

Chapter 12 – Iowa Workforce Grant

Established in May 2023, the Iowa Workforce Grant (WG) assists Iowa resident students who enroll in eligible programs of study at Regent Universities in Iowa. The statutory maximum award is \$2,000 per semester for a student enrolled on a full-time basis, although the maximum funded award may be less depending on the funding available and number of projected recipients. A [Historical Appropriations Summary](#) can be found on the Iowa Department of Education’s Higher Ed and Postsecondary Readiness Reports site.

A. Eligibility

1. College/University

The Code of Iowa limits eligibility to Iowa colleges/universities governed by the state Board of Regents.

Undergraduate Iowa residents attending the institutions listed on the following table are eligible to receive WG.

Participating Colleges

WG Participating College	Location
Iowa State University	Ames
University of Iowa	Iowa City
University of Northern Iowa	Cedar Falls

2. Student

In addition to the general student eligibility requirements found in Chapter 1, an eligible WG recipient must be currently enrolled or planning to enroll in an eligible undergraduate program of study on at least a part-time basis (3 hours minimum).

3. Programs of Study

The Iowa Workforce Development Board and the Iowa Board of Regents will update and approve the list of statewide high-demand jobs and corresponding eligible programs of study used for the WG at least every two years. The Iowa Department of Education’s Bureau of Iowa College Aid (Iowa College Aid) will communicate the list of eligible programs and Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) codes to eligible colleges/universities annually. Only students enrolled in programs of study aligned with an eligible CIP code may be awarded the WG. A list of grandfathered programs of study at each participating college/university can be found in the Eligible Programs by Institution attachment to this chapter.

Students must be enrolled in the program of study aligned with the eligible CIP code as of the college/university census date to qualify. Program of study changes occurring after the census date will not impact eligibility for that semester, but will impact future eligibility under the program.

Grandfathered programs of study: In the event that an eligible program of study is removed from the list in a subsequent year, a student who was enrolled in that program of study and received a WG in the previous academic year (either the fall or spring semester, or both) will continue to be considered eligible for the WG as long as the student remains continuously enrolled in the same program of study and meets all other eligibility criteria. A student who falls under this provision and who withdraws from all classes prior to the 60% point in the semester will be considered to have discontinued their enrollment, and will not be eligible for future WG awards.

B. Application Process

Students must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the application deadline specified by Iowa College Aid.

C. Selection of Recipients

The WG is awarded by college/university officials to eligible on-time applicants whose Student Aid Index (SAI) is at or below the threshold established by Iowa College Aid.

1. Award Priority

In the event that available funds are insufficient to provide an award to all eligible applicants, awards will be prioritized in the following order:

- a. Eligible applicants who received a WG in the prior academic year.
 - i. If all eligible applicants who received a WG in the prior academic year cannot be funded, those with the lowest SAIs will be awarded first.
- b. Eligible applicants who did not receive the WG in the prior academic year, prioritized in the following order:
 - i. Applicants with the lowest SAIs. An SAI range will be established by Iowa College Aid prior to authorizing awards under the WG.
 - ii. Eligible applicants who are closest to completion of their eligible program of study. Iowa College Aid will establish a credit hour threshold to allow colleges/universities to award eligible applicants who have completed at least the number of semester credit hours identified by the threshold.

2. Application Deadline

For the 2026-2027 academic year, applicants must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on or before July 1, 2026. The Application Receipt Date on the student's Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) MUST indicate that the student met the July 1, 2026 priority filing deadline.

3. Eligible SAI Range

The maximum eligible SAI is 7,000. Awards must be made on accurately calculated SAI.

4. Credit Hour Threshold

Eligible applicants must be within four full-time semesters of completing the eligible program of study in order to qualify for the WG. This requirement is designed to ensure that the WG recipients do not exhaust the maximum number of full-time semesters of receipt allowed under the program prior to graduation. Students must receive the WG during the academic year in which they graduate in order to qualify for a future Workforce Incentive Payment (see Section K). For this purpose an academic year is defined as the fall, spring and summer semesters, in that order.

In order to maximize the potential for students to qualify for the Workforce Incentive Payment, Iowa College Aid may establish a minimum threshold of credit hours completed. This threshold also ensures that eligible applicants do not exhaust eligibility prior to completing the program of study.

For the 2026-27 academic year, eligible applicants must have completed at least 60 credit hours to qualify for the WG.

5. Additional Requirements

An eligible student must be admitted to and enrolled in coursework that is part of an eligible undergraduate program of study (with a CIP code that matches a CIP code on the list of eligible programs of study). The CIP code for the program of study must be aligned with the student's major; a minor with a matching CIP cannot alone make the student eligible for WG.

Students with Bachelors' degrees may qualify for the WG if they enroll in undergraduate programs of study to receive additional bachelors' degrees (not to add another major to their bachelor's degree) or are pursuing another type of undergraduate program that aligns with an eligible program of study. Students seeking their initial teacher certification in the State of Iowa may receive WG, as long as the coursework is required for elementary or secondary teacher certification in Iowa and is offered in credit or clock hours. This includes teacher certification programs and eligible teacher intern programs. Teachers who are already licensed and who are seeking additional endorsements are not eligible to receive WG.

D. Awarding

1. Award Timeframe

The WG is provided during the traditional 9-month academic year generally defined as September through May, unless surplus funding allows awards to be made during the summer semester. Summer awards are not authorized at this time, but Iowa College Aid will notify eligible colleges/universities if summer awards will be allowed early in the spring semester prior to the summer semester.

2. Award Amounts

Students can qualify for the award as long as the WG, in combination with other need-based aid, does not exceed the student's calculated financial need. All financial aid, including the WG, cannot exceed the cost of attendance. Please note the exception in Chapter 1, on page 6, for Federal veteran's education benefits.

The statutory maximum award per semester for the WG is set by the Iowa Legislature. Iowa College Aid sets the funded maximum WG award for each semester in an academic year (not to exceed the statutory

maximum), and student awards may not exceed the lesser of the funded maximum award amount per semester or the amount of the student’s financial need.

The maximum WG for the 2026-27 academic year is \$1,125 per semester. This amount is applicable only for the fall and spring semesters during the 2026-27 academic year.

The following table provides the maximum WG award allowed based on a maximum annual award of \$2,250.

Maximum Award

Enrollment Status	Credits	Semester
Full-Time (F)	12+	\$1,125
Three-Quarter Time (P)	11	1,035
Three-Quarter Time (P)	10	934
Three-Quarter Time (P)	9	844
Half-Time (H)	8	754
Half-Time (H)	7	653
Half-Time (H)	6	563
Less-Than-Half-Time (L)	5	473
Less-Than-Half-Time (L)	4	371
Less-Than-Half-Time (L)	3	281

In order to determine amounts for students enrolled less than full time, use enrollment intensity percentages. For example, if a student is enrolled in 11 credits they would be eligible for 92% (rounding to the nearest percent) of the maximum award making the student eligible for \$1,035 (round awards to the nearest dollar). $(1,125 \times (11/12))/2 = (1,125 \times .92)/2 = \$1,035$. Total awards cannot exceed the annual maximum.

Awards must be made on an accurately calculated SAI.

E. Award Offer

Institution officials should provide financial aid offers to all WG recipients. Award offers must clearly indicate award amounts and the state programs from which students will receive funding. All notices concerning state grants must include the following award notification statement:

“The amount of grant money you receive from the Iowa Department of Education may change based on state funding.”

F. Renewal and Lifetime Eligibility

A student who received a WG in the prior academic year is considered a renewal applicant.

Financial need is determined annually on the basis of a new FAFSA filed by the applicant. Eligible Iowa students may be considered for subsequent awards if the students continue to meet Iowa College Aid eligibility requirements and have not exhausted their WG eligibility.

Eligible full-time students may receive up to 4 semesters of WG. Part-time students may receive up to 8 semesters. ICAPS determines the lifetime maximum by the usage of points. The WG has a maximum limit of 2 points. The following chart indicates the point values given per term based on the enrollment status indicated in ICAPS.

Points Established by Enrollment Status

Enrollment Status	Credits	Semester Points	Quarter Points
Full-Time (F)	12+	0.5	0.333
Three-Quarter Time (P)	9-11	0.375	0.25
Half-Time (H)	6-8	0.25	0.167
Less-Than-Half-Time (L)	3-5	0.125	0.083

In no case may a student exceed the lifetime maximum limit of 2 points in ICAPS. Information on previous payments are found in ICAPS under the 'Payment History' section of the student record or by utilizing the grant history report in ICAPS.

College/university officials who need assistance in determining whether a student has reached maximum eligibility should contact Iowa College Aid.

G. Disbursement of Funds

Chapter 3 provides a complete description of the payment process. The WG is a need-based program. In addition, payments may be applied to any expense within the student's cost of attendance.

The WG award amount, enrollment status, CIP code aligned with the eligible program of study, awarded SAI, graduation date, and personal email address will be reported in ICAPS for each recipient in each semester a WG disbursement is reported. A list of ICAPS reporting guides can be found by clicking the help icon when logged into ICAPS.

H. Changes/Corrections

Any changes in awards must be provided to Iowa College Aid electronically via ICAPS by the reporting deadlines established in Chapter 3 of the Iowa Student Financial Aid Guide.

I. Verification/Compliance

College/university officials are responsible for completing any required federal verification procedures and for coordinating all aid to ensure compliance with student eligibility and allowable award amounts.

For students selected for federal verification, one disbursement of state-funded student financial aid may be made prior to completing the verification process as long as college/university officials have no reason to believe application information is inaccurate. If students become ineligible for aid due to verification activities, refunds must be made to state-funded programs.

J. Workforce Grant Eligible Programs of Study

A list of eligible shortage programs by participating college/university can be found in the attachment to this chapter.

K. Workforce Incentive Payment (WIP)

Individuals who receive a WG payment within the academic year in which they complete the eligible program of study are eligible for one WIP of up to \$2,000 if they meet the following requirements:

- Within 6 months of completing the eligible program, begin full-time work in a high-demand job in Iowa AND complete the WIP application.
 - The WIP application can be found within the Iowa Financial Aid Application.
 - The 6-month timeframe begins on the date the student meets the graduation requirements for the eligible program (and the student must have received a WG in the academic year in which they graduate to be eligible).
 - The job in which the individual is employed must be aligned with a job on the list of high-demand jobs that either were in place when the individual received the WG, or a high-demand job that is approved for the program when the applicant begins full-time work in Iowa. If it is uncertain as to whether or not the job performed by the applicant aligns with an eligible high-demand job, the employer will be asked to verify that the applicant's job tasks generally align with those summarized in the tasks for the relevant occupation on the [O-Net website](#).
- After 12 consecutive months of full-time employment in the job, Iowa College Aid will verify that the applicant met all eligibility requirements with the employer. If the applicant is eligible, Iowa College Aid will send the WIP directly to the applicant. The WIP is considered taxable income.
- Individuals living out of state but commuting to Iowa and working full-time in a high-demand job qualify. Individuals working 100% remote qualify if they live in the state of Iowa and are working in a high-demand job in Iowa.
- Other unique circumstances may be submitted to Iowa College Aid in writing. These requests should be submitted to the grants.iowacollegeaid@iowa.gov email address with the subject line: WIP Request for Review. The request must fully detail the applicant's circumstances.

L. Workforce Incentive Payment Eligible High-Demand Jobs

A list of eligible jobs in Iowa that qualify for the WIP can be found in the Eligible Programs by Institution attachment to this chapter.