

Drug Convictions May Affect Your Financial Aid

By law, some students who have drug-related convictions under any federal or state law **may be ineligible for federal student aid.**

According to the law, if you are convicted of a drug-related offense you may face these restrictions:

1. For **possession** of illegal drugs, you are ineligible from the date of conviction (not arrest) for:
 - 1 year for a first offense
 - 2 years for a second offense
 - Indefinitely for a third offense
2. For **sale** of illegal drugs, you are ineligible from the date of conviction (not arrest) for:
 - 2 years for a first offense
 - Indefinitely for a second offense

Do all drug convictions count?

No, do not count any conviction that was reversed, set aside, or removed from your record. Also, do not count any conviction that occurred before you turned 18, unless you were prosecuted as an adult.

Alcohol and tobacco are not illegal drugs under this law.

If I have drug convictions, should I still apply for student aid?

Yes, even if you have drug convictions, you should complete and submit a [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA). You may be eligible, depending on the date and number of convictions.

Even if you are ineligible for federal student aid, you should complete and submit your FAFSA. Many states and schools use information from the FAFSA, and you may still be eligible for scholarships or other types of aid from other programs. There is a way that you can regain eligibility for the federal programs no matter how many or what type of drug convictions you have. You must successfully complete an acceptable drug rehabilitation program that meets the standards set by Congress and the Department of Education, and you will regain eligibility on the date you complete the program.

How do I answer question 35 on the FAFSA?

Question 35 on the FAFSA asks about drug convictions. **Do not leave this question blank.** If you answer "YES" you can call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or go to www.fafsa.ed.gov if you need help filling out the worksheet after you receive it in the mail.

What is an acceptable drug rehabilitation program?

An acceptable drug rehabilitation program must have **TWO** unannounced drug tests **AND** it must either:

1. Be qualified to receive funds from a federal, state or local government agency or program, or from a state or federally licensed insurance company, or
2. Be administered or recognized by a federal, state or local government agency or court, or by a state or federally licensed hospital, health clinic, or medical doctor.

How can I get more information?

If you still have questions about the law, call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243). Your personal information is confidential, and you will remain anonymous.

If you want to find out if a drug rehabilitation program meets the described standards, you need to contact the rehabilitation program.