

April 22, 2019

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 19-32**

This letter clarifies guidance provided to County Welfare Departments regarding Cal Grants awarded and paid to students attending a California Community College. The guidance on this topic supersedes guidance previously provided via All County Letter (ACL) No. 17-05 dated February 14, 2017 and ACL No. 18-27 dated April 2, 2018.



PAT LEARY  
ACTING DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
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GAVIN NEWSOM  
GOVERNOR

April 22, 2019

ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) NO. 19-32

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS  
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS  
ALL CONSORTIA MANAGERS  
ALL QUALITY CONTROL COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: CALFRESH STUDENT ELIGIBILITY: CLARIFICATION  
REGARDING CAL GRANTS FOR COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE STUDENTS

REFERENCE: [MANUAL OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES DIVISION 63, SECTION 63-406.1 and 406.2; AB 1930, \(CHAPTER 729, STATUTES OF 2014\); TITLE 7 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS \(CFR\) SECTION 273.5\(b\); ACINs I-89-15, I-45-11, I-45-11E; ACL 17-05, and 15-70; ASSEMBLY BILL \(AB\) 214, CHAPTER 134, STATUTES OF 2017; ACL 18-27; SENATE BILL \(SB\) 850 \(CHAPTER 747, STATUTES OF 2014\)](#)

This letter clarifies guidance provided to County Welfare Departments (CWDs) regarding Cal Grants awarded and paid to students attending a California Community College (CCC). The guidance on this topic supersedes guidance previously provided via All County Letter [\(ACL\) No. 17-05](#) dated February 14, 2017 and [ACL No. 18-27](#) dated April 2, 2018.

Most students with low-income who attend a CCC may only receive a Cal Grant B Access award. Because Cal Grant B Access is never funded with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars, receipt of Cal Grant B Access cannot be used to determine that a student meets the criteria for an exemption from the student eligibility rule. Only students with low-income who receive a Cal Grant A or B and meet the TANF requirements will receive written notification from the California Student Aid

Commission (CSAC) verifying receipt of a TANF funded benefit and indicating their potential CalFresh eligibility.

### **Background**

The CSAC offers three types of Cal Grants to students:

1. Cal Grant A (provides tuition and fee assistance),
2. Cal Grant B, which is one grant with two components:
  - Cal Grant B (provides tuition and fee assistance), and
  - Cal Grant B Access (provides assistance to cover the cost of books/supplies and other college expenses), and
3. Cal Grant C.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) allocates TANF funds yearly to CSAC for the purpose of issuing Cal Grants to students with low-income that meet the TANF eligibility requirements. As stated on page two of [ACL No. 17-05](#) those requirements are that the student is:

- a. Currently unmarried; and
- b. 25 years of age or younger; and
- c. Has parental and/or student income of \$50,000 a year or less.

Additional eligibility requirements, including previous receipt of a Cal Grant and citizenship status, will be considered by CSAC.

Receipt of a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B may be used to determine if a student meets the criteria for an exemption from the student eligibility rule.

Note that CSAC provides Cal Grants to students that do not meet the TANF eligibility requirements. It is important to keep this in mind when determining whether a student meets the criteria for an exemption from the student eligibility rule. The CWD must confirm that the student receives a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B.

As a result of this nuance, [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 214 \(Chapter 134, Statutes of 2017\)](#) requires that CSAC provide recipients of a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B written notification regarding their potential eligibility for CalFresh. This written notification serves as verification that a student receives a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B and, by definition, also meets the TANF eligibility requirements.

Only Cal Grant A or B includes tuition and fee assistance and may be TANF funded. Because the Cal Grant B Access component and Cal Grant C are never TANF funded, receipt of either award cannot be used to determine if a student meets the criteria for an exemption from the student eligibility rule. Therefore, only students who receive a Cal Grant A or B and meet the TANF requirements will receive written notification from

CSAC verifying receipt of a TANF funded benefit and indicating their potential CalFresh eligibility.

Most students who attend a CCC can only receive the Cal Grant B Access component and therefore, do not meet the criteria for an exemption from the student eligibility rule. Please see [ACL No. 17-05](#) for other exemption criteria that may apply to students who attend a CCC.

Unfortunately, [ACL No. 17-05](#) provides inaccurate information regarding the types of students that will receive written notification from CSAC verifying receipt of a TANF funded benefit. Specifically, the letter inaccurately states that students attending a CCC may receive a TANF funded Cal Grant A while attending the CCC.

Page 3 of [ACL No. 17-05](#) reads:

- *Students attending a community college receive Cal Grant A and meet the TANF requirements listed in [ACL No. 17-05](#).*

The CDSS, in partnership with CSAC, has determined that further clarification on this topic is needed so that CWDs may accurately determine whether a student meets the criteria for an exemption from the student eligibility rule.

### **Clarification Regarding Students Attending a California Community College**

Cal Grant A or B provide tuition and fee assistance for students who attend a “tuition charging institution”. Students with low-income do not pay tuition at any CCC as a result of fee waiver programs, such as College Promise, formerly known as the Board of Governor’s Fee waiver. Therefore, the CCCs are not considered tuition charging institutions for the purposes of establishing Cal Grant eligibility. Students with low-income who attend a CCC and meet the TANF eligibility requirements are not eligible to receive tuition and fee assistance through Cal Grant A or B while attending a CCC.

As stated in [ACL No. 18-27](#), a student with low-income attending a CCC may be eligible for a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B, if and when the student transfers to a four-year, tuition charging institution of higher education. The student will receive tuition and fee assistance through the TANF funded Cal Grant A or B only at the time they transfer to the four-year, tuition charging institution.

Guidance regarding four-year institutions of higher education has not changed. Students attending a CSU, UC or other four-year institution of higher education, including private institutions, that are receiving tuition and fee assistance through a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B meet the criteria for an exemption from the student eligibility rule.

### **Exception for California Community Colleges Offering a Baccalaureate Degree**

[Senate Bill \(SB\) 850 \(Chapter 747, Statutes of 2014\)](#) authorized the CCC Board of Governors to establish a statewide Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program that, starting in fall 2017, allows fifteen approved CCCs to offer bachelor's degrees. Each of the fifteen approved CCCs will offer one academic degree in the area of health, science, or technology that are not already offered at a CSU or UC. Under the law, each CCC will charge \$84 per unit of upper-division course work. A small population of CCC students with low-income eligible for a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B and participating in the Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program will be charged tuition and may receive tuition and fee assistance through a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B while attending the CCC.

Below is a list of the CCCs participating in the Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program. Listed next to the CCC is the field of study that is offered.

<b>Community College</b>	<b>Field of Study</b>
Antelope Valley College	Airframe Manufacturing Technology
Bakersfield College	Industrial Automation
Crafton Hills College	Emergency Services & Allied Health Systems
Cypress College	Mortuary Science
Feather River College	Equine Industry
Foothill College	Dental Hygiene
West Los Angeles College	Dental Hygiene
Mira Costa College	Bio-Manufacturing
Modesto Junior College	Respiratory Care
Skyline College	Respiratory Care
Rio Hondo College	Automotive Technology
Mesa College	Health Information Management
Santa Ana College	Occupational Studies
Santa Monica College	Interaction Design
Shasta College	Health Information Management

### **Written Notification to Cal Grant A or B Recipients**

As mentioned, AB 214 requires that CSAC provide recipients of a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B written notification regarding their potential eligibility for CalFresh. The written notification, which has taken the form of an electronic or paper letter sent directly to the student, is provided by CSAC once the TANF funded Cal Grant A or B has been awarded and paid. A student may provide a copy of the written notification to the CWD to verify that they have received a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B. Currently, this written notification is the preferred method of verifying that a student has received a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B.

If a student receiving a Cal Grant A or B does not receive written notification from CSAC regarding their potential eligibility for CalFresh, it may be that the student is not

receiving a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B. As previously mentioned, it is not sufficient to confirm that a student has received a Cal Grant A or B to determine that a student meets the criteria for an exemption from the student eligibility rule. The CWD must also confirm that the Cal Grant A or B is TANF funded.

The preferred method of verifying that a student has received a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B is the written notification from CSAC. If a student has lost the original written notification, the student may request a replacement directly from CSAC. If necessary, the CWD may assist the student in requesting a replacement. If a student's Cal Grant A or B is not TANF funded, CSAC will not provide the written notification.

Note that students participating in the CCC BA Pilot Program who have received tuition and fee assistance through a TANF funded Cal Grant A or B will also receive written notification from CSAC.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact your CalFresh county consultant or call the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 654-1896.

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

KIM JOHNSON  
Deputy Director  
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division