

How is Student Aid Counted for CalFresh?

Differentiating between public and private scholarships:

Public forms of student financial aid from programs funded under Title IV of the federal Higher Education Act, the Bureau of Indian Affairs student assistance programs, or Title XIII of the Indian Higher Education Programs are all excluded as income. *This means that public scholarships will not be used to determine income eligibility for the CalFresh program.*

The following are not counted as income:

- Pell Grants (also known as Basic Education Opportunity Grants or BEOG)
- Federal and state college work study
- Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG)
- National Direct Student Loans (NDSL) (also known as Perkins Loans)
- Guaranteed Student Loans (GSL, the same loan program that is the source of PLUS loans and Supplemental Loans for Students)
- The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program
- Special Programs for Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds (the source of TRIO loans)
- Special Programs for Students Whose Families are Engaged in Migrant and Seasonal Farm Work
- Grants to States for State Student Incentives and the Income Contingent on Direct Loan Demonstration Project

Other educational assistance in the form of deferred payment loans, private grants, or private scholarship are counted but **allowable educational expenses** are subtracted. What this means is that while private scholarships do count as income, students can deduct allowable educational expenses.

Examples of allowable educational expenses include:

- Tuition and mandatory fees (including the purchase or rental of any equipment, materials, and supplies related to course of study),
- Books,
- Supplies,
- Transportation,
- Dependent care, and
- Miscellaneous personal expenses

Educational expenses, however, do not include:

- Rent or mortgage,
- Personal clothing, or
- Food eaten at home

Since most forms of financial assistance are received in lump sums, the county eligibility staff will average any scholarships that are not excluded and that are not being used for allowable educational expenses across the semester to determine the amount that is considered the monthly income. For additional questions, you can contact our CalFresh team at calfresh@sdhunger.org for assistance.