

Eligibility for Financial Assistance and Drug Convictions

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form contains a question about whether the student has been convicted for the possession or sale of illegal drugs for an offense that occurred during a period when he or she was receiving federal student aid for enrollment at a postsecondary institution. If you have had such a conviction, you will lose eligibility for federal and possibly state and institutional assistance for a certain period of time. The length of time that you will remain ineligible depends on the offense, and is outlined in the chart below:

	Possession of Illegal Drugs	Sale of Illegal Drugs
First Offense	1 year from date of conviction	2 years from date of conviction
Second Offense	2 years from date of conviction	Indefinite Period
Three or More Offenses	Indefinite Period	Indefinite Period

If a student is convicted of both possessing and selling illegal drugs, and the periods of ineligibility above are different, he or she will be ineligible for the longer period of time.

A conviction that was reversed, set aside, or removed from the student's record does not count, nor does one received when a student was a juvenile, unless he or she was tried as an adult.

Regaining eligibility

A student will regain eligibility the day after the period of ineligibility ends, or when the student successfully completes a drug rehabilitation program that includes passing two unannounced drug tests given by the program.

Students who lose eligibility for an indefinite period of time can regain eligibility by completing any of the following three options:

1. Successfully completing a rehabilitation program that includes passing two unannounced drug tests given by the program
2. Having the conviction reversed, set aside, or removed from the student's record so that fewer than two convictions for sale or three convictions for possession remain on the record.
3. Successfully completing two unannounced drug tests which are part of a rehab program (the student does not need to complete the rest of the program)

Drug Rehabilitation programs must meet the following standards if a student is to regain eligibility for federal financial aid:

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

Once a student has completed the requirements to regain eligibility for financial assistance, it is his or her responsibility to certify that he or she has completed a drug rehabilitation program or regained eligibility through another means mentioned above. Please contact your financial aid counselor if you have questions about this information.