Student Handbook

Application Essentials

Table of Contents

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Student Application Information

Manage your Account – Use it and Be Responsible for your state financial aid!

The Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) is the application for some state-funded student financial aid programs, including the **Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program**.

- **It is your responsibility** after you submit an FFAA to update your demographic information, and track your application and award status.

- **It is OSFA's responsibility** to provide you with notifications on the processing of your application.

    o OSFA will post all official/award notifications to your online record.

    o Important: To access your account and login credentials in the future, an email may be required. Therefore, OSFA encourages every applicant to provide an email address.

- **It is your responsibility** to maintain up-to-date contact information with OSFA using your login credentials to update your profile.

    o Failure to keep your contact information up-to-date and monitor your application certifications can result in a delay in the processing of your application or prevent you from receiving a scholarship.

This application is NOT the federal application for student financial assistance. If you are interested in student financial aid from the federal government such as PELL Grants, Stafford loans or PLUS Loans you must complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)](#).

Student Application Definitions

Felony – Under state law, you ARE NOT eligible for a Bright Futures scholarship if you have been found guilty of a felony or if you have pled no contest to a felony. However, you ARE still eligible to apply and may check "NO" to the felony question within your Florida Financial Aid Application if your conviction or plea was removed from your record by a court or took place in a juvenile court. For more information see section 1009.531, Florida Statutes.

I Do Not Know – When you select **"I Do Not Know"** as a choice for an answer to any question on the application, you will need to supply the correct information before the program application deadline(s). You must update your application with this information if you wish to be considered for the Scholarships for Children and Spouses of Deceased or Disabled Veterans, the Rosewood Family Scholarship Program, the Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship Program, and/or the Randolph Bracy Ocoee Scholarship Program.

Twin Applicants

Our system checks each submitted profile against existing profiles to prevent duplication. However, to accept twin applicants, our system asks questions to determine any relationship to a prior applicant.

Graduate Students

Graduate Student – A student who has earned a bachelor's degree and is now attempting a master's degree, doctorate degree, or any post-baccalaureate certificate.

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) administers state and federal programs to assist students with the costs of postsecondary education. Visit OSFA's State Programs website at https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org which provides detailed information regarding available programs for graduate students. Currently, the FDOE administers a graduate program for the José Martí Scholarship Challenge Grant Fund, although priority for the José Martí Scholarship Challenge Grant Fund is given to graduating high school seniors.

The financial aid office at the postsecondary institution you are planning to attend is an excellent source of information concerning financial aid and available internship opportunities.

Email Filters

Note: your first notification regarding the processing of your FFAA will be sent from OSFA@fldoe.org. Please update any email or spam filters to allow messages from this address. Contact your email service provider for further assistance. All subsequent notifications will be posted to your Financial Aid Recipient History screen.

Social Security number (SSN) / Name Accuracy / Privacy

SSN

SSN Disclaimer

Financial assistance will not be denied for failure to disclose your SSN. However, without an SSN, correct identification of the applicant's record cannot be assured and may result in an error in the award amount or delay in the disbursement of an award.

Use of an Applicant's Social Security number/Non-discrimination Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 requires state agencies to inform applicants of the reasons for requesting their SSN. The Florida Department of Education requests an SSN on all applications for financial assistance to correctly identify applicants. An applicant will not be denied financial assistance for failure to disclose the SSN. Without an SSN, correct identification of an applicant's record cannot be assured and may result in an error in the award amount or a delay in the disbursement of an award. Pursuant to Section 1000.05, Florida Statutes, state student financial assistance is provided to eligible applicants without discriminating on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or marital status. Minority status will be considered when required by law as a condition of eligibility or selection.

Verifying your SSN

It is critical that you verify the accuracy of your SSN on your profile. It is used in matching your transcript(s) and test score(s) records. If you made an error entering your SSN, please contact Customer Service at 888-827-2004 and request to speak to a Program Specialist. **Do not submit a second profile**.

If you do not wish to supply your SSN

It is not required by law to submit your SSN for evaluation of financial aid through the State of Florida. If you choose to leave your SSN blank, the system will automatically generate a Pseudo Number, which you will use to access your records. Providing your SSN allows the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) to collect necessary information to determine award eligibility. Go to https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org, select the Login link located in the upper right corner, login to access your account, and under Student Account Information, select Update Profile to update your Pseudo SSN.

Name Accuracy

Verify the spelling of your first and last name on your profile. It is critical that your profile information is the same as it appears on your high school transcript(s) and test score(s).

If your last name changes, update your demographics on the OSFA State Programs website at https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org. Select the Login link located in the upper right corner, login to access your account, and under Student Account Information, select Update Profile. Ensure your demographic information remains consistent with your postsecondary institution. **Do not submit a second profile**.

OSFA Privacy Statement

Thank you for visiting the Office of Student Financial Assistance's Financial Aid Database site. Your privacy is very important to us. Our policy is to collect no personal information about you when you visit this site, unless you affirmatively choose to make such information available to us. When you visit this site, the Web server automatically recognizes only the Internet domain and IP address from which you accessed the site. This information does not result in the identification of your personal email address or other personal information.

In addition, information is only gathered regarding the volume and timing of access to the site by collecting information on the date, time, and pages you visited while at the site. This is done so that the content of the site can be improved. This information is not shared with other organizations. Again, only aggregate information is collected, and your personal information is not identified. If you choose to share personal information, such as sending a message or filling out an electronic form with personal information, the information will only be used for the purposes you authorized. By submitting a Florida Financial Aid Application you are authorizing the Florida Department of Education to share pertinent information you provided with high school related staff and the Florida Department of Veteran's Affairs for the sole purpose of evaluating you for one or more state scholarships. Some of this information may be saved for a designated period of time in order to comply with Florida's archiving policies. However, information will not be disclosed to any other third parties or other government agencies, unless required by state or federal law. If information is required by law to be disclosed about you, then every effort to notify you about the disclosure in advance will be taken.

Grade Point Averages & Test Scores

Grade Point Average (GPA)

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) will receive the student's official GPA for the José Martí Scholarship Challenge Grant program and the Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship program evaluations from the appropriate entity (high school or postsecondary institution) and will calculate the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship GPA from specific coursework on the student's high school transcript.

High School GPA

OSFA will receive the GPA information directly from the student's high school. The GPA calculated for purposes of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program may differ from the GPA on the report card.

Postsecondary Institution GPA

If you are a graduate student initially applying for the José Martí Scholarship Challenge Grant Fund, the postsecondary institution you plan to attend will certify your institutional cumulative GPA online to OSFA by a date established by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE).

Test Scores

Demographic information on your FFAA and on your ACT, SAT, or PERT must match. If your demographic information does not match, there may be delays in OSFA receiving your test scores. Don't forget, when you take your exam, you must authorize test services to send your single sitting test scores to your high school and one of the 12 Florida state universities. OSFA will then be able to retrieve your test score from our Florida repository.

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program requires **test scores**.

Test Deadlines:

- Bright Futures – Test taken by (scores can be <u>received</u> by OSFA after the deadline): January 31 for early (7th semester) evaluations. Test taken by (scores can be <u>received</u> by OSFA after the deadline): June 30 for final (8th semester) evaluations.

- Bright Futures Mid-Year Graduates 7th semester – After the spring term of your junior year is completed and semester grades are posted. A mid-year 7th semester transcript evaluation will include test scores for test dates through the end of June. 8th semester – After the fall graduation and all grades are posted, an 8th semester transcript evaluation will include test scores for test dates through January 31.

Residency Criteria

State Board of Education Rules [6A-20.003](#) **and** [6A-10.044](#)

- All state-funded scholarship and grant programs, except the Rosewood Family Scholarship Program, require Florida residency.
- A student's postsecondary institution is responsible for requesting documentation and determining whether the applicant meets Florida residency requirements. [6A-20.003(5)]
- A dependent student may be considered a Florida resident if either parent meets residency requirements. [6A-10.044(6)(b)4]
- An applicant or a parent of a dependent applicant must be a legal Florida resident for purposes other than education for 12 consecutive months prior to the first day of classes of the academic term for which assistance is requested. [6A-10.044(8) and 6A-20.003(2)]
- An applicant must be a U.S. citizen, a U.S. national, or an eligible noncitizen to be eligible to establish Florida residency for the purpose of state student financial aid. [6A-10.044(3)]

CITIZENSHIP

- An applicant must be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen in order to receive state program awards.
- Citizenship for state programs is determined using the same criteria and documentation as for federal student aid programs, unless specified in State Board of Education Rules 6A-20.003 and 6A-10.044.

Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) Checklist

Student Responsibilities for State Scholarship and Grant Program Applicants
Print this checklist and keep track of your application process.
This is for your records only.

☐ **Submit Application** – Students must submit a completed 2022-23 Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) to the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) to be considered for state scholarships and grants. Submit **one application** for consideration for the following programs:

Program	Deadline
☐ Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program	August 31, 2022
☐ Rosewood Family Scholarship	April 1, 2022
☐ José Martí Scholarship Challenge Grant	April 1, 2022
☐ Scholarships for Children and Spouses of Deceased or Disabled Veterans	**Timely**: April 1, 2022 **Late**: August 31, 2022
☐ Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship Program	August 31, 2022
☐ Randolph Bracy Ocoee Scholarship Program	April 1, 2022

☐ Contact the financial aid office at the institution you plan to attend regarding your potential eligibility for additional state financial assistance programs.

☐ **Keep all information – Print a copy of the application and the Saved Results page** and keep a record of all information sent to and from OSFA.

☐ **Manage your Account – Use it and Be Responsible for your state financial aid!** Access your account using your login credentials after create a profile. Your login credentials will be displayed on your Profile Acknowledgement screen and sent in an email after completing a profile. Go online to https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org and select the Login link located in the upper right corner to access your account. If you do not remember your login credentials, utilize the links available on the login screen.

☐ **Receive Official Notifications –** All notifications (including FFAA award notifications) will be available using your assigned login credentials to login to your Financial Aid Recipient History screen. Section VII: Correspondence History provides users with the ability to retrieve a PDF copy of the notification which may be printed.

To access your Financial Aid Recipient History screen, go online to https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org, select the Login link located in the upper right corner to access your account, enter your login credentials, select the **Students** menu, and under **Student Account Information**, select **Financial Aid Recipient History (FARH)**.

☐ **Review Your Application Status and Certifications** – Review certifications and application status frequently to ensure that certifications are complete by program deadlines. To access your status page, visit your **Financial Aid Recipient History**.

☐ **Update Information** – Keep your email and postal mail addresses, telephone numbers, as well as the postsecondary institution you plan to attend updated.

☐ **Watch for a Bright Futures Award or Denial Notification** – Following official evaluation of your high school transcripts for program eligibility, a Bright Futures award or denial notification will be posted to your **Financial Aid Recipient History** screen.

Official award notification comes from OSFA, not high schools or postsecondary institutions.

☐ **Watch for award or denial notifications from other state scholarships and grants.** Between June through August, notifications will be posted to your **Financial Aid Recipient History** screen for the following programs:

- José Martí Scholarship Challenge Grant
- Rosewood Family Scholarship
- Scholarships for Children and Spouses of Deceased or Disabled Veterans
- Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship Program
- Randolph Bracy Ocoee Scholarship Program

☐ **Get your money! Check with your postsecondary institution's financial aid office** – All funds are sent directly to eligible Florida postsecondary institutions. Each postsecondary institution has its own disbursement process. Check with your institution to find out when and how you will receive your scholarship and grant funds.