

The Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance



ACTION LETTER

Action Letter #2
December 2025

2025-2026 PROGRAMS GUIDELINES UPDATES

Follow-up to Requests for 2025-2026 Student Financial Aid Guidelines Clarifications and Additional OSFA Guidance and/or Announcements

Dear Colleague:

This Action Letter responds to recent requests for clarification and guidance regarding the current 2025-2026 MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus guidelines, and to announce changes to be implemented in response to recent legislative action and Board of Higher Education ("BHE") vote. The purpose of this letter is to summarize the Department of Higher Education's ("DHE") responses to those inquiries and to provide updated guidance and related announcements.

Requested Clarification #1: Methodology for Calculating the Tuition and Fee Award under MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus.

DHE Response:

Subject to appropriation and the availability of funds (allocations), the DHE's current 2025-2026 MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus guidelines allow for every eligible student to receive a tuition and fee award under MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus.

As noted in each set of guidelines, this award must be calculated as follows:

MassEducate Award = Tuition and Fees (minus) All Other Non-Loan Aid

MassReconnect Award = Tuition and Fees (minus) All Other Non-Loan Aid

MASSGrant Plus Award = Tuition and Fees (minus) All Other Non-Loan Aid

Requested Clarification #2: Methodology for Calculating the Allowance and Support Award under MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus.

DHE Response:

Subject to appropriation and the availability of funds (allocations) the DHE's current 2025-2026 MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus guidelines allow for every eligible student to receive an **Allowance and Support Award** under MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus.

As noted in each set of guidelines, this award must be calculated as follows:

Allowance and Support Award = Cost of Attendance COA (minus) All Other Non-Loan Aid

(Applicable to Community Colleges only): We understand that some financial aid offices may have used a DHE-approved allowance formula from prior fiscal years (based on total direct costs), to assess student eligibility for the **Allowance and Support Award**. In this limited instance, the DHE will defer to financial aid officers' discretion in managing their caseloads within their institutional allocations and accept an institution's use of either the Allowance and Support Award formula listed above or a DHE-approved formula for students that have already been assessed and issued awards this academic year. To help understand the scope and impact of the variances among campuses in calculating the **Allowance and Support Award**, and to help inform future decision-making in this area, the DHE will rely on its mid-year collection apparatus and direct outreach to institutions as needed to obtain the additional data to perform the necessary review and analyses.

Requested Clarification #3 (Applicable to Community Colleges Only): Methodology for Calculating the **“Second” Allowance and Support Award** under MassEducate.

DHE Response:

Pursuant to relevant statutory and line-item language, MassEducate funding may be used to award one Allowance and Support Award, but **may not** be used to award a **Second Allowance** to eligible students. The use of funds under the **Second Allowance** falls under the guidelines of the **MASSGrant Plus Allowance and Support Award**. Additionally, the **Second Allowance** is subject to available funding. Colleges have discretion to further define how they will distribute

limited funds to eligible students, which may include filing deadlines, awarding less than the maximum allowable amount in a given semester or a full academic year, or other conditions deemed appropriate by the school. Priority may be given to students with the highest need.

As noted in each set of guidelines, this award must be calculated as follows:

MASSGrant Plus ("Second" Allowance and Support Award) = Cost of Attendance COA (minus) All Other Non-Loan Aid

DHE Announcement #1: Restoration of the \$1,200 Allowance Maximum.

The DHE received a new legislative appropriation that allows the current \$1,000 maximum allowance to be restored to a maximum of **\$1,200**, under the MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus programs.

DHE Announcement #2: Updates to 2025-2026 MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus Guidelines.

The 2025-2026 MassEducate, MassReconnect, and MASSGrant Plus guidelines have been updated to reflect the restoration of the **\$1,200** maximum **Allowance and Support Award**, consistent with BHE Motion 26-30. Accordingly, all eligible students can receive up to the full \$1,200 allowance this academic year (AY2025-2026) regardless of the initial amount(s) they may have been awarded pursuant to prior guidelines for each of the programs. The newly updated guidelines are available on [OSFA's website](#). Direct links to the updated guidelines can be found below:

- [MassEducate](#)
- [MassReconnect](#)
- [MASSGrant Plus](#)

Please do not hesitate to contact the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance at 617.391.6070 if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance