

Fostering Independence Grant
Sample Award Notification Private Schools
Fall 2023

Below is suggested language your campus can use as an award notice for the Fostering Independence Grant. Information in **red** are where you can personalize or provide alternative guidance to students. Feel free to add additional information where appropriate.

First Name Last Name (Student ID#),

Congratulations, you have been awarded the Fostering Independence Grant (FIG) for the 2023-2024 academic year.

You will receive **{\$ amount}** for the Fall 2023 semester and are estimated to receive **{\$ amount}** for the Spring 2024 based on **{XX}** Spring enrolled credits.

This is a need-based financial aid program to fund the last dollar of your cost of attendance at **{school name}** after you have been awarded other forms of college grants, scholarships, and waivers.

(Include this information if the student is receiving ETV): You have also been awarded the Minnesota Education and Training Voucher (ETV). Action is required by you to access ETV funds. You should have received an email from Paul Minehart from the Minnesota Department of Human Services with instructions on accessing your award. ETV funds can be used for college-related expenses like tuition or rent. Contact Paul Minehart at 651.402.2239 or paul.minehart@state.mn.us with any questions on accessing your ETV.

How was the Fostering Independence Grant calculated?

First, **{school name}** determined your federal cost of attendance based on your enrollment level and program. Then, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education used the lesser of your federal cost of attendance or the highest Minnesota public institution cost of attendance as a starting amount for your recognized cost of attendance.

The following are then subtracted from the recognized cost of attendance:

- Your Federal Student Aid Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
- Any Federal and State Gift Aid (Example: Federal Pell Grants, Minnesota State Grant)
- Any tribal scholarships
- Extended Foster Care Benefits
- The Education and Training Voucher (ETV)
- Any private grants or scholarships

The remaining amount is your Fostering Independence Grant award for the term.

What if my federal cost of attendance is greater than the highest public institution cost of attendance?

If your federal cost of attendance is greater than the highest Minnesota public institution cost of attendance, **{school name}** has awarded you a combination of the following to reach your federal cost of attendance:

- Institutional grants or scholarships
- Waivers for tuition, housing, or meal plans.
- Remission of charges

What is my cost of attendance?

It is the estimated cost of attending college. It includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, housing, food, transportation, and personal expenses. The amount of each category is set by the college every year. There may be several different cost of attendances at a college based on a student's program or housing situation. **Check with the Financial Aid Office or search on the college website to see a breakdown of the cost of attendance.**

Can I appeal my cost of attendance?

Students with exceptional educationally-related expenses may appeal to increase their cost of attendance. Common scenarios that may qualify a student for an increased cost of attendance include: child care expenses, significant medical/dental expenses paid during the academic year, special course fees, and disability expenses. **Check with the Financial Aid Office on the appeal process.**

Are all items in my cost of attendance included in the Fostering Independence Grant calculation?

Generally, yes. The only cost of attendance adjustment not included in the calculation are for study abroad adjustments.

Can my award change?

Yes. If you receive a new or increased grant, scholarship, or waiver after receiving the Fostering Independent Grant, your FIG award will be reduced by the same amount. You could also receive an increase in your Fostering Independence Grant if a grant, scholarship, or waiver is removed from your account.

How do other college Foster Care programs impact the Fostering Independence Grant calculation?

Extended Foster Care Benefits and Education & Training Voucher funds are included in the calculation of your FIG award. If you receive either of these benefits, they are subtracted from your FIG award.

Can I take out federal student loans?

Most students who receive a FIG award are not eligible for federal student loans. However, if you are receiving Extended Foster Care, you could have loan eligibility. Also, if you have an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) higher than zero, you might be able to take out student loans. **Check with the Financial Aid Office on your options.**

Can I receive federal or state work-study?

Most students who receive a FIG award are not eligible for federal or state work-study. If you are receiving Extended Foster Care, you might have work-study eligibility. **Check with the Financial Aid Office on your options.**

If you have questions on the Fostering Independence Grant award calculation, contact the state program administrator:

Adam Johnson
State Financial Aid Program Administrator
Minnesota Office of Higher Education
651.355.0617
Adam.D.Johnson@state.mn.us