

North Star Promise Scholarship Program

Talking Points

Beginning in fall 2024, the North Star Promise Program is a new, ongoing state-funded scholarship that will cover the full cost of tuition and fees for eligible Minnesota residents who attend a public undergraduate college or university in the state. The scholarship will be available to those with an annual family income of less than \$80,000. The program will benefit new, current and returning students who are working toward a degree, diploma or certificate.

The North Star Promise is a “last-dollar” scholarship program, meaning that it will cover the remaining balance of tuition and fees after other scholarships, grants, stipends and tuition waivers have been applied.

Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible, Minnesota students must have an annual income of less than \$80,000. Some students may have questions on what this means or how this is determined.

If a student is claimed as a dependent on someone else’s taxes (for example, their parents), their family’s annual income would be used to determine eligibility. If a student files as an independent on their taxes, their personal income (plus their spouse’s income, if applicable) will be the determining factor.

Annual income will be referred to as Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) on the FAFSA or Minnesota Dream Act. This is simply the technical term for annual income and can be found a person’s Federal 1040 Income Tax Return.

Additionally, students must meet all of the following requirements:

- Must be a Minnesota resident (see www.ohe.state.mn.us/mnresident for full details)
- Attend a Minnesota public higher education institution
 - Any Minnesota State college or university (www.minnstate.edu)
 - Any University of Minnesota campus (<https://system.umn.edu/campuses>)
 - Any Minnesota Tribal College
 - Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College (<https://fdltcc.edu>)
 - Leech Lake Tribal College (<https://www.lltc.edu>)
 - Red Lake Nation College (<https://www.rlnc.edu>)
 - White Earth Tribal and Community College (<http://www.wetcc.edu>)
- Not be in default on a state or federal student loan
- Must be enrolled in a program working toward an associate’s degree, bachelor’s degree, diploma or certificate and be taking at least one credit
- Must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards
- Have not already earned a baccalaureate degree

Students who will benefit from the North Star Promise

The North Star Promise is available to any new, current or returning student of any age who meets the eligibility requirements. This includes Class of 2024 graduating seniors, currently enrolled college students, and adults who want to return to college to complete their degrees.

North Star Promise funds are only available to students working toward their first credential, such as a certificate, diploma, associate's degree, or bachelor's degree. Students who are pursuing a masters or doctoral program are not eligible. Students who want to earn a second bachelor's degree are not eligible.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is there a limit on how long you can receive North Star Promise Program funds?

Yes. There is no maximum time limit, but there are credit limits. Students earning a 2-year degree can receive the award for a total of 60 credits. Students earning a 4-year degree can receive the award for a total of 120 credits.

What tax year will be used to determine eligibility for the North Star Promise Program in fall 2024?

The first year of the North Star Promise Program is the 2024-2025 academic year. The FAFSA or Minnesota Dream Act application asks about prior, prior year AGI. In other words, the AGI from 2022. This can be found on line 11 of the 1040.

How do students apply for the North Star Promise Program?

Students must fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (studentaid.gov) or Minnesota Dream Act application (www.ohe.state.mn.us/mndreamact). Eligible students will receive North Star Promise funds as part of their whole financial aid package from the financial aid office at their school. There is no additional application.

How will students be notified that they have received North Star Promise Program funding?

Students are notified of their scholarship through their college or university's standard financial aid awarding process. Questions about this process should be directed to a student's financial aid office.

What is not covered by the North Star Promise Program?

North Star Promise **does not** cover the cost of books, housing, transportation, food, and other living expenses. By filling out the FAFSA or MN Dream Act, student may receive additional grants or scholarships that can help cover those costs.

When does the North Star Promise Program end?

There is no end date for the North Star Promise Program. It was established in the 2023 Legislative Session as an ongoing program.

Additional Frequently Asked Questions can be found at www.ohe.state.mn.us/nspfaq