

# The Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance



## ***ACTION LETTER***

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Action Letter #1  
August 2021

### **2021 Student Financial Aid Attestation Guide Update**

Dear Colleague:

This Action Letter makes changes to the current Student Financial Aid Attestation Guide (SFAAG) that addresses eligibility for Massachusetts state financial aid programs for students who are subject to the Military Selective Service Act, have criminal convictions, or are incarcerated.

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The current SFAAG, on page 19, lists the following two criteria as compliance requirements for a recipient of a Massachusetts state grant, loan, or tuition waiver award:

- Is in compliance with the requirements of the Military Selective Service Act or has been excused there from
- Has not been convicted of an offense involving the possession or sale of illegal drugs and/or has not been incarcerated in a federal or state penal institution

The U.S. Department of Education has given notice that it is implementing portions of the FAFSA Simplification Act, enacted on December 27, 2020, earlier than required under the law. Specifically, as of June 17, 2021, failing to register with the Selective Service or having a drug conviction while receiving federal Title IV aid will no longer impact a student's Title IV aid eligibility. Because eligibility for Massachusetts state grants, loans, and tuition waivers tracks the eligibility requirements for federal Title IV aid, these criteria will also no longer impact a student's eligibility for state aid.

Institutions should disregard the two above criteria in the SFAAG; institutions should replace that language with the following criteria for assessing student eligibility for Massachusetts state grants, loans, or tuition waiver awards:

- *Is not currently incarcerated at a federal or state correctional facility.*

Institutions are invited to contact the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance at 617.391.6070, if they have any questions or need further clarification about the above update.

Please also note that the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) is aware that there are additional recent changes to federal Title IV guidelines that may also impact student eligibility for Massachusetts state financial aid programs and will be providing guidance to institutions via OSFA updates. OSFA is planning to issue a complete update to the SFAAG in the very near future.

Thank you,

Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance

**617.391.6070**