



FINANCIAL AID GUIDANCE MEMO

REFERENCE: **FA 18-001B**
TOPIC: **ADDENDUM TO FA 18-001 (14 JULY 2017)**
AUTHOR: **TAMIKA BRASWELL, PROGRAM MANAGER**
DATE: **17 OCTOBER 2017**
RELEVANT STATUTE: **OHIO REVISED CODE, SECTION 3333.122**

Recent changes in OCOG statute include the Treatment of Federal Veteran's Education Benefits and Student's with Intellectual Disabilities, both effective for the winter/spring 2018 term. Further guidance is provided here.

Treatment of Federal Veterans' Education Benefits

Effective for the winter/spring 2018 term, Ohio Revised Code section 3333.122 now states that "For a student who is receiving federal veterans' benefits under the "All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program," 38 U.S.C. 3001 et seq., or "Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Program," 38 U.S.C. 3301 et seq., or any successor program, the amount of a grant awarded under this section shall be applied toward the total state cost of attendance and the student's housing costs and living expenses. Living expenses shall include reasonable costs for room and board".

For the 2017-2018 academic year, the state cost of attendance is defined as tuition and general fees. Note that since living expenses are permissible for these students, *in these cases only*, OCOG is not tuition specific and the student may be eligible for *up to* the 2017-2018 respective maximum grant award. This means, *in this specific instance*, students attending a public community college or regional campus may be eligible for *up to* the public main campus award amount. Please refer to guidance memo [FA 18-001](#) for the respective sector award amounts.

Living expenses shall include reasonable costs for room and board and should be contained in each student's institutional cost of attendance. If housing costs and living expenses are not included on the student's billing statement, documentation of how the student's charges were calculated or how the average cost was arrived at must be kept. In keeping with federal guidelines, the institution must keep this documentation in the event of an audit.

Statute maintains the requirement that a student's Pell grant and EFC combo must be applied toward tuition and general charges before the student's specific OCOG award amount can be determined. This requirement remains for students receiving federal veteran education benefits and OCOG funds should be applied to any remaining cost of tuition/general fees and housing/living expenses. *For ease of administration, a calculator is available on our website for this purpose.*

To override the \$0 OCOG eligibility that will normally populate all community college students on the eligibility query, a student list must be sent to our office via the secure file transfer site, which can be found at <https://heifx.ohiohighered.org>.

Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Effective for the winter/spring 2018 term, Ohio Revised Code section 3333.122 now states that a student should be considered for an OCOG award who is enrolled in "A comprehensive transition and postsecondary program that is certified by the United States department of education. For purposes of this section, a "comprehensive transition and postsecondary

program" means a degree, certificate, or non-degree program that is designed to support persons with intellectual disabilities who are receiving academic, career, technical, and independent living instruction at an institution of higher education in order to prepare for gainful employment as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1140." In keeping with federal guidelines, the institution must keep supporting documentation in the event of an audit.

All other OCOG eligibility must be met. Please refer to guidance memo [FA 18-001](#) for the respective sector award amounts. For students at community colleges and regional campuses, Ohio Administrative Code maintains that the Chancellor may choose to calculate the average tuition and general charges for each sector in determining eligibility for an OCOG award. Based on this calculation, no OCOG awards are generally available to students attending institutions in the community college sector and a modified maximum OCOG award amount will be available to students attending institutions in the regional campus sector. This maintains for a student that is enrolled in a degree, certificate, or non-degree program designed to support individuals with intellectual disabilities. However, students in these programs that otherwise qualify for foster youth status, Federal Veteran's Education benefits, or third-term OCOG, may be eligible for up to the public main campus award amount. Please refer to guidance memo [FA 18-001](#) to determine OCOG eligibility for these exceptions.

Financial aid personnel should direct questions to the Ohio College Opportunity Grant Program Manager, Tamika Braswell, 614.728.8862, tbraswell@highered.ohio.gov.