Status of Financial Aid for CA Higher Education Undocumented Students
Webinar Q&A Transcript

1. **Can you create a Dream Act app like you the FAFSA app? Also, can you create a short video on how to apply for Dream Act for our students?**

    Please see the following link for information about the California Dream Act including the application process and other resources: https://www.csac.ca.gov/california-dream-act. The California Student Aid Commission will continue to add tools and resources to the page as they become available.

2. **Can you create a Dream Act Demo like sandbox?**
    Thank you for your inquiry. At this time, there is no plan to create a sandbox for external users but we will provide notification if this tool becomes available.

3. **With your campaign to increase the number of students who applied through Dream Act, is it possible to create a flyer/poster from CSAC that states undocumented students are eligible for state aid? This is because we can reach and communicate that to students, but an official message/image from CSAC that states that would be a way for us all to share a common message to our students across the state**…
    Thank you for your question. All our outreach efforts talk about the availability of the California Dream Act Application for undocumented students. We are in the process of updating our financial aid publication materials and those will be available on our website.

4. **Can the Ca Dream be available in Spanish in the future?**
    The CADAA is available in Spanish in PDF version here: https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/resources-california-dream-act-application. Unfortunately, the Spanish version is not currently available online.

5. **What happens to the funding that is allocated to students via CADAA, but isn't used by students?**
    For students awarded under the Cal Grant entitlement program, the state provides funding based on the number of eligible students. For the competitive Cal Grant program, funds are allocated based on the number of authorized awards per the state budget. Unused funds remain in the state's General Fund.

6. **Why would CADAA applicants not be awarded aid...60% on a previous slide? deemed ineligible?**
    There are many reasons, but typically it is because the student did not complete the application on time, does not have a corresponding GPA, has unresolved issues on the application, or otherwise does not meet all the eligibility criteria such as failing to complete high school graduation requirements, attending less than half-time or not enrolling at a Cal Grant eligible institution. Some students fill out the CADAA knowing they may not qualify for a Cal Grant, but understanding that there may be other aid available to them through the institution.

7. **Is the paid rate a community college lower because they are students who are eligible for Cal Grant A and it gets deferred while they are in CCC?**
    Thanks for your question. It probably has more to do with the number of applicants at this particular segment when compared to the number of applicants at all other segments. We do not see the Cal Grant A deferral as being the main reason for the lower paid rate. Certainly, there are other reasons that these students do not get paid including issues with their applications, issues with Selective Service, etc.

8. **To what do we attribute the paid numbers going down?**
    There are many reasons for this. Students may not enroll or may enroll with less than half-time units. Other students may be attending colleges and universities that are out of state.

9. **Can CSAC get rid of that selective service requirement since it is not federal aid?**
    Unfortunately, the selective service requirement is also in state law for state aid. CSAC on its own cannot get rid of it, this requires a change to state law. The Governor did issue an Executive Order in May waiving <u>verification</u> of the Selective Service Registration requirement for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years. This is a temporary response in light of COVID-19 complications.

10. **I have helped male students in completing the CADAA- they have been experiencing longer wait in the Selective Service paperwork due to delays in post office. Do you have any suggestions about this issue?**
    We understand the Selective Service is experiencing delays in the processing of paper registration forms due to COVID-19. <u>Executive Order N-65-20</u> signed by Governor Newsom on May 19, 2020 waives the requirement to verify Selective Service registration for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 award years for CA Dream Act applicants only. Please note, the Executive Order does not waive the requirement to register for Selective Service. Male applicants completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) can register on the FAFSA itself or directly on the Selective Service website.

    Registration of Male applicants completing the CA Dream Act Application (CADAA) is done by mailing their registration to the Selective Service, and students are encouraged to register as early as possible (no earlier than 3 months following their 17th birthday) to allow for longer processing time. Paper registration forms can be found at: https://www.sss.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Form-1.pdf

    (source: https://www.csac.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/faqs__impact_of_covid-19_on_commission_programs_0.pdf?1594931700)

11. **Will Cash 4 College workshops be available virtually this Fall?**
    Yes! Beginning October 1st when applications can be filled out, we will be holding virtual events.

12. **How does the requirements of an ITIN # affect the application process and reward?**
    Use of a SSN, ITIN, or all zeros is allowed in the parent fields of the CA Dream Act Application. Applicants who have not yet filed taxes and are awaiting issuance of an ITIN before filing can indicate that that they "will file" for the question, "What income tax return did you file, or will you file for 2018?". Once 2018 taxes are reported, students must return to the application to complete tax-related questions. Please refer to the "2020-21 Application Instructions" on the CADAA Resources page for instructions: https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/resources-california-dream-act-application

13. **How does CSAC work with campus financial aid offices for training them on the CADAA? I find that on some campuses they do not have an automated process to award students Cal Grants through the CADAA.**
    Thank you for your question. Our training and outreach team or our institutional support unit can work with your financial aid office. We also have our Cal Grant Regional Training Workshops that you can attend via ZOOM. Please visit our CSAC website for details and dates on these workshops.

14. **Are there any resources/reminders CSAC provides around selective service for undocumented students?**

CSAC addresses Selective Service in its Statewide Financial Aid Workshops. CSAC sends reminders to male applicants about the selective service requirement. In addition, the Governor's Executive Order waives verification of SS registration for 2019-20 & 2020-21: https://www.csac.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/press_release_may-2020_executive_order.pdf

15. **If a student is seeking political asylum in the US and interested in attending post-secondary education, are they eligible to apply for AB 540 to be considered for the CA DREAM Act? The student is not sure if Political Asylum will be granted. Or should they file the FAFSA? Or are they not eligible for anything at all?**

    In order to complete the CADAA, students must meet AB 540 requirements: https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/california-nonresident-tuition-exemption, regardless of their immigration status. If a student is not a US citizen, permanent resident, T or U visa holder, nor AB 540-eligible, the student would not be eligible for federal or state aid.

16. **Why are students not getting paid out after they were offered aid? What are some factors to consider?**
    There are many reasons, but typically it is because the student didn't complete the application on time, does not enroll in a Cal Grant-eligible institution, does not have a corresponding GPA or has issues on the application. Offers are given to students that apply and meet eligibility requirements but there are steps that must be taken after an award is offered, including enrollment. If a student applies in their senior year, they may receive a Cal Grant award offer before they've even decided which college they are going to attend. Additionally, some students fill out the CADAA knowing they may not get a Cal Grant but so the institution can see if other aid is available.

17. **Is there a plan to provide or extend the CA Dream Loan for Under-Grad/Grad students attending Private School such as USC?**
    CSAC does not administer the CA Dream Loan Program - this program is administered at the campus level. We are not aware of any plans at this time.

18. **Why students need to fil out an SAP extension appeal after they have completed 150% units? Is it an individual college policy or CSAC policy?**
    Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policies are determined at the campus level, not by CSAC. I believe that most campuses have certain requirements around students that reach 150% of units pursuant to federal guidance on SAP. In addition, it is minimum federal SAP requirement that students complete coursework within 150% of the published duration of the program: https://www.edvisors.com/fafsa/eligibility/satisfactory-academic-progress/

19. **What exactly is AB 540, and can folks still apply for that?**
    AB 540 refers to the requirements to be able to apply and be a awarded a Cal Grant as an undocumented student:

    Option A:

    - 3 years high school credits and 3 years total attendance at any of these schools in California:
    - Elementary School
    - Middle School
    - High School

Option B (SB 68):

- 3 years attendance (or equivalent) at any of these schools in California:
- High School
- Adult School
- Community College *
- Maximum of 2 years of community college may be applied towards 3-year SB 68 requirement

Please see this link for information on AB 540 and the California Dream Act. https://www.csac.ca.gov/california-dream-act

20. **Is the Cash for college scholarship still available? We were told it is no longer available.**
    The scholarships that had been provided in past years to randomly selected attendees are currently unavailable. However, the Commission is looking into opportunities to reinstitute the "scholarship drawings" through philanthropic funding channels.

21. **Does the CSAC plan any time in the future to increase Cal Grant awards?**
    The Cal Grant program, with the exception of the Competitive Cal Grant program, is an entitlement program. This means that if a student applies and is deemed eligible for a Cal Grant award, they are entitled to that award so long as they take the steps to claim the award (i.e. enroll in an eligible institution, submit GPA and/or HS verification, etc.). For the Competitive Cal Grant Program, CSAC is currently authorized to award 41,000 NEW awards each year. Any increase in that number would be contingent on changes to state law and a corresponding funding increase at the state level. The Commission endeavors to get as much aid out to students as possible so we are always supportive of increased support for financial aid programs.

22. **How about extending the deadline for CADAA/Cal Grant to CCC students to Sep. 2 as it is for others?**
    March 2nd is the main deadline students should keep in mind if they are new applicants. However, for students planning to attend a CCC (including CADAA applicants) and applying for a Competitive Cal Grant award, they have until September 2nd. Application deadlines for state financial aid programs are consistent with California law and any changes to those laws would require legislation.

23. **What kind of high school partnership do you have?**
    CSAC's Training and Outreach Unit has developed partnerships with various schools. We currently offer the Annual Statewide Financial Aid Workshops that are designed to address questions, issues and concerns that high school counselors and administrators. Please visit our Annual Statewide Financial Aid Workshops that can be found on our website.

24. **Are there video tutorials or resources for parents to understand the CADAA? Are they available in Spanish?**
    The PDF of the CADAA application is available in Spanish; although other worksheets, instructions, and tutorials are in English: https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/resources-california-dream-act-application. The California Student Aid Commission will continue to add tools and resources to the page as they become available.

25. **What recommendations do you have for students that have not yet turned 18 and won't get a confirmation for Selective Service until they do?**
Males can register as soon as 3 months following their 17th birthday. Early registration is encouraged, given that CADAA applicants must apply via US mail, and the processing time for paper registration forms is 2-3 months. In addition, Executive Order N-65-20 signed by Governor Newsom on May 19, 2020 waives the requirement for colleges to verify Selective Service registration for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 award years for CA Dream Act applicants only. Please note, the Executive Order does not waive the requirement to register for Selective Service.

26. **Why are students not being paid out? What does that mean? Does that mean that they applied for aid and are just not receiving money?**
There are many reasons why a student might not be "paid out" Cal Grant funds. To name a few:
    - Applicants may not meet application requirements, and are therefore not awarded a Cal Grant:
        - Applied after deadline
        - GPA not submitted, or was too low to qualify
        - Income over threshold
        - Incomplete application; i.e.; missing parent signature, or incomplete income information
        - Application on-hold for verification until student provides additional documentation
        - Student holds a bachelor's degree
    - Applicants may be awarded a Cal Grant, but are not eligible for payment:
        - Not enrolled, or enrolled less than half-time
        - Not attending a Cal Grant eligible college/university in California
        - Not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements per college policy

27. **Was there an update or waiver to Selective Service registration during COVID this year?**
Yes. The Governor issued an Executive Order in March waiving verification of the Selective Service registration requirement for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years. This is a temporary response due to COVID-19 and closures of Selective Service offices. Please see our COVID-19 FAQ for more info: https://www.csac.ca.gov/covid19

28. **What is the possibility of allowing students who file their app after the current March 2nd deadline to qualify for the Cal Grant?**
March 2nd is the main deadline students should keep in mind if they are new applicants. However, students planning to attend a CCC (Cal Grant Competitive awards) and foster youth students, have until September 2nd. Application deadlines for state financial aid programs are written into state law. Any changes to the application deadline would require a change to state law.

29. **At community colleges, students generally complete the CCPG online application to receive the fee waiver and stop there. The challenge continues for campuses to encourage students to complete the CADAA…**
Application rates at community colleges are lower for this reason. We always encourage students to submit the FAFSA/CADAA to maximize their financial aid opportunities.

30. **I think having videos in various languages would be helpful for us to post onto our websites or have a link to CSAC where students and their parents can learn the importance of not only filing CADAA but also the need to disclose income. Also perhaps providing information or links to file for I-Tin number, as they are open to getting selected for verification.**
    This is a great point, and we are always looking for this kind of feedback... For suggestions like these please email jose.quiaoit@csac.ca.gov to submit a request. As we move forward during this pandemic, we are working diligently to migrate our trainings to a virtual format while also creating new content. We will be creating new trainings around the CADAA application, which is currently being updated. CSAC will look into the ITIN training as well.

31. **What suggestions do you have if the student does not yet turn 18 until they've already started their 1st semester? Will they still be able to receive their Cal Grant?**

    Suggest merging with question #10 and/or 25- **Yes**

32. **Regarding Selective Service, what suggestion do you have if the student does not yet turn 18 until they've already started their 1st semester? Will they still be able to receive their Cal Grant?**
    A male student does not have to register for selective service until they are 18, and they can receive their Cal Grant if they are under 18 and have not completed the registration. However, students can register with selective service starting at 17 years and 3 months old.

33. **We have seen an increase of students who are asylum seekers, and I know U visa and TPS holders are eligible for CA Dream act, but can you touch more on this group of students and what support is available?**
    Please see the second page of this resource to view a flow chart addressing your question:
    https://www.csac.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/folder.pdf?1587771354

34. **A lot of our students are too young to register until aid becomes an issue. What is the workaround on that?**
    Males can register for Selective Service beginning at 17 years/3 months of age. In addition, for CADAA applicants, verification of registration is waived for 2019-20 and 2020-21.

35. **How can we obtain data as far as how many students applied for CA DREAM Act and were awarded? Also, how about long-term data, if I wanted to know how many applied and were awarded since 2001?**
    We post annual reports on our website regarding offered Cal Grant Awards. You can find them here:
    https://www.csac.ca.gov/reports