

# PENNSYLVANIA

# STATE GRANT PROGRAM

## How to Check the Status of Your State Grant

1. Check the Financial Aid section of your *myHACC* account to view the amount of State Grant HACC has applied to your account. The State Grant will appear as either “PA State Grant fulltime” or “PA State Grant parttime”.
2. If further information is needed, you can access your State Grant award directly from PHEAA via [www.pheaa.org](http://www.pheaa.org). Use the “Account Access” section to log in or to create an on-line account.
3. If you require direct assistance from a PHEAA State Grant representative, call 717-720-2800.

## State Grant Eligibility Requirements

The basic eligibility requirements determined by PHEAA when they receive your application include:

- Meet criteria for financial need.
- Be enrolled on at least a half-time basis in a PHEAA-approved undergraduate program of study and do not already have a 4-year (or more) undergraduate degree. At HACC, that means that students must be enrolled in an Associate Degree program.
- Be a US high school graduate or the recipient of a GED.
- Be a Pennsylvania resident for at least 12 months (domiciliary).
- Meet the application deadline by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the academic year the student is attending.

PA State Grant award notices should be considered estimates. Even after you have received a PA State Grant award notice, PHEAA requires HACC to conduct additional eligibility checks. The following are some of the eligibility checks that will be made by HACC staff prior to any State Grant funds being disbursed to your account.

**Additional School Certification Eligibility Requirements:**

Enrollment Status: PHEAA considers full-time status to be enrollment for at least 12 degree credits in a semester. Half-time status is considered to be enrollment for at least 6 degree credits in a semester. Enrollment status can also be impacted by the individual courses selected. Please read the information regarding “Remedial Exception” and “Virtual Coursework” (below). In some cases, Winter credits may be counted toward Spring enrollment.

Change in Enrollment Status: Changing enrollment status can affect your eligibility for a State Grant. The following are some examples of enrollment status changes that can reduce or eliminate your eligibility during a semester:

- Drop from full-time to half-time enrollment
- Drop from half-time to less than half-time enrollment
- Withdrawal
- Switching from a degree course to one that is remedial/developmental, or ESL
- Switching from a classroom course to a virtual or blended course

Minimum Semester Length: PHEAA defines a semester as a minimum of 15 weeks in length. Therefore, if you are taking courses in shorter parts of term, you may be ineligible for State Grant aid or receive it later in the term. For example, if you are taking 6 credits, both of which are in the “Late” (12-week) part of term, you will not be eligible for a State Grant because the term length does not meet PHEAA’s definition. If you are taking 6 total credits, 3 credits in the “Full-Term” (15 weeks) and the other 3 credits in the “Late” part of term, you may be eligible for the Grant but will not receive payment until the disbursement date for the “Late” part of term. Due to the shorter time frame during the summer, PHEAA allows a minimum of 5 weeks for the summer term. Attending a Winterim session does NOT affect the semester term-length requirement.

Virtual Coursework: Your State Grant award will be reduced to an amount determined by PHEAA if the number of virtual credits you are taking exceeds the number of classroom credits you are taking during any given term. The amount of reduction may fluctuate on a yearly basis. Blended courses are considered to be 100% virtual when determining this percentage, except where HACC academic staff have verified a given classroom percentage.

Remedial Exception: If you are taking remedial/developmental or ESL courses, you must also take a minimum number of degree credits in the semester to qualify for a State Grant. To receive a part-time State Grant payment, the student must be enrolled for at least 6 total credits, with at least 3 of those credits being degree credits. To receive a full-time State Grant payment, you must be enrolled for at least 12 total credits, with at least 6 of those credits being degree credits. You are only eligible to receive this type of combined credit payment (remedial exception) for 2 full-time or 4 part-time semesters. After you have received this maximum number of exceptions, only degree credits can be used when determining your enrollment level for State Grants.

Academic Progress: If you have received State Grant aid in a prior academic year, HACC must verify that you successfully completed PHEAA's minimum number of credits before paying State Grant aid for the current year. For the most recent year you received State Grant, you must have successfully completed at least 12 credits for each full-time term of State Grant received and/or at least 6 credits for each part-time term of State Grant received. For example, if last academic year you received a full-time State Grant during Fall term and a part-time State Grant during Spring term, you must have completed a minimum of 18 credits before you can be eligible for further State Grant aid. If you received the State Grant or completed credits at a different institution, you must submit your prior college's academic transcript to HACC to confirm that this requirement has been met.

Reduced Charges: If your cost of tuition and fees is reduced/cancelled due to withdrawal, tuition forgiveness, or non-attendance, the amount of PHEAA State Grant you have been awarded may be adjusted. In these cases, you may owe HACC for the amount that must be returned to PHEAA.

Maximum Number of Awards: You are only eligible for 4 years of State Grant aid in your lifetime. PHEAA defines "4 years" as 8 full-time or 16 part-time semester awards. You should examine your future educational goals to see if you want to reserve some of your State Grant eligibility for future enrollment in a bachelor's degree, especially since PHEAA awards higher State Grant amounts to students who are attending higher cost colleges. In addition, PHEAA only allows students to receive 2 years of State Grant in a two-year program, so you will lose State Grant eligibility for your associates degree once you have received 4 full-time or 8 part-time semesters of State Grant here at HACC.

