North Star Promise & Future Together Grant

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Agenda

• Future Together Grant Close-out Process

• North Star Promise
  • Program overview.
  • Eligibility, Application, What it Covers.
  • Gift Aid & Tuition and Fees.
  • Credit Limits.
  • * Indicates OHE proposed provision in legislative policy bill.
Future Together Grant Close-Out Process

Time line and Expectations

- **Mid-May 2024**: Spring 2024 FTG awarding completed by last day of term.

- **End of June 2024**: Spring 2024 term reports due to OHE within 40 business days of the spring term end.

- **August 20, 2024**: End of grant period, no award changes/adjustments for any term after this point.

- **Early September 2024**: Unused FTG funds at each campus returned to respective system office.

- **October 1, 2024**: End of grant period reports* due to OHE.

- **October 15, 2024**: System Office/Grantee returns funds to OHE via refund return form and check.

*End of grant period reports generated from system office.
North Star Promise – Program Overview

- Beginning Fall 2024.

- On-going, state funded, tuition and fee-free pathway for eligible Minnesotans.

- Promise: eligible students will have tuition and fees charges covered through a combination of federal, state, institutional, and private sources of aid.

- North Star Promise (NSP base) and North Star Promise Plus (NSP Plus).
North Star Promise – Who is Eligible?

• Any Minnesota resident who has a family Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) less than $80,000 (as reported on the FAFSA or MN Dream Act).
  • Dependent student: AGI of parent (step-parent if applicable).
  • Independent student: AGI of student and spouse (if applicable).

• New, returning and current college students.

• Students who are attending a Minnesota public higher education institution or Tribal College.

• Students who are taking at least one credit, enrolled in any program or course of study, working toward a degree, diploma or certificate*.

• Students who are meeting Satisfactory Academic Program (SAP) standards*.

• Students who have NOT already earned a baccalaureate degree and are NOT in default of a state or federal student loan.
North Star Promise – How to Apply

• Complete the 2024-25 FAFSA or MN Dream Act application.
• There is no additional application.
• The college or university will assess a student’s eligibility on a term-by-term basis and award North Star Promise Scholarships to all eligible students.

Office of Higher Education | https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/
North Star Promise Plus

- Awarded to NSP eligible students who are also eligible for Pell Grant.
- % match of Pell (up to 50%) to be determined by OHE annually.
- Use Pell Grant received for NSP Plus calculation.
- Dream Act eligible students use “simulated Pell amount” found in MNAid reports.
- Possible to receive $0 NSP award, but receive NSP Plus award.
- Not base-funded in statute (funded 24-25, 25-26, 26-27).
- NSP and NSP Plus combined (not separated) in appropriation.
**What does North Star Promise Cover?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North Star Promise (NSP)</th>
<th>North Star Promise Plus (NSP Plus)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Last dollar” program covering remaining balance of tuition and fees after all gift aid such as scholarships, grants, stipends, and tuition waivers have been applied.</td>
<td>• Meant to assist with non-tuition and fees related expenses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Awards include cents.</td>
<td>• Maximums based off % of Pell Grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No maximum term, yearly, or lifetime award amount.</td>
<td>• Awards include cents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Does not cover books, supplies, food, housing, transportation, etc.*</td>
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Gift aid comes from a variety of sources and includes:

1. Federal financial aid that is not a loan or pursuant to a work-study program;
2. State* financial aid, unless designated for other expenses, that is not a loan or pursuant to a work-study program;
3. Institutional** financial aid, including a grant, scholarship, tuition waiver, fellowship stipend, or other payment, unless designated for other expenses, that is not a loan or pursuant to a work-study program; and
4. All private financial aid that is not a loan or pursuant to a work-study program.

Other expenses: includes books, required supplies, child care, emergency assistance, food, and housing.

*State financial aid includes financial aid programs/assistance funded by the State of MN (including from State agencies other than OHE such as, but not limited to, MDVA, DHS, MDE, DLI, DEED, MDH, etc.).

**Institutional financial aid includes gift aid from the institution’s foundation.
North Star Promise – Tuition

• Includes the student’s actual (not estimated/averaged) tuition charges including any differential program tuition rates.
  • Charges must appear on student account.
  • Can pay for tuition over 15 credits.
  • Can include tuition for developmental education and/or tuition for ‘below college level’ courses.
North Star Promise – Fees

• North Star Promise can only pay charges that appear on the student’s institutional account.

• For NSP, the definition of “fee” must be flexible enough to include mandatory charges a student incurs, while excluding optional, elective, and/or punitive, charges.

• Fees included in the institution’s State Grant budget.
  • Fees charged to all students.

• Mandatory, program-specific, and/or course-specific fees.
  • Mandatory: the student cannot opt-out or decline the fee, did not elect the fee, did not initiate the fee (other than by enrolling).
    • Is the fee related to the course(s)/coursework (program or course-specific)?
    • Is the fee paying for something like housing, food, transportation/parking, books, insurance, etc.? Then likely it’s not included.

• Fines or punitive fees are not included.

• Reach out with questions.
North Star Promise Award Adjustments

• NSP awards must be re-calculated when any component of the current award calculation changes within the award year that the award was made.
  • Enrollment changes can change both tuition and fees and/or scholarships and grants (gift aid) amounts.
  • Other than the end of your institution’s award year, there is no “census” date for which any term award is exempt from re-calculation.

• If the Pell grant amount is modified after the NSP Plus award is made, then the NSP Plus award must be re-calculated.

• Put systems in place to identify when components of award calculation change so re-calculation can be completed.
North Star Promise in MNAid

• NSP will be administered in MNAid.

• Features:
  • Access to see unit/program usage for individual students.
  • Award/payment history.
  • Reporting and Reports.

• Currently testing in BETA, hoping to be live by end of May!

• Gather NSP institutional users after MAFAA.
  • MNAid training for NSP – July.
North Star Promise – Credit Limits

• Associate’s degree: up to 4 full-time semesters or the equivalent, Bachelor’s degree: up to 8 full-time semesters or the equivalent.
  • 48 unit max for Associate’s degree, 96 unit max for Bachelor’s degree.
  • Students may exceed unit count as long as they begin final award term under unit max.

• Students taking more than 15 credits per term will only utilize the 15-credit equivalent unit count.

• MNAid is system of record for program usage.

• Developmental education or below college level courses excluded from usage, included in tuition and fees.

• Unit count in MNAid is based off enrollment reported when students receive the North Star Promise base award.
  • Students receiving NSP Plus with no base award will not incur program usage.

• Individual student NSP usage can be looked up in MNAid.
  • Financial Aid administrators with appropriate access to North Star Promise data in MNAid.
  • In the future, students will be able view their unit counts for OHE programs in their MNAid portal.

• OHE and System IT/development working together to systematize transfer of NSP unit counts to your financial aid management systems.
NSP and Dream Act Eligible Students

• Students will apply for MN Dream Act through the MNAid portal.

• Account creation in MNAid asks about SSN:
  • If no SSN: MNAid will generate a “proxy” SSN in the convention: DXX-XX-XXXX.

• OHE will process the Dream Act application and determine eligibility for that program.

• Institutions will identify Dream Act eligible students who may also be eligible for NSP through a report in MNAid. Report can be run anytime, recommended at least once per term.

• Report includes:
  • Dream Act eligible students who have a family AGI under $80,000,
  • Estimated Dream Act award based on 15 credits, paid Dream Act award,
  • Simulated Pell amount based on 15 credits (used to determine eligibility for the North Star Promise Plus award).

• The campuses will then need to assess eligibility for North Star Promise and North Star Promise Plus. If the school determines the MN Dream Act student is also eligible for NSP and/or NSP Plus, they will award and notify the student through their established awarding procedures.

• All North Star Promise and North Star Promise Plus awards are reported to OHE in the same file.
North Star Promise Reporting in MNAid

• NSP reporting similar to MN State Grant reporting in MNAid.
  • Reporting required every 30 days, or more frequently.
  • Awards reported first, school requests payment within 2 weeks of start of term, OHE sends payment, then schools report disbursements.
  • Award adjustments reported via same process with new award and disbursement date.
  • North Star Promise and North Star Promise Plus awards are reported to OHE in the same file.
  • File record layout available upon request.

• Only one institution can report an award per student per term.
  • If student is enrolled at more than one eligible institution in the same term only one school can report NSP awards. MNAid will accept the first award but reject any subsequent for the same student/same term.
Enrolled at More than 1 Eligible Institution

• Students enrolled in more than one NSP eligible postsecondary institution during the same term may be eligible to have all eligible institutions’ tuition and fees counted in the NSP award calculation.
  • Only one institution may award and report the NSP and/or the NSP Plus.
  • In general, the institution responsible for awarding other federal Title IV aid should be awarding NSP funds.
  • Institution discretion.

• Reporting should include combined enrollment and combined tuition and fees amounts.
• North Star Promise is a “last-dollar” program...
  • NSP pays after financial aid assistance from state agencies other than OHE and private aid programs.

• ...but there are some exceptions:
  • Federal last dollar programs supersede state last dollar and pay last.
  • Examples: Veterans Education Benefits, Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc. Rehab.), Dislocated Worker Benefits, National Science Foundation Grants (S-Stem), etc.
  • State OHE last dollar financial aid programs.
    • In general, awarded by order of program enactment date (NSP is the most recent).*
    • OHE Commissioner may decide to re-order (due mostly to funding limitations).
      • Annual basis decision, not student by student.
• When an aid administrator uses professional judgement resulting in a modification of the AGI data element into the range of eligibility for NSP, the institution should use the modified AGI when assessing the student for NSP award eligibility.

• With North Star Promise using AGI as the means-test, campuses may see an uptick in special circumstances requests where the student is seeking an AGI modification for purposes of NSP eligibility. Campuses should use their established policies and procedures when considering these requests.

• Institutions cannot use professional judgement to waive NSP eligibility requirements.
Recap Time Line

• Upcoming for NSP...
  • End of May
    • Marketing and messaging – OHE partnership with DRIVE, end of May kick-off.
    • Legislative session wraps, technical provisions finalized.
    • Finalize NSP draft manual and distribute.
    • Gather NSP contacts at each institution.
  • By July 1
    • Go live with NSP in MNAid.
    • Enter campus users for NSP in MNAid.
• July and early August
  • Training NSP in MNAid in July.
Thanks for Listening!

• Questions?

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