

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION & UPDATES FROM
NEW YORK STATE HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES CORPORATION (HESC)**

FIRST TIME STARTING COLLEGE 2021

- **FAFSA** – The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is the first step to qualify for federal student aid, like Pell Grants and federal student loans. Visit studentaid.ed.gov. *The deadline for the 2021-22 academic year cycle is June 30, 2022.*

- **TAP** – The NYS Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), is a need-based grant awarded to eligible students with family net taxable incomes of \$80,000 or less who are attending a public or private college located in New York State. You will find a link to the TAP application directly from the FAFSA; but if you missed it, you can apply [here](#). *The deadline for the 2021-22 academic year cycle is June 30, 2022.*

- **Excelsior Scholarship** – For the 2021-22 academic year, the Excelsior Scholarship will cover up to the resident tuition costs of eligible SUNY and CUNY students whose 2019 family adjusted gross income was \$125,000 or less. Visit hesc.ny.gov/excelsior to learn more about post-graduation requirements. *The deadline for the 2021-22 academic year is August 31, 2021.*

- **Enhanced Tuition Awards** – Students whose 2019 family adjusted gross income was \$125,000 or less receive \$6,000 in tuition aid for the 2021-22 academic year through a combination of TAP (if any), their ETA award and a match from their participating private college. Visit hesc.ny.gov/eta to learn if your private college is participating in the 2021-22 ETA program. *The deadline for the 2021-22 academic year is August 31, 2021.*

- **NYS Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Scholarship** – The STEM Scholarship provides tuition awards at public and private colleges for students in the top 10 percent of their 2021 high school graduating class to pursue an approved STEM degree. To learn more about the STEM Scholarship, including post-graduation requirements, visit hesc.ny.gov/stem. *The deadline for the 2021-22 academic year is August 15, 2021.*

FAQ

QUESTION: If I'm not sure what college I'm going to, should I list more than the college on my application for TAP? How can I do that?

ANSWER: Only one college can be listed on the NYS Student Aid Payment Application per term. After you complete the FAFSA, the first New York State college that you listed will automatically be populated on the NYS Student Aid Payment Application. HESC will process your application with this one college, but you can always change the college code later in your [HESC Student Account](#).

Once you've decided which New York college you will attend, you may log in to your account online using your HESC PIN, and change the college code to the correct college.

RETURNING STUDENTS ATTENDING COLLEGE 2021

- **FAFSA** – Returning college students must complete the FAFSA each year. To renew your FAFSA for 2021-22, visit studentaid.ed.gov and log in as a returning user.
- **NYS Student Aid Payment Application** – Returning NYS financial aid award recipients must also complete the NYS Student Aid Payment Application each year to request payment of your award. The NYS Student Aid Payment Application is linked directly from the FAFSA, but if you missed it, you can apply [here](#).

FAQ

QUESTION: I received TAP last year. Do I have to apply again?

ANSWER: TAP recipients who wish to receive payments for a subsequent academic year do not need to reapply for TAP but must complete the [NYS Student Aid Payment Application](#) each year to verify that they continue to meet the program's income eligibility requirements.

INCREASE IN TAP!

This year's State Budget provides for a \$500 increase in the maximum TAP award beginning this fall (academic year 2021-22). TAP awards are determined using multiple factors including income, dependency status and marital status.

Students who are dependent on their parents' incomes, foster youth, orphans, wards of the court, single (independent) students with dependent children, and married (independent) students with dependent children are now eligible for awards up to \$5,665 (up from \$5,165).

Single or married independent students without children are now eligible for awards up to \$3,525 (up from \$3,025).

Want to know if you are affected by this change go to your [HESC Student Account](#) and check it often!

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I COMPLETE MY TAP APPLICATION?

- Once you complete and submit your TAP application, HESC reviews your data, using the information obtained from your FAFSA, to verify that your information is complete and accurate.
- After your application is reviewed, and all required information has been submitted and can be verified, your application is processed and no further action is needed.
- In some instances, you may be asked for additional information or documentation about you or your parent's marital status, income, residency or other issues. This is to ensure we understand your dependency status, whose income should be used and your state of residency to enable processing to continue. These requests, and all updates regarding your award, will appear in your [HESC Student Account](#). You'll also receive a reminder email to check your account when updates are made.
- Once your application is processed, both you and your college receive an estimated award.

Want to help prevent delays?

Be sure you have submitted all required documentation and included all required signatures. Failure to sign your application is one of the most common reasons for processing delays.

NEWS ABOUT EXCELSIOR – APPLICATION IS OPEN NOW!

The 2021-22 Excelsior Scholarship and Enhanced Tuition Awards (ETA) applications are now available for first-time applicants and will be available through August 31, 2021. New applicants are encouraged to apply early.

BEFORE YOU APPLY, YOU MUST:

- Complete your FAFSA for 2021-22
- Create your HESC PIN
- Complete your NYS Student Aid Payment Application for 2021-22

CURRENT RECIPIENTS

You do not need to complete another Excelsior or ETA application but do need to submit the FAFSA and the 2021-22 NYS Student Aid Payment application to receive awards in the 2021-22 academic year.

Want to receive a text or email notification when the application is available? Sign up [here](#) for Excelsior Scholarship and [here](#) for ETA.

DON'T GO HUNGRY!

SNAP FOOD ASSISTANCE IS NOW EXPANDED FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

The federal government has made **temporary** changes to include **qualified** students for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Some eligibility includes:

- Are eligible to participate in state or federally financed work study during the regular academic year, as determined by the college; *or*
- Have an expected family contribution (EFC) of 0 in the current (2020-21) academic year, including students who are eligible for a maximum Pell Grant.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT

www.fns.usda.gov/snap/students

TIPS AND HINTS

- When creating your HESC PIN, HESC verifies your identity by matching with your FAFSA information. You must be sure to enter your full name (including middle initial, if used on FAFSA), date of birth and Social Security Number (SSN) on your HESC PIN exactly as it appears on your FAFSA.
- Remember your HESC PIN. You will use it each time you complete a HESC application or access your HESC account.
- “You” on the application always refers to the student, not parents. For NYS financial aid purposes, all references to parents include natural parents, stepparents and adoptive parents only, and do NOT include foster parents, grandparents, or other family members (unless they adopted you).
- For applicants whose parents are separated, divorced, or were never married and are living apart, only the custodial parent’s information should be entered on the NYS TAP application. Do not include information (income, or SSN) of the parent to be excluded. Also, if your parents are separated or divorced, the date of the separation or divorce MUST be included on the application.