need to maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) to retain my award?

Yes. To retain the HOPE Scholarship, you must maintain satisfactory academic progress and achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.75 after attempting 24 and 48 semester hours. After reaching the 72 hour benchmark and beyond, you may retain the award in one of two ways:

- Achieve a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 **or**
- If your cumulative GPA is between 2.75-2.99 and your semester GPA is 3.0 or above in the prior semester then you may retain the award on a semester-to-semester basis. Under these guidelines, you must maintain full-time enrollment. Your eligibility is checked after each semester except for the summer. However, if you meet these guidelines and enroll full time for the summer, your eligibility will be checked at the end of the summer term.

A student who receives the HOPE Access Grant will continue to receive the award for each semester until they have attempted 24 semester hours. If you meet the HOPE Scholarship renewal criteria listed above then your award will convert to the HOPE Scholarship.

If you receive the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant and are pursuing a certificate or diploma, you must maintain satisfactory academic progress and be continuously enrolled each term until earning a certificate or diploma from the Tennessee College of Applied Technology.

How will my eligibility be affected if I decide to drop a course(s)?

You should **never** drop a course without first talking to the financial aid office at your institution. Your eligibility will not be affected if you are enrolled full-time and withdraw from courses but maintain at least 12 semester hours of enrollment. Your full-time (12+ semester hours) or part-time (6+ semester hours) enrollment status, as of the institution’s census date, is the enrollment status you must maintain throughout the semester. If your enrollment status is not maintained, the institution shall apply its refund policy to determine whether a refund is required and/or funds are returned to TSAC. Dropping a course(s) without a documented medical or personal reason may cause you to **permanently** lose your HOPE Scholarship eligibility.

If I decide to take a semester off or enroll at an ineligible postsecondary institution, how will my award be impacted?

You must maintain continuous enrollment at an eligible postsecondary institution. Discontinuing enrollment from an eligible postsecondary institution to enroll at an ineligible postsecondary institution may cause you to **permanently** lose your HOPE Scholarship eligibility. Also, taking a semester off from an eligible postsecondary institution without a documented medical or personal reason may cause you to **permanently** lose your HOPE Scholarship eligibility. Students must be enrolled at an eligible postsecondary institution at least part time for the fall and spring semesters to continue receiving the award. Enrollment in the summer semester is not required. Students enrolled in less than six (6) credit hours for any semester will maintain continuous enrollment but do not qualify for an award. If you receive the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant, you should check with your institution regarding continuous enrollment requirements as enrollment in the summer term may be required for your program of study.

If I lose my award, can I regain it?

Yes. If you fail to meet the academic renewal requirements and lose the HOPE Scholarship you can regain the award one time only by meeting the renewal criteria listed above at a benchmark. You cannot appeal to regain your HOPE Scholarship if your GPA falls below the renewal requirements. If you lose the award due to a nonacademic reason such as not maintaining continuous enrollment or changing your enrollment status from full time to part time, or part time to less than part time you are **not** eligible to regain the award unless an appeal is approved by the postsecondary institution or TSAC. For further information regarding the appeal process, contact your school or visit our website at <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/collegepays/money-for-college/tn-education-lottery-programs/tels-program-and-tn-promise-scholarship---appeals-and-exceptions.html>. Students who lose the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant shall not be eligible to receive future awards.

How will my grade point average be calculated for purposes of the HOPE Scholarship?

Whether receiving the HOPE Scholarship or not, all college courses attempted after high school graduation shall be used in calculating your grade point average. You may repeat one (1) course one (1) time and use the higher grade achieved. However, both courses attempted shall be used in the attempted hours total.

In addition to a lottery scholarship, I'm eligible to receive other state financial aid. Where can I go on-line to review the state financial aid I'm eligible to receive?

You may visit our website at www.TN.gov/CollegePays and click on the "TSAC Student Portal". The TSAC Student Portal provides a summary of all state financial aid programs available to the student along with award amounts by semester. Also, the student may transfer his financial aid package from one postsecondary institution to another.

How long can I receive the HOPE Scholarship?

Beginning with Fall 2015, students who first received the HOPE Scholarship in fall 2009 and thereafter and meet all criteria to retain the HOPE Scholarship may receive the award until the student has earned a baccalaureate degree, five (5) years have passed from the date of the student's initial enrollment at any postsecondary institution or the student has attempted 120 semester hours or has received the HOPE Scholarship for eight (8) full-time equivalent semesters, whichever occurs later. Students enrolled in degree programs that exceed 120 hours may receive an exception for the number of hours required for the degree or 136 hours, whichever is less. Please visit our website at <https://www.tn.gov/collegepays/money-for-college/tn-education-lottery-programs/tennessee-hope-scholarship.html> for more details regarding the renewal criteria.

I qualify for the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant. How do I continue receiving it each year?

You must apply by completing the FAFSA each year, maintain continuous enrollment in a certificate or diploma program at an eligible Tennessee College of Applied Technology and maintain satisfactory academic progress. No minimum number of enrollment hours is needed to maintain the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant. Prior HOPE Scholarship recipients are eligible to receive this grant. Wilder-Naifeh recipients who complete their diploma may qualify for a HOPE Scholarship if initial eligibility requirements were met upon high school graduation.

If I enroll less than full time, will my award be reduced?

Yes. HOPE Scholarship recipients who are enrolled less than full time will receive a reduced amount. Students enrolled in 9-11 hours will receive $\frac{3}{4}$ of the full award and students enrolled in 6-8 hours will receive $\frac{1}{2}$ of the full award. Students enrolled for less than 6 hours will not receive an award. Your enrollment status is determined as of the institution's census date. If you receive the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant, you will receive a reduced award if you are enrolled less than full time or enrolled for less than a full academic term.

Where can I use the HOPE Scholarship?

The HOPE Scholarship must be used at an eligible postsecondary institution in the state of Tennessee. For a complete list of eligible institutions, please visit <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/collegepays/money-for-college/tn-education-lottery-programs/tennessee-education-lottery-program---eligible-institutions-.html>. If you choose to attend an out-of-state institution, you are not eligible to receive the award. While enrolled at the regionally accredited out-of-state institution, you must meet the same GPA requirements and enrollment requirements that lottery scholarship recipients must meet as described in this document should you decide to return to Tennessee and enroll at an eligible postsecondary institution.

If I change schools, how do I transfer my award?

If you transfer to another eligible postsecondary institution, you can transfer your award in one of two ways. You may create a student account to transfer postsecondary institutions by accessing the Student Financial Aid Portal located on our website at www.TN.gov/CollegePays or you may complete a Change of Institution Request Form which can be found at the "Students and Parents" link.

I have created an account in the Student Portal and my status for a scholarship is "Tentative". What does that mean?

The "tentative" eligibility status means TSAC has determined that you are a potential candidate to receive an award. Your eligibility status will be finalized at a later time by the eligible postsecondary institution in which you are enrolled. For more details, contact the financial aid office.

My name is misspelled or other information is incorrect on the Student Portal. How can I get this corrected?

To make a correction to student information on the Student Portal, click on “Send Email to TSAC”. Once you have sent the email with the correction information, TSAC staff will update your application. Please note that a name change will require TSAC staff to delete your Student Portal account so that you can re-register an account with the correct name. Once an account has been registered, it will connect with your existing application(s) in our system.

If I had missed the Fall application deadline date, does that mean I’m ineligible to receive a scholarship for that semester and will I receive it for the spring semester?

Applications for the HOPE Scholarship and HOPE Access Grant must be received by September 1st for the fall semester and February 1st for the spring and summer semesters. If you miss the application deadline date for the Fall semester but the application is received by the Spring and summer semester deadline dates, you may qualify for an award in the Spring or Summer semester. Applications for the Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant must be received by July 1st for the summer trimester, November 1st for the Fall trimester and May 1st for the Winter/Spring trimester.

I am a home school graduate and I meet the General Assembly Merit Scholarship (GAMS) requirements. The GAMS amount does not appear in my award letter and in the Student Portal. What steps do I take to update my record in the Student Portal to reflect the GAMS?

Although your final home school grade point average cannot be used for GAMS eligibility, you may still meet the GAMS requirements. Please go to <https://www.tn.gov/collegepays/money-for-college/tn-education-lottery-programs/tennessee-hope-scholarship/home-school.html>. Contact the financial aid office at the institution in which you are receiving the HOPE Scholarship and have them review your status for the GAMS; as a home school graduate.

Where can I go to learn more about all of the lottery scholarship programs?

Please visit our website at <https://www.tn.gov/collegepays/money-for-college.html> to learn more about all of the lottery scholarship programs.

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