

Effect of Drug Conviction

Persons convicted of drug trafficking or possession under federal or state law may be ineligible to receive federal student aid including grants, loans and work-study programs.

When completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form, question 23 asks if the student has ever been convicted of a drug related offense. Failure to answer the question will automatically disqualify the student from receiving federal aid. Answering the question falsely, if discovered, could result in fines, imprisonment or both.

Convictions count only if they were for an offense that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving federal aid. A conviction does not count if it was reversed, set aside or removed from the student's record or if the conviction occurred when the student was a juvenile (before age 18) unless the student was tried as an adult.

According to the law, the following chart indicates the period of ineligibility for federal student aid. (A conviction for sale of drugs includes convictions for conspiring to sell drugs.)

	Possession of Illegal Drugs	Sale of Illegal Drugs
1st offense	1 year from date of conviction	2 years from date of conviction
2nd offense	2 years from date of conviction	Indefinite period
3+ offenses	Indefinite period	

A student regains eligibility the day after the period of ineligibility ends or when he or she successfully completes a qualified drug rehabilitation program. Further convictions will make the student ineligible again. Students denied eligibility for an indefinite period can regain it only after successfully completing a rehabilitation program as described below.

A qualified drug rehabilitation program must include at least two unannounced drug tests and must satisfy at least one of the following requirements:

- Be qualified to receive funds directly or indirectly from a federal, state or local government program or federally or state-licensed insurance company.
- Be administered or recognized by a federal, state, or local government agency or court.
- Be administered or recognized by a federally or state-licensed hospital, health clinic or medical doctor.

It is the student's responsibility to certify to the Financial Aid Administrator that he/she has successfully completed a qualified rehabilitation program.