

Title 10: Education Institutions and Agencies

Part 611: Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG)

Part 611 Chapter 1: Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) Rules and Regulations

Rule 1.1 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) Rules and Regulations. These Rules and Regulations are subject to change by the Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board (Postsecondary Board). All eligible students shall receive a Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG) award; however, the amount of each MTAG award depends upon the availability of funds as authorized by the State Legislature.

I. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

- A. The applicant must be a current legal resident of Mississippi. Resident status for purposes of receiving MTAG under this act shall be determined in the same manner as resident status for tuition purposes as set forth in Sections 37-103-1 through 37-103-29, of Ms. Code Ann., with the exception of Section 37-103-17.
- B. The applicant must be continuously enrolled (not less than two semesters or three trimesters in each successive academic year) full-time (minimum 15 semester hours or 9 trimester hours) at the undergraduate level at one (1) eligible institution in the State of Mississippi.
- C. The applicant must meet one of the following sets of academic criteria:
 - 1. Graduated from high school, as verified by the institution before disbursement of awards, with a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, as certified by the high school counselor or other authorized school official, and scored an ACT composite score of 15 or higher from a national test or tests. In lieu of ACT scores, students may submit equivalent SAT scores according to the official ACT/SAT concordance tables in publication at the time of the test in question; or
 - 2. Attended a home education program during grade levels 9 through 12 and scored an ACT composite score of 15 or higher from a national test or tests. In lieu of ACT scores, students may submit equivalent SAT scores according to the official ACT/SAT concordance tables in publication at the time of the test in question; or
 - 3. Successfully completed the International Baccalaureate Program, with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, based on that school's grading system, and scored an ACT composite score of 15 or higher from a national test or tests. In lieu of ACT scores, students may submit

equivalent SAT scores according to the official ACT/SAT concordance tables in publication at the time of the test in question; or

4. Satisfactorily completed a high school equivalency diploma and scored an ACT composite score of 15 or higher from a national test or tests. In lieu of ACT scores, students may submit equivalent SAT scores according to the official ACT/SAT concordance tables in publication at the time of the test in question; or
 5. Completed at least twelve (12) college hours and earned a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale on all college work.
- D. Exception: Any student, including the entrant with a high school equivalency diploma, pursuing a vocational or technical program of study at a community or junior college leading to a certificate or an associate of applied science degree is not required to take the ACT, unless required by the school.
- E. The number of prior full-time semesters or trimesters that a student has attended college will not be a factor in determining a recipient's initial eligibility if he/she is otherwise eligible.
- F. The applicant must not be financially eligible for the maximum Federal Pell Grant as evidenced either by a Student Aid Index (SAI) greater than zero (0) on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or by completion of a Financial Certification Statement certifying that the family income will preclude the applicant's eligibility for the Federal Pell Grant or other need-based Title IV funds.
- G. The applicant must complete an application for state financial aid on or before September 15 during the fall of the aid year for which the student is seeking assistance.
- H. The applicant must not currently be in default on a Federal or State educational loan or owe a repayment on a Federal or State grant.
- I. The applicant must meet any other general requirements for admission and student financial aid at the student's eligible institution of choice.

II. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- A. First-time applicants must:
1. Complete an application online at www.mississippi.edu/financialaid by the deadline date of September 15 during the fall of the aid year for which the student is seeking assistance.

2. Submit two forms of documentation of current legal residency by the document deadline of October 15. Acceptable forms of residency documentation are listed in the General Administration Rules and Regulations and published online at www.mississippi.edu/financialaid.
3. If the applicant is considered to be a first-time college student (completed fewer than twelve (12) credit hours), submit by the document deadline of October 15:
 - a) Proof of graduation from high school with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale certified by the high school counselor or other authorized school official and proof of an ACT composite score of 15 or higher from a national test or tests taken prior to being enrolled as a first-time college student. In lieu of ACT scores, students may submit equivalent SAT scores according to the official ACT/SAT concordance tables in publication at the time of the test in question. If the student is enrolling in a vocational or technical program of study at a community or junior college, the student may submit a letter or other proof of program enrollment from the college in lieu of the required standardized test scores; or
 - b) Proof of attendance at a home education program during grade levels 9 through 12 and proof of an ACT composite score of 15 or higher from a national test or tests taken prior to being enrolled as a first-time college student. In lieu of ACT scores, students may submit equivalent SAT scores according to the official ACT/SAT concordance tables in publication at the time of the test in question. If the student is enrolling in a vocational or technical program of study at a community or junior college, the student may submit a letter or other proof of program enrollment from the college in lieu of the required standardized test scores; or
 - c) Proof of successful completion of the International Baccalaureate Program, with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, based on that school's grading system and proof of an ACT composite score of 15 or higher from a national test or tests taken prior to being enrolled as a first-time college student. In lieu of ACT scores, students may submit equivalent SAT scores according to the official ACT/SAT concordance tables in publication at the time of the test in question. If the student is enrolling in a vocational or technical program of study at a community or junior college, the student may submit a letter or other proof of program enrollment from the college in lieu of the required standardized test scores; or

d) Proof of satisfactory completion of a high school equivalency diploma and proof of an ACT composite score of 15 or higher from a national test or tests taken prior to being enrolled as a first-time college student. In lieu of ACT scores, students may submit equivalent SAT scores according to the official ACT/SAT concordance tables in publication at the time of the test in question. If the student is enrolling in a vocational or technical program of study at a community or junior college, the student may submit a letter or other proof of program enrollment from the college in lieu of the required standardized test scores.

4. If the applicant is considered to be a continuing college student (completed more than twelve (12) credit hours), submit by the document deadline of October 15, proof of a cumulative college GPA of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.
5. Complete by the document deadline of October 15 either the FAFSA to demonstrate that the applicant is not financially eligible for the maximum Federal Pell Grant because the applicant has an SAI greater than zero (0), or a Financial Certification Statement certifying that the family income will preclude the applicant's eligibility for the Federal Pell Grant or other need-based Title IV funds.
6. Be enrolled full-time (minimum 15 semester hours or 9 trimester hours) at the undergraduate level at one (1) eligible institution in the State of Mississippi. Evidence of enrollment will be automatically provided to the Postsecondary Board by the attending institution.

B. Renewal applicants must:

1. Complete an application online at www.mississippi.edu/financialaid by the deadline date of September 15.
2. Maintain current, legal residency status in the State of Mississippi.
3. Complete by the document deadline of October 15 either the FAFSA to demonstrate that the applicant is not financially eligible for the maximum Federal Pell Grant because the applicant has an SAI greater than zero (0), or a Financial Certification Statement certifying that the family income will preclude the applicant's eligibility for the Federal Pell Grant or other need-based Title IV funds.
4. Maintain continuous, full-time enrollment at one (1) eligible institution in the State of Mississippi for not less than two semesters or three trimesters in each successive academic year, unless granted an exception for cause.

- a) Full-time enrollment consists of a minimum 15 semester hours or 9 trimester hours at the undergraduate level. Evidence of enrollment will be automatically provided to the Postsecondary Board by the attending institution, unless requested from the applicant.
 - b) If a student drops below full-time status during a semester or trimester of the academic year and is not granted an exception for cause by the administering agency, no refund will be required for that term; however, that student is ineligible to receive funds during the following semester or trimester of full-time enrollment of the regular academic year.
5. Maintain satisfactory academic progress toward a degree with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, as certified by the registrar, based on that institution's calculation, at the end of each semester, trimester, or term of the regular academic year. In the case of students pursuing a certificate, the student must meet that institution's satisfactory academic progress standards of his/her program of study.

III. LENGTH AND AMOUNT OF AWARD

- A. No student may receive MTAG for longer than the equivalent semesters or trimesters required to complete one (1) certificate, and/or one (1) associate, and/or (1) bachelor degree per institution, not to exceed eight (8) semesters or twelve (12) trimesters.
- B. For freshman and sophomore students, the award shall not exceed Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) per academic year (to be divided equally between each semester/trimester). Classification will be determined by the attending institution.
- C. For junior and senior students, the award shall not exceed One Thousand Dollars (1,000.00) per academic year (to be divided equally between each semester/trimester). Classification will be determined by the attending institution.
- D. Those students eligible for less than the maximum Federal Pell Grant award shall receive an MTAG award in an amount equal to the difference between the maximum Federal Pell Grant award amount and the award amount of the Federal Pell Grant for which the student is eligible based upon the student's SAI as determined by the FAFSA. In no situation may the MTAG award amount exceed the maximum MTAG amount allowable for students of the same classification.
- E. All awards are dependent on the availability of funds and are subject to proration.
- F. No student shall receive a combination of student financial aid and MTAG that exceeds the cost of attendance as defined by the institution's Federal Pell Grant Budget.

- G. Undergraduate grant awards will be offered to individual applicants through the single undergraduate grant program that offers the applicant the largest award.
- H. Payment of MTAG awards shall be disbursed directly to the educational institutions and applied first to tuition.
- I. If a recipient transfers from one eligible Mississippi institution to another, the award will be transferable, provided the student applies for the grant and is otherwise eligible.

Source: *Miss. Code Ann.* § 37-106-29.