

RICHMOND COMMUNITY COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID POLICIES AND PRACTICES

How Long Can I Receive Federal Pell Grant?: Not all students qualify for Pell grant, but for those who do, new federal regulations say that a full-time student can only receive Pell grant for 12 semesters. This is a life-time total. Most students can get an Associate Degree or a Bachelor's degree in 12 semesters, but be sure to plan your course schedule carefully so that you can graduate on time. Part-time students can receive Pell for a longer amount of time.

Developmental Hours: Students can only receive Federal Financial Aid for up to 30 Developmental hours. Students may need to take more than 30 hours in order to be admitted into an eligible program, just be aware that Financial Aid will not be able to pay for more than 30 hours.

Determination of Awards: Richmond Community College attempts to meet the financial need of its students within its available resources. A student's financial need is determined by the results of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA determines an Expected Family Contribution (EFC). A student's need is determined by subtracting the Expected Family Contribution from the total estimated cost of attendance. In most instances, the total financial aid awarded will not exceed the student's documented financial need.

Review and Adjustment of Award: Financial aid awards can be adjusted or cancelled based on a number of reasons. For example, aid may be adjusted or cancelled if a student drops classes, changes programs or has changes in their financial status. Awards may also be canceled if an error is made in determining eligibility for aid or calculating the amount of aid or if information on the application or need analysis is determined to be incorrect. If you purposely give false or misleading information, you may be fined \$20,000, sent to prison, or both. Also, awards may be canceled if the Financial Aid Office receives notification from the Department of Education that the student is in default on a student loan received previously or if the student owes a financial aid repayment of funds received previously. All awards are based on the availability of funds. Should funds become unavailable for a particular program, awards will be adjusted accordingly.

Enrollment Status: To be classified as full-time, the student must be registered for **12 or more credit hours**. Registration for 9 to 11 credit hours is considered to be a three-quarter time enrollment status. A half-time enrollment status is defined as being registered for 6 to 8 credit hours. Less than half-time enrollment is defined as being registered for 1 to 5 credit hours. The amount of financial aid a student receives depends on how many credit hours a student registers.

Only classes that are required within your major will be counted when determining enrollment status. This means that a student may not receive financial aid for courses that are not required for his/her curriculum (major, program).

Some sources of financial aid require that you maintain full-time enrollment. You are responsible for knowing if the sources of aid you receive require full-time enrollment.

Early Scheduling/Early Registration/Registration/Tuition Payment: Once you have scheduled classes, you are expected to attend those classes. If you decide to change your schedule OR NOT to attend RCC, you **MUST** see a counselor **IN PERSON** to officially withdraw from your scheduled classes. Failure to withdraw from the classes will result in an overpayment of financial aid funds. This overpayment could prevent you from receiving future financial aid funds at RCC or any college until the overpayment is repaid. You will be responsible for repaying the financial aid funds.

Changes: It is the student's responsibility to make certain that the address on file in the Admissions Office is correct. All correspondence and refund checks are mailed to the address on file. Also, student must notify the Financial Aid Office in writing of changes in his/her name, address, home telephone number, academic program, or enrollment status. **A student is required to notify the Financial Aid Office if withdrawing from ALL classes.**

Federal, State, and Scholarship Funds: Any commitment of federal, state, and scholarship funds is contingent upon congressional and/or legislative appropriation and actual receipt of funds by Richmond Community College. Additionally, all awards are subject to funding and program regulations relative to the individual program or award granted to the student.

Federal Direct Loans: After serious consideration and careful evaluation of the Federal Direct Loan Program by the Board of Trustees, Richmond Community College has elected to not participate in the loan program.

Federal Work-Study: If your offer of financial assistance includes employment under the Federal Work-Study program (FWS), the amount shown for this category is the amount of money you may expect to earn during the academic year for work performed. This amount **cannot** be exceeded. You will be assigned a job to perform and paid hourly for hours worked. FWS awards are paid monthly based upon the number of hours worked. You will be required to attend a workshop concerning the FWS program. Information will be mailed to you concerning the FWS program and the workshop if you have been offered this assistance.

Student Refunds: Tuition, fees, books and supplies may be charged to Federal and State grants each eligible semester. After the Financial Aid and Business Offices have balanced all accounts, a check is written to each recipient for the balance of the grant (if any) not used for tuition, fees, books, and supplies. Checks are mailed to the student's address on file with the Admissions Office. Not all students will receive a refund. Sometimes grants are not enough to cover all the charges. Returning students can check their Webadvisor account to see their financial aid award as well as their school charges.

****For students that are enrolled in 12-week classes, 8-week classes, 5-week classes, Developmental classes such as DMA and DRE should receive their Financial Aid check as they progress in and/or successfully complete each class.** Therefore, withdrawing from any classes can result in a student not receiving a check and maybe repaying financial aid funds.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG): Funds are awarded to the students with the greatest financial need as determined by the Department of Education's calculation of the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*. A limited amount of funds are available. These awards may be canceled for students who fail to enroll for the subsequent semester, who become academically ineligible or who no longer meet the grant requirements.

North Carolina Community College Grant: Recipients are selected by the NC State Education Assistance Authority and College Foundation, Inc. based on the information provided by the student on the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*. Funds are disbursed after the Financial Aid and Business Offices have balanced all accounts. Checks are mailed to the student's address on file with the Admissions Office. These awards may be canceled for students who fail to enroll at least half-time (minimum of 6 credit hours), who become academically ineligible or who no longer meet the grant requirements.

North Carolina Education Lottery Scholarship: Recipients are selected by the NC State Education Assistance Authority and College Foundation, Inc. based on the information provided by the student on the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*. Students with EFC's of 2001-5000 will be considered. Funds are disbursed after the Financial Aid and Business Offices have balanced all accounts. Checks are mailed to the student's address on file with the Admissions Office. These awards may be canceled for students who fail to enroll for the subsequent semester, who become academically ineligible or who no longer meet the grant requirements. This program requires that the recipient be enrolled for a minimum of 6 credit hours.

RCC Scholarships and most other scholarships: Checks are mailed to the student's address on file with the Admissions Office. Most scholarship programs require that the student be enrolled full-time and maintain continuous enrollment. These awards may be canceled for students who fail to enroll for a subsequent semester. Some scholarships are based on specific majors. If a student changes their major in mid-year, they may not be eligible for the scholarship they received. Applications for RCC scholarships are generally available in April of each year.

Outside Awards: Students receiving financial aid from sources outside of Richmond Community College such as VA, National Guard TAP, WIA, TAA/TRA, NAFTA, NC Reach, Voc. Rehab., TEACH, private scholarships etc., are required to notify the Financial Aid Office so that this aid can be coordinated with other assistance.

Maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress: Most financial aid is awarded based upon financial need; however, to be assured of financial assistance, you should strive for a high grade point average and completion of all courses. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress will result in losing all financial aid. A copy of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy is mailed each financial aid recipient in the Financial Aid Award Package and is printed in the College Catalog.

Repayment: Any student who withdraws from school, reduces the number of credit hours carried, is withdrawn from classes, or takes courses outside his/her specified program of study, may have to repay all or a portion of his/her award.

Return of Title IV: If a student withdraws from all courses (official withdrawal), receives unofficial withdrawal in all courses, or has a combination of official and unofficial withdrawals in all courses, a Return to Title IV refund calculation must be performed. This calculation determines the amount of funds the College and the student must return to the U.S. Department of Education. Students are notified in writing when this calculation indicates funds must be returned. It is highly advisable for the student to contact the Financial Aid Office prior to withdrawing from ALL courses.

Re-Application: Financial need must be re-evaluated each year. **A new application for financial aid must be submitted each year for this purpose.** Richmond Community College defines one academic year as the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Students must complete a new *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* or Renewal Form after January 1 with the U.S. Dept. of Education at www.fafsa.gov.

Correspondence: Students are mailed and sent e-mail from the Financial Aid Office to complete the application and awarding process. Once the student's financial aid is finalized, the student will receive mainly emails with some written correspondence as necessary. Therefore, students should check their RCC e-mail accounts frequently for important information from the Financial Aid Office. Students can check their financial aid status, view and print award letters on Web advisor.

***At the end of each semester, students are notified of their Satisfactory Academic Progress by e-mail.