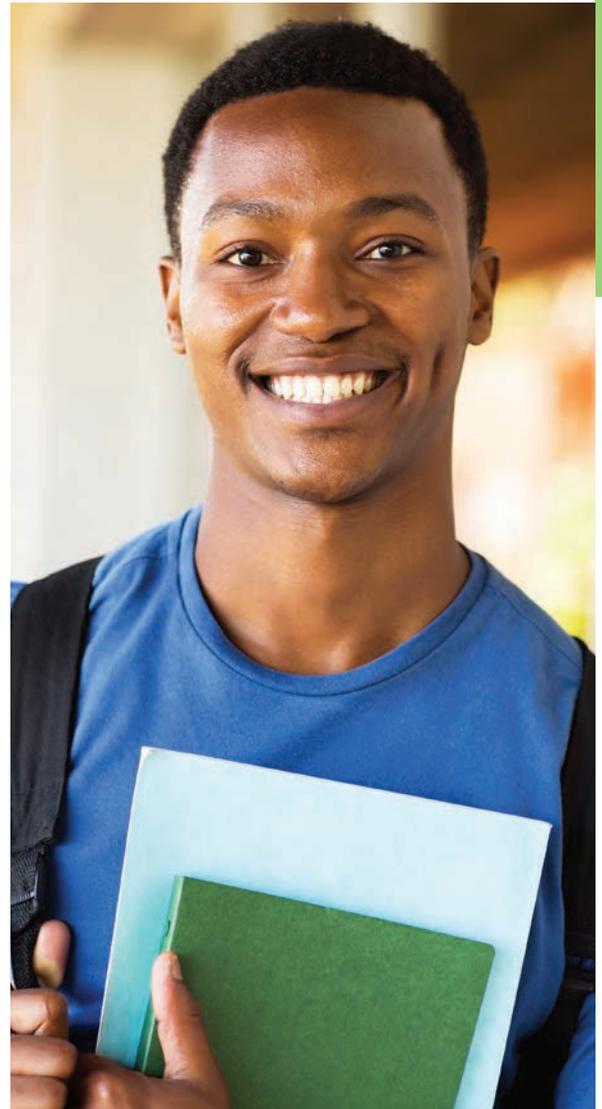


# ILLINOIS FINANCIAL AID UPDATES OCTOBER 2019

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## Financial Aid Program Updates

### **PRIORITY DEADLINE DATE FOR RETURNING STUDENTS TO RECEIVE MONETARY AWARD PROGRAM (MAP) FUNDS**

MAP-eligible returning students who received a MAP grant in the prior academic year will receive priority access to MAP funds if they complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) by the priority deadline date set by ISAC each year. ISAC will announce the priority deadline date each year prior to October 1, when the FAFSA becomes available for the upcoming school year.

To receive priority access for MAP, the applicant must:

- Be a returning student
- Have received a MAP grant in the immediately prior academic year

If you meet the above criteria, you should file your FAFSA by the priority deadline date to receive priority access to MAP funding. So long as you continue to be eligible for MAP and MAP funds have been appropriated, you will receive a MAP grant. If you don't file your FAFSA by the priority deadline date, you will not have priority access to funding, but you might still have the opportunity to get a MAP grant if you file your FAFSA as soon as possible after that date. Because there is more demand than funding for MAP grants, MAP is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, so if you are an eligible returning MAP recipient but miss the deadline, you should file your FAFSA as soon as possible.

**As a reminder, ISAC encourages *all* students to file their FAFSA as soon as possible after October 1 of the calendar year before the academic year they choose to attend.**

For more information, see [www.isac.org/home/priority-access-map-bill](http://www.isac.org/home/priority-access-map-bill)

## AIM HIGH GRANTS

Aspirational Institutional Match Helping Illinois Grow Higher Education (AIM HIGH) Grants are awarded to eligible students attending one of the 12 public universities in Illinois. This grant provides assistance toward a full-time undergraduate student's cost of attendance at the university. The AIM HIGH grant is renewable and if you receive it once and continue to meet the eligibility requirements, you will be eligible to receive a renewal grant in subsequent years.

Additionally, all AIM HIGH participating universities will provide matching funding for institutional awards for students who meet eligibility requirements established by the university. This funding may or may not be available to the same students who receive the AIM HIGH grant, depending on how the matching program is designed by the university.

While ISAC helps administer state funds for this grant, each university has its own AIM HIGH grant program and is responsible for making awards to students under its program.

To be eligible for an AIM HIGH grant, the applicant must have attended an Illinois high school and must be applying to be enrolled for the first time as an undergraduate student attending a participating Illinois public university.\* The applicant must have demonstrated financial need, with a household income no greater than six times the poverty guideline established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the applicant must meet the other criteria established by the university, including meeting the minimum cumulative grade point average or ACT or SAT college admissions test score, as determined by the university.

### Enrollment requirements

Must be enrolled as an undergraduate student on a full-time basis.

### Where to use it

Participating public universities in Illinois.

### When and how to apply

Apply by filing the FAFSA as soon as possible after October 1 of the calendar year before the academic year you choose to attend; funding is limited so apply early.

\*Students applying only for a university's matching funds may not need to meet these eligibility requirements; refer to the program information for your university.

Each university's AIM HIGH grant program is described in detail on the university's website. For complete program information, ISAC provides links to the AIM HIGH page for each of the participating universities at the bottom of this page on ISAC's website: [www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/aim-high.html](http://www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/aim-high.html)

## EXONEREE GRANT PROGRAM

This grant program is for Illinois residents who have either been issued a pardon on the grounds of innocence of the crime for which they have been imprisoned, or who have received a certificate of innocence from a circuit court. This grant provides assistance toward tuition and mandatory fees for a maximum equivalent of four regular school years (8 semesters) of full-time enrollment in undergraduate or graduate study at Illinois public colleges and community colleges. It can also be used for costs associated with obtaining a high school equivalency certificate from an Illinois Community College Board approved provider. Note that students cannot receive MAP if they are receiving funds through the Exonerate Grant Program.

Funding is limited and awarded to eligible applicants on a first-come, first-served basis, so apply as early as possible when the application becomes available.

### Enrollment requirements

Seeking a high school equivalency certificate or completing a high school equivalency preparation course; or enrolled in an Illinois public college or community college in an eligible degree or certificate program.

### How to Apply

Apply annually online with the application available on the ISAC Student Portal.

## Financial Aid Eligibility and Process Updates: RISE Act

### RISE ACT APPLICATION: PATHWAY FOR CERTAIN STUDENTS TO APPLY FOR STATE FINANCIAL AID

The Retention of Illinois Students and Equity (RISE) Act makes state student financial aid available to certain students who are not otherwise eligible for federal aid. This includes noncitizen students who have not obtained lawful permanent residence, as well as transgender students who may have been disqualified for failure to register for selective service.

The RISE Act extends eligibility for all state student financial aid, including aid from Illinois public colleges and universities and all ISAC financial aid programs, to those who meet certain residency-related conditions and who meet all eligibility requirements for each program.

Because the RISE Act specifically applies to students who are not otherwise eligible to receive federal student aid, ISAC is creating an Illinois-specific online application as a pathway for these students to apply for state financial aid. The RISE Act application will be available on January 1, 2020 for the 2020-21 academic year.

For students who will be applying for MAP grants through the new RISE Act application, the online application will be accessible through the ISAC Student Portal. Online instructions at the beginning of the application will help students determine which application (RISE vs. FAFSA) should be completed.

For more information, including eligibility requirements, visit [isac.org/RISE-Act](http://isac.org/RISE-Act)

