



2020 CSBG Scholarship Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following FAQ is provided to assist you with the most common and frequently asked questions about the CSBG Scholarship Program.

1. What is the CSBG Scholarship Program?

CEDA’s CSBG Scholarship Program offers financial aid ranging from \$500-\$3,000 for income eligible individuals residing in suburban Cook County for post-secondary education at an accredited institution of higher education in the state of Illinois for the 2020-2021 academic year. The award must be used for only the 2020 fall semester. This assistance is funded via CEDA’s Community Services Block Grant (CSBG).

2. Who is eligible for the CSBG Scholarship Program?

The scholarship is available to any suburban Cook County resident who is enrolled in a postsecondary institution by September 15, 2020 and living in a household that is determined to meet income eligibility guidelines. Please see the chart below for income eligibility guidelines. Additional application requirements apply.

2020 Income Eligibility Guidelines (Gross Income)		
Size of Household	30-Day Income Limit	Annual Income Limit
1	\$2,127.00	\$25,520.00
2	\$2,873.00	\$34,480.00
3	\$3,620.00	\$43,440.00
4	\$4,367.00	\$52,400.00
5	\$5,113.00	\$61,360.00
6	\$5,860.00	\$70,320.00
7	\$6,607.00	\$79,280.00
8	\$7,353.00	\$88,240.00
For each additional person add	\$746.00	\$8,960.00

3. What qualifies as income?

Income includes total annual cash receipts before taxes from all sources, with exceptions noted in #4 below. Income includes money wages and salaries before any deductions; net receipts from nonfarm self-employment (receipts from a person’s own incorporated business, professional business, or partnership, after deductions for business expenses); net receipts from farm self-employment (receipts from a farm which one operates as an owners, renter, or sharecropper, after deductions for farm operating expenses); regular payments from social

security, railroad retirement, unemployment compensation, strike benefits from union funds, workers' compensation, veterans' payments, public assistance (including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income, and non-Federally General Assistance or General Relief money payments), and alimony, child support and military family allotments or other regular support either from an absent family member(s) or someone not living in the household; private pensions, government employee pensions (including military retirement pay) and regular insurance or annuity payments; dividends, interest, net rental income, net royalties, period receipts from estates or trusts, and net gambling or lottery winnings. **Stimulus unemployment insurance benefits received ARE considered income to be included in the calculation of income.**

4. What does not qualify as income?

Income does not include the following types of money received: capital gains; any assets drawn down as withdrawals from a bank, the sale of property, a house, or a car; or tax refunds, gifts, loans, lump-sum inheritances, one-time insurance payments, or compensation for injury. Also excluded are noncash benefits, such as the employer-paid or union-paid portion of health insurance or other employee fringe benefits, the imputed value of rent from owner-occupied nonfarm or farm housing, and such Federal noncash benefit programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, school lunches, and housing assistance. **Stimulus checks received from the coronavirus stimulus bill are NOT considered income to be included in the calculation of income.**

5. Who has to provide proof of income?

All family members 18 years of age or older and those members younger than 18 receiving a sustainable income such as SSI for a medical condition are required to provide income documentation.

6. What documentation do I need to submit if I have no income or no proof of income?

If a household member has no income or cannot provide proof of income, they are required to complete a "No Income/No Proof of Income Affidavit," which is included with the scholarship application. On this affidavit, the individual must indicate the month(s) for zero income or no proof of income, provide an explanation, sign and date the form. The "No Income/No Proof of Income Affidavit" must be witnessed and anyone who knows the applicant may be the witness.

7. What documentation do I need to submit if I don't have an ID or social security card?

If a household member, other than the applicant, has no ID or social security card readily available to submit with the CSBG scholarship application, they are required to complete a "No Identification Affidavit," which is included with the scholarship application. On this affidavit, the individual must indicate which statement applies, sign and date the form. The "No Identification Affidavit" must be witnessed and anyone who knows the applicant may be the Witness.

8. If I am attending a vocational training center to obtain a certification, can I apply for the CSBG scholarship?

No, the CSBG scholarship is only for post-secondary education. In previous years, vocational training students could apply for this scholarship, but now they must apply for financial assistance through the Trade Skills Program offered by CEDA's Family Support and Community



Engagement department. More information about the Trade Skills Program is available at www.cedaorg.net or by calling (312) 259-4237.

9. What does the scholarship cover?

The scholarship covers tuition, uniforms, books, and fees related to education.

10. What does the scholarship not cover?

The scholarship does not cover the purchase of laptops or computers, payment of previous balances, costs that have already been paid, or costs not related to education.

11. What school semester does the scholarship cover?

Scholarship awards are for the fall 2020 semester only. Awards cannot be applied towards the spring semester.

12. What schools are eligible for the scholarship?

Only accredited educational institutions in the state of Illinois are acceptable.

13. If I am a city of Chicago resident, which application do I use?

The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) manages the CSBG Scholarship Program for Chicago residents.

The application for Chicago residents is available online at www.cityofchicago.org. Do a keyword search for "2020 CSBG Scholarship Application".

Chicago residents who have questions or need more information should call (312) 746-7291.

14. If I am a suburban Cook County resident, which application do I use?

Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County, Inc. (CEDA) manages the CSBG Scholarship Program for suburban Cook County residents.

The application for suburban Cook County residents is available at www.cedaorg.net. A sample completed application is available to download for reference.

Suburban Cook County residents who have questions or need more information should email csbgscholarship@cedaorg.net or call (312) 259-4237.

15. What documents are needed to apply for the scholarship?

In order to apply for the scholarship, you will need to provide:

- CSBG scholarship application (4 pages including Family/Household Member Characteristics parts I and II)
- Most recent transcripts with grade point average (GPA) or graduate equivalency degree (GED) with test scores.



Family Support and Community Engagement (FsACE)

- Acceptance letter from school attending fall 2020 (not required if currently attending) or explanation as to why acceptance letter is not included.
- Income for 30-days (May 1, 2020 through May 31, 2020) for all family members 18 years of age or older and those members younger than 18 receiving a sustainable income such as SSI for a medical condition or a No Income/No Proof of Income Affidavit.
- Current financial aid awards. If your current financial aid award is not submitted with application, please provide an explanation and a copy of your completed FAFSA. Also, if you are not eligible for financial aid, you must provide that explanation in writing.
- Legible copy of all family members' Illinois driver's license, Illinois state I.D, passport, or consular identification card.
- Legible copy of social security cards for all family members (includes infants and children).
- Minimum 300-word essay. If you were awarded a scholarship with an essay previously submitted, you must submit a different essay or you will be disqualified.
- Letter of recommendation. The writer of the letter of recommendation may come from school, work, extra-curricular or church/house of worship activity environments. It must be on letterhead and signed by the endorser.
- Release of Information Form. This form must be completed in its entirety, signed and dated.
- School Costs Form AND Statement of Costs detailing costs for the fall 2020 semester only.

16. Is there a guide available to help me complete the application accurately?

Yes, a sample completed application is available online at www.cedaorg.net. In addition, webinars and workshops will be conducted to provide information on how to complete the application correctly. Please see the application for dates, times, and registration information.

17. How long will it take to know if I will receive a scholarship award?

Applicants will be notified the week of August 10, 2020.

18. What happens if I submit my application with missing documentation?

Incomplete applications will not be reviewed and will not be eligible for the CSBG Scholarship Program. No exceptions.

19. What is the deadline and how do I submit the application?

The 2020 CSBG Scholarship Application is due by **Friday, June 12, 2020 no later than 5:00pm**. It can be hand delivered or mailed to the address below. Mailed, delivered, or postmarked applications that arrive after June 12, 2020 at 5pm will not be accepted.

CEDA of Cook County, Inc.
ATTN: 2020 CSBG Scholarship Program
53 East 154th Street
Harvey, IL 60426

20. How are scholarship applications evaluated?



CEDA implements an evaluation process that ensures all applications receive fair and unbiased reviews. Applications are assessed by an eligibility committee that reviews whether an applicant meets program eligibility requirements (income and residency). A final review committee evaluates submissions based on application completeness (application, transcripts, essay, eligibility documents, letter of recommendation, etc.). Each application is reviewed by multiple committee members and assigned a score based on the quality of the application submission.

Incomplete applications are not reviewed and are not eligible for the CSBG Scholarship Program.

21. How is the award amount determined?

A monetary award rubric is used to determine the scale for award amounts. Each applicant's award is based on their application score and the standard rubric guidelines. In addition, the applicant's school costs and need are used to determine the final award amount.

22. Who receives the check for the scholarship award?

The check for the scholarship award is made out to the school and mailed directly to the school.

23. Can part of the award go to the student?

The scholarship award cannot go to the student. The entire award must be applied towards allowable expenses (see #9). Any unused funds must be returned to CEDA by the school.

24. How often can I apply for CSBG Scholarship Program?

Scholarship funds are dependent upon funding. Individuals that have received assistance in a calendar year can apply the next year, provided they meet eligibility requirements.

25. What do I do if I have questions?

If you have any questions regarding the program or how to complete the application, you can email csbgscholarship@cedaorg.net or call (312) 259-4237.