

## **What is the Tuition-Free Community College (TFCC) Plan?**

The Tuition-Free Community College (TFCC) Plan pays for up to three years of tuition and fees for Boston residents -- regardless of their age, income, or immigration status -- who are pursuing an associate degree or short-term certificate program at a partner college.

## **Which colleges are eligible?**

There are six partner colleges:

- [Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology](#)
- [Bunker Hill Community College](#)
- [Massasoit Community College](#)
- [MassBay Community College](#)
- [Roxbury Community College](#)
- [Urban College of Boston](#)

## **What costs are covered?**

- All tuition and mandatory fees remaining after any other applicable financial aid has been applied.
- \$250 each semester for up to three years of college-related expenses (such as books or transportation).
- Debt of up to \$2,500 for students with an outstanding balance at a partner college that is preventing a student from re-enrolling at that school.

## **How do I apply?**

Students simply need to apply to their desired program and the partner colleges will apply the funds as a part of their financial aid process.

## **Do I need to be a U.S. citizen to apply?**

No, all Boston residents are eligible regardless of immigration status.

## **What programs are covered?**

Any associates degree program or short-term certificate program available at a TFCC partner college. To learn more about the available programs and how to apply, visit the relevant college's admissions website.

Single courses or courses that are not part of a degree or certificate program, such as ESOL classes or continuing education classes are not eligible for TFCC funds.

## **What is a short-term certificate program?**

Short-term certificate programs can provide credentials that lead to jobs in industries like healthcare, renewable energy, and information technology in as little as six months. The six participating TFCC colleges offer a range of certificate programs. To learn more and apply, contact the relevant partner college.

## **What is the FAFSA?**

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a free, online process that will let you know if you qualify for a specific income-based financial aid award called a Pell Grant, which covers college costs.

The Pell Grant is a grant from the U.S. Department of Education that helps pay for college for students in financial need. Unlike a loan, the Pell Grant does not need to be repaid.

The FAFSA takes less than an hour to complete.

Apply at [studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa](https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa)

If you need help completing the FAFSA, FAFSA Day Massachusetts is a non-profit, volunteer driven program providing free assistance to students and families seeking to complete the FAFSA.

Learn more at [masfaa.org/fafsaday/](https://masfaa.org/fafsaday/)

### **Do I have to complete the FAFSA?**

#### For degree programs:

Students that are eligible for federal student aid, must complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA. If you are eligible to receive a federal Pell Grant as determined from submission of the FAFSA, that will be applied toward your tuition and then the TFCC program will pay the remaining balance. If you are not eligible for federal student aid because of your citizenship status, you are not required to fill out a FAFSA and the TFCC program will pay the entire balance of your tuition and fees.

#### For short-term certificate programs:

Some short-term certificate programs are not eligible for a Pell Grant. Each participating college can advise you as to whether or not the short-term certificate program you are seeking is eligible and whether you need to complete a FAFSA (if your citizenship status allows).

### **I am already a student at a TFCC school, can I still get free tuition?**

No, if you are already enrolled at a TFCC school you are not eligible for this funding.

### **How many years will TFCC cover?**

The program covers free tuition and fees for up to three years, including summer semesters.

### **Does it matter when I take classes during my three years in TFCC?**

Once you start receiving TFCC funds, you should aim to take classes every fall and spring semester. If you take a semester off, you can still remain enrolled in TFCC. But remember: You still only get up to 3 years of funding. If you take a semester off, you cannot get that semester of missed funding back.

While it is not a requirement for TFCC, you should also try to take at least 10 college credits each semester. This will increase your chances of earning your associate degree within three years. Your academic advisor can help you stay on track.

**Once I'm accepted in the plan, how do I maintain eligibility?**

Once enrolled in TFCC, you do not need to re-apply in following years. Complete your FAFSA each year to continue receiving the Pell grant (if eligible).

**Does TFCC cover bachelor's degree programs?**

No. TFCC only pays for students pursuing coursework in associate degree and short-term certificate programs. However, if you think you might want to continue your education beyond your associate degree, check out Boston Bridge or the MassArt Transfer program.

Boston Bridge

Boston Bridge is a partnership between TFCC and the State's Commonwealth Commitment program that allows eligible students to earn a bachelor's degree free of tuition and mandatory fees. Learn more here.

MassArt Transfer Program

The MassArt Transfer program will cover tuition, fees, and mandatory supplies for PELL-eligible students transferring from a Massachusetts community college to a bachelor's degree program at MassArt. To learn more visit [massart.edu/masstransfer](https://massart.edu/masstransfer) or contact Shannon Gallagher, the MassArt Transfer Admissions Counselor, at [sagallagher@massart.edu](mailto:sagallagher@massart.edu).

**Is it really free?**

Yes! If you are a Boston resident, tuition and fees at the six participating colleges are free for both associate degree and short-term certificate programs.

**I have an outstanding balance at my community college and cannot re-enroll. Can you help?**

Yes! The program will pay off debt of up to \$2,500 for students with an outstanding balance at a partner college if it prevents them from re-enrolling at that college. Students must re-enroll in an associate degree or certificate program at that college.

**I dropped out of a community college program. Can I re-enroll in a TFCC school to finish my degree with these funds?**

Yes! You are eligible for free tuition if you re-enroll in a participating community college.

**I started my degree program at a non-TFCC school. Can I enroll at a TFCC school to finish my degree with these funds?**

Yes! Your tuition at any of the six participating schools will be free if you're a Boston resident. Contact the school of your choice to arrange any transfer of credits.