



# OPERATIONS MEMO

Update of the California Student Aid Commission

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GOM 2007-27

**TO:** Financial Aid Administrators

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**SUBJECT:** California Chafee Foster Youth Grant Program Update

This Operations Memo is to provide you with an update on the California Chafee Foster Youth Grant Program (Chafee) for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008.

## Program Background

The California Student Aid Commission (Commission), through an interagency agreement with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), is now in its fifth year administering the Chafee and a multi-year Chafee contract was approved for the period of July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2009. The Chafee Program provides eligible California youth aging out of foster care with financial assistance to attend a postsecondary institution in a Title IV-eligible program. Students may be eligible to receive up to \$5,000 per year if they are enrolled in an eligible program. Funding is intended to supplement, not supplant, any grant funds that a student may not otherwise be entitled to receive, nor may the total grant funding exceed the student's cost of attendance.

## 2006-2007 Status

As of today, the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) has awarded over \$12 million to 2,835 foster youth students. Of these awarded students, the Commission was pleased to make 1,616 new grant awards and 1,219 renewal awards for the 2006-2007 academic year. The Commission's objective is to continue processing the remaining 2006-2007 allocated federal funds prior to the end of the federal fiscal year (October 1 - September 30). Of these 2006-2007 funds, \$1 million will be used to make awards for the 2007-2008 academic year.



State of California  
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To make awards available to other needy students, the Commission encourages schools to return 2006-2007 checks by **September 10, 2007** for students who are no longer eligible or who can not be located.

The remaining 2006-2007 funds will be awarded to students with 2006-2007 Needs Analysis Reports (NAR) completed and posted by **September 14, 2007**. After September 14, 2007 the remaining funds will be allocated to 2007-2008 awards so that Fiscal Year 2006 funds can be depleted by **September 30, 2007**.

### **2007-2008 Award and Payment**

With consultation and direction from CDSS, the Commission maintained the existing 2006-2007 selection criteria (as referenced in GOM 2006-03 and GOM 2006-29) for the 2007-2008 award year. The 2007-2008 Chafee award process was as follows:

- Priority 1: Renewal students who received a payment in a prior year
- Priority 2: Students who are aging out of the program
- Priority 3: Students with dependents
- Priority 4: Student with an unmet need of \$5,000 or higher
- Priority 5: Submission date of completed application

Award Announcement letters were processed for the 2007-2008 academic year and were mailed to all eligible Chafee recipients on August 27, 2007. The Commission will begin mailing Chafee payments to your institutions via Federal Express by the end of August 2007, now that the Fiscal Year 2007 State Budget has been approved.

### **Renewal Applicants and Renewal Deadline**

Chafee students who submitted an application during the 2006-2007 academic year do not have to re-submit an application. However, the completion and filing of a 2007-2008 FAFSA is required. The Commission has already notified all renewal students of their status and has notified those students who have not filed a 2007-2008 FAFSA. Your institution can check on WebGrants under Report Download to identify any students that can not be processed at this time due to incomplete/missing documents. We ask that you please assist us in contacting these students to complete the awarding process.

### **Need Analysis Report**

The Cost of Attendance for the NAR is pre-populated from the standard cost of attendance record maintained in the Commission's database. The NAR information processes on a weekly cycle for eligible students. The NAR is available on WebGrants under "Report Download." Schools with access to WebGrants must update their need analysis data. Schools without access to WebGrants or who require special calculations must complete a paper NAR or request access to WebGrants reports and complete the necessary security forms by contacting the Commission's helpdesk at 888-294-0148.

Students who do not have their information posted on the NAR will not receive an award. Based on the large number of new applicants and the limited federal funding, students with a completed NAR will receive priority in the awarding process. Therefore, *it is the institution's responsibility to ensure that all NARs are completed in order not to jeopardize a student's opportunity to be awarded a grant.*

### **Stakeholder's Meeting**

The Commission would like to remind representatives of the financial aid community to participate in the California Chafee Foster Youth Grant Program Stakeholder's Meeting Thursday, September 13, 2007, (as mentioned in GSA 2007-18). Your input and participation is very valuable to the continued success of the Chafee award process. At the meeting, Stakeholders will review program administration strategies, including successes and challenges, and will engage in program planning for the 2008-2009 academic year. We look forward to the opportunity to consider recommendations from Stakeholder's meeting regarding program enhancements and improvements.

### **Contacting the Commission**

Schools may contact the Commission's Specialized Programs Operations Branch at (888) 224-7268, option 3, for questions regarding the content of this memo. Students may contact Student Support Services with general Chafee inquiries at 1-888-224-7268. The Commission encourages students to use *WebGrants for Students* at <https://calgrants.org> to access account information.

*Working together to effectively promote education beyond high school!*

**Enclosures:** GZ0005 2007-2008 Award Announcements