

TIPS FOR APPLYING

DON'T:

- 1. Apply as a married student before you are married.**
If you plan to file as a married student, you must be married on the date you sign the form. Don't submit the form before you are married. If you submit your application as a single student, you are not allowed to update your status after the fact.
- 2. Apply as married if you are separated at the time you submit the application.**
Even though you are legally married, if you are separated at the time you submit your application, answer "SEPARATED".
- 3. Fail to include parent income information (dependent students).**
Dependent students are under age 24, not married or no children. Dependent students must include parent income and parent personal information on the FASFA application.
- 4. Forget to include yourself (the student) as a part of the household (dependent students).**
Always include yourself as part of your parent(s) household even if you didn't live there during the tax year.
- 5. Incorrectly report income and assets of parent(s) or spouse.**
If you are divorced or separated, list only your income and asset information (including only your portion of taxes paid), even if you filed a joint return. If you are married when you sign the FAFSA, combine you and your spouse's income and asset information, even if you were not married during the 2015 tax year. Dependent students, don't forget stepparent income, if applicable.
- 6. Incorrectly report untaxed income.**
Pay particular attention to cash or any money paid on your behalf not reported elsewhere on the FASFA form. If you received money for living expenses from another source that was not reported elsewhere, it must be included here.
- 7. Incorrectly report educational tax credits and child support payments.**
Use section 3 or 4 (student & parent area) on the FAFSA instructions to complete these questions correctly.
- 8. Purposely provide inaccurate information.**
If you purposely provide false information on your federal financial aid application, you are subject to fines and/or imprisonment under the U.S. Criminal Code. State and local laws may also apply in such cases.

Meridian Technology Center will not discriminate in its programs, services, activities or employment because of race, color, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender expression or identity, national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, or genetic information in its programs, services, activities and employment.

Inquiries concerning application of this policy may be referred to Schelina Burnett, Coordinator of Section 504/Title II, Title VI, Title IX, and the Age Act, at Meridian Technology Center, 1312 South Sangre Road, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 74074-1899, or by phone at 405.377.3333. Outside assistance may be obtained from the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights at One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, Suite 320, Kansas City, MO 64106, or by phone at (816) 268-0550, fax at (816) 268-0599 or email at OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov.

TIPS FOR APPLYING

DO:

- 1. Apply quickly after Jan 15.**
Many financial aid programs have limited funding (Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant) that is awarded to those who apply earliest. The ideal time to apply is as soon as possible after January 15 and before March 1. FASFA applications submitted after March 1 will be accepted. You must renew your financial aid application each award year. Award year begins July 1 through June 30.
- 2. Submit a completed and signed application form. Your FSA ID is the same as your actual signature.**
Pay close attention to the school year you are applying for when entering your financial aid information.
- 3. Use completed federal tax return information by transferring the data using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool while processing your FASFA. An award will not be calculated until tax information and verification is complete.**
- 4. Use FAFSA on the Web at www.fafsa.ed.gov.**
- 5. Apply for username and password when directed.**
- 6. Use Meridian Technology Center's Title IV school code: 012474.**

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT DISCLOSURES

You can find more information on gainful employment at www.meridiantech.edu/gainful-employment. The information shows the total number of post-secondary students who completed their Career Majors; the number completing within 100 percent of the normal timeframe; the number who got jobs related to their training; the number who continued on with school (either at Meridian Technology Center or college); and the median debt of those students upon completion. Meridian Technology Center does not participate in the federal student loan programs. To our knowledge, no student received loan proceeds from private loans. None of the completers owed any money to Meridian Technology Center when they completed.

Our instructors contact completers 6 months after they complete the program to ascertain whether or not the students had jobs related to their training. The completion and job placement outcomes are reported to the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

NEW – Beginning with 2017-2018 FASFA, apply for FASFA soon after October 1, 2016 for the 2017-2018 Pell award year. For 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 you must use 2015 IRS Form 1040 tax information.

For more information about financial aid contact:

Meridian Technology Center
1312 South Sangre Road | Stillwater, OK 74074-1899
(405) 377-3333, Ext. 298 | www.meridiantech.edu
Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Title IV School Code: 012474

Rev. 4/28/2016



MERIDIAN TECHNOLOGY CENTER

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION 2016 - 2017

Financial Aid is available to assist students and their families with educational expenses. Sources of aid are federal, state, institutional, community, foundation, and business and industry programs.

FEDERAL & STATE FINANCIAL AID

Federal Pell Grant Program (Title IV Financial Aid) provides aid to which assistance from other federal and non-federal sources may be added. This is a grant with no repayment as long as student meets guidelines. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>.

Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant (OTAG) is a grant from the state of Oklahoma. Grant amounts are determined by enrollment status, demonstrated financial need to meet the cost of attendance and the availability of funds. The student must be a resident of Oklahoma and complete the Oklahoma residency section on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education will notify each recipient of his or her eligibility and award amount. Submission of the FAFSA serves as your application for these funds. These funds are limited; the priority application deadline is **March 1** of each year. It is advisable to prepare your previous year's income tax return as soon as possible and apply for FASFA early due to limited funding.

Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (Oklahoma's Promise), formerly known as OHLAP, is a unique program that provides scholarships equivalent to all or part of tuition expenses for students who complete the program's requirements while in high school. Please advise the Financial Aid Office that you are an Oklahoma's Promise recipient at the time of enrollment to determine the career major you enroll in qualifies for funding.

Federal Student Loans are not available.

OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is designed to assist individuals facing employment barriers or economic disadvantages or individuals that require additional training to secure productive employment. Eligibility is determined by a WIOA counselor. Additional information is available by calling the Office of Workforce Innovation at (405) 624-1450 or (888) 980-9675.

Vocational Rehabilitative Services assists individuals who are physically and/or mentally challenged/disabled. Eligibility is determined at the local office by a vocational rehabilitation counselor. Apply by contacting the local office at (405) 743-6904.

Veteran's Educational Benefits provides a monthly allowance to assist eligible veterans in meeting education and living expenses while in training. Refer to www.gibill.va.gov

Veterans must meet eligibility requirements under Chapters 30, 31, 32, 33, and dependents of veterans eligible under Chapter 35 of Title 38 of the U.S. Code.

Details and applications for benefits may be obtained by contacting the VA Regional Office, P.O. Box 8888, Muskogee, OK 74402-8888 or by calling (888) 442-4551.

Eligibility for VA educational benefits is determined by the VA. Students requesting use of their VA educational benefits should submit the following documentation to the financial aid office:

- Certificate of Eligibility (issued by the VA)
- Veteran's form DD-214
- All Transcripts of the student's previous education
- Official Military transcript at:
<https://jst/doded/mil/smart/signIn.do>

The student must be enrolled in an approved career major by the Oklahoma State Accrediting Agency (SAA) for 2016-2017 before the Meridian Technology Center VA Certifying Official can submit VA benefit application on-line for student.

Tribal Grants may be available for Native Americans. Eligibility is determined by each tribal agency. Contact the appropriate tribal agency office for eligibility requirements and application procedures. If an agency will be paying tuition, books, etc., it is the student's responsibility to obtain an award letter from that agency, and submit it to the financial aid office.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Meridian Technology Center Foundation Scholarships are available for students who require supplemental assistance for tuition and/or book expenses. Qualifications include demonstrated financial need and ability to benefit from career and technical education. **Applications are available from the Meridian Technology Center Foundation or online at www.meridiantech.edu/scholarships.**

The Next Step Tuition-Waiver Scholarship

This scholarship provides assistance for recent graduates from one of Meridian's district high schools. Applicants must apply within two years of high school graduation. The student must provide the following items: \$100 deposit, written statement of career plans/goals, two letters of reference, final high school transcript and proof of residence.

Second Year Senior Tuition Waiver

The Second Year Senior Tuition Waiver provides assistance with educational costs for in-district students who begin a program of study during their senior year of high school and need to complete the second year of the program as an adult student.

Secondary students attending Meridian may receive a tuition waiver upon completion of their high school graduation requirements if they attended Meridian while they were enrolled in a Meridian Technology Center district high school.

Other scholarships are provided each year by numerous community and civic organizations. The Financial Aid Office will provide applications and information through instructors as these opportunities occur.

TUITION AND BOOKS

Adult students’ books and online curriculum will be available in the classroom. In-district tuition is \$3.00 per hour and \$6.00 for out-of-district with a \$100.00 deposit due for most career majors. Practical Nursing, Radiologic Technology and Evening Cosmetology require a \$500.00 deposit and may have additional tuition and fees. Please refer to www.meridiantech.edu website for career major descriptions, total clock hours, gainful employment, costs and the tuition schedule.

APPLYING FOR FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID

Step 1: Create a FSA ID & Password

You must enter a user name. The user name must be from 6 to 30 characters long. You can use any combination of numbers and/or uppercase and lowercase letters. Choose a user name that you will not forget. Avoid using personal identifiers (first name, last name, date of birth). Dependent students under the age of 24, not married or with no children will also need a parent FSA ID & password. The password must be between 8 and 30 characters long. You can use any combination of the following **as long as it contains at least 3 of the 4 criteria:**

- Numbers
- Uppercase letters
- Lowercase letters
- Non-alphanumeric special characters !@#\$\$%*() .? Your password is case sensitive

Step 2: Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Review how at: <http://www.financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/tk/outreach/social-media/youtube.jsp>

Using the 2015 Federal Income Tax Return information, you can begin applying for the 2016-2017 FASFA after January 15th. After October 1, 2016 and using the same 2015 income tax information, you can apply for the 2017-2018 FASFA. Complete the FASFA application online at www.fasfa.gov. List Meridian Technology Center as a school you plan to attend. **The Title IV school code is 012474.**

Step 3: Submit the Completed FAFSA for Processing in Two Ways:

- Submit your FAFSA via the Internet at www.fasfa.ed.gov
- Use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool. It would be helpful to have a copy of your (and your spouse’s or parents’) income tax forms (1040, 1040A or 1040EZ and W-2s for 2015) in front of you when you fill out the FAFSA on the Web. You are encouraged to print the confirmation page after you have submitted your FAFSA.

Step 4: Wait for a Response

Depending on the method utilized to submit the FAFSA, you should receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) in approximately three weeks. The Financial Aid Office will contact you by mail if additional information is needed to complete your file.

Step 5: Award Notification

The Financial Aid Office will send you an award letter after your financial aid file is completed indicating the amount of Pell Grant you are eligible to receive. An official award is not available until your enrollment is finalized and verification completed; however, you may contact the Financial Aid Office for an estimate at any time after providing all requested information.

FASFA ELIGIBILITY

To receive aid from the U.S. Department of Education student aid programs, you must:

- Demonstrate financial need as determined by the FASFA
- Received a High School Diploma or an equivalent such as a General Education Development (GED) or homeschool equivalency, but not a bachelor’s degree
- Be enrolled as a regular student seeking a certificate in an eligible daytime program for 600 clock hours or more
- Sign the certification statement on the FASFA stating that:
 - You are not in default on any Title IV HEA federal student loans
 - You do not owe a refund on any grant or loan received from a previous institution
 - You will not receive a Federal Pell Grant from more than one educational institution for the same period of time

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen with a valid social security number
- Registered with the selective service (males only, 18-25 years of age)
- Make Satisfactory academic progress
- Have less than 600% lifetime eligibility used (LEU)

An individual’s financial aid eligibility calculation incorporates several components, which includes financial need, the difference between direct educational expenses and family contribution, and earned income from the previous tax year. Family contribution equals parental contribution for dependent students in conjunction with the student’s contribution.

INDEPENDENT STUDENT

An independent student need not submit parental information on the FAFSA. Under the federal definition, an independent student for 2016-2017 is:

- Twenty-four years old (born before 1/1/93)
- A veteran of the U. S. Armed Forces
- Married
- An orphan or ward of the court
- One who has legal dependents other than a spouse
- Through documentation by the Financial Aid Office and determined to be independent by reason of exceptional circumstances

DEPENDENT STUDENT

Dependent students are those that do not meet any of the definitions of an independent student. Parents of dependent students must submit parental information on the FAFSA in order for the students to be considered for financial aid.

EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION (EFC)

For dependent students, EFC is the sum of the parent’s contribution and the student’s contribution calculated by the federal needs analysis formula. It is the total amount of money a family can be expected to contribute toward the student’s education for the award year. For the independent student it is the student’s (and spouse’s, if any) contribution calculated by the federal needs analysis formula.

STUDENT AID REPORT (SAR)

A SAR is sent to the applicant a few weeks (approximately three to six weeks) after a FAFSA has been submitted. It provides all the information from the applicant’s FAFSA allowing that information to be reviewed and, if necessary, corrected. It tells the applicant if he/she is eligible to receive a Pell Grant. Carefully check the accuracy of the information, make necessary corrections, and respond to any questions and/or special messages on the SAR. Corrections may be submitted by consulting with the Financial Aid Office.

VERIFICATION

The Financial Aid Office is required by the federal government to verify a percentage of all applicants. The information to be verified may include but is not limited to:

- Household size
- Number in college
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (Snap, food stamps)
- Child support paid – if amount indicated in ISIR
- Tax Filers and nontax filers
 - a. Adjusted gross income
 - b. U.S. income tax paid
 - c. Education credits

- d. Specific untaxed income items (Untaxed IRA distributions, Untaxed pensions, IRA deductions, Tax exempt interest)
- e. Other untaxed income and benefits

Non-tax filers

- a. Income earned from work

High school completion status

- a. High School diploma copy
- b. Final high school transcript that shows the date the high school diploma was awarded
- c. General Educational Development (GED) Certificate
- d. Homeschooled – transcript signed by parent or guardian, that lists the secondary school courses completed by the applicant and documents the completion of secondary school education
- e. Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose

If selected for verification by the U.S. Department of Education, the Financial Aid Office will issue a letter to the applicant requesting additional information be submitted. Use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool by logging into FASFA at www.fasfa.gov to transfer your income tax return information into the FASFA. If a tax return is required or an amended tax return was prepared, you must order an “IRS Tax Return Transcript” for the tax year required, at www.irs.gov. Click on “Order a Return or Account Transcript” link or call 1-800-908-9946. Make sure to request the “IRS Tax Return Transcript” and not the “IRS Tax Account Transcript.” No disbursement will be processed until verification is complete.

FINANCIAL AID DISBURSEMENT

Pell Grants are disbursed twice per month on the 15th and 30th.

Students who are eligible for disbursements three working days prior to the 15th will receive their disbursement on the 15th. Students who are eligible three working days prior to the 30th will receive their disbursement on the 30th. For example, if you are eligible on January 7th, you will receive your check on the 15th. If you are eligible on January 14th, you will receive your check on the 30th.

Disbursements will be paid based on the availability of funds from the U.S. Department of Education after all required information has been verified, a complete student file is established, and the recipient is attending class. Each recipient will receive a memo from the Financial Aid Office when disbursement to the student’s account has occurred. Funds in excess of tuition, fees or books previously deferred are paid in the form of a check to the eligible recipient. If there are excess funds, the student will be notified that these funds are available. After receiving notification, a recipient should take photo identification with a signature to the Bursar’s window to receive the refund check.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Satisfactory academic progress means the student is progressing in a positive manner toward fulfilling career major certificate requirements within the stated length of time. To remain eligible for financial aid at Meridian Technology Center, students are expected to progress toward satisfactory completion of a course of study as stated below:

- **Qualitative Requirement (grade based):** Maintaining a cumulative grade of “C”; or 70% (2.0) grade point average or greater. A progress report will be sent to the instructor who will be asked to complete the student’s academic status.
- **Attendance:** Maintaining 90% attendance. No absence is considered excused for financial aid purposes.
- **Quantitative Requirement (time based):** Completing an acceptable percentage of the program’s scheduled objectives. The percentage is based upon curriculum clock hours completed to date/total hours of enrolled career major.

To determine if the student maintains eligibility for assistance, the following procedures will be followed:

First Payment (new students – students enrolled in a new career major): The student’s enrollment status will be checked and documented

in the student’s file to ensure the student is enrolled and in attendance in an approved career major on at least a half-time basis. If the student has met the initial entrance and eligibility standards and all necessary documents for financial aid have been received, the student will receive the first payment on schedule.

Subsequent Pay Periods (new students): To determine the satisfactory academic progress for subsequent pay periods, an average cumulative grade of at least a “C” or above will be documented using the progress report received for the previous payment period(s). If, for the previous payment period the following are met, the financial aid office will disburse the second Pell grant.

- The average cumulative grade is at least a “C” or above

- The cumulative attendance is 90% or better

- The student is proceeding in a positive manner toward fulfilling certificate requirements within 150% of the enrolled career major hours and satisfactory academic progress standards have been met

Continuing Students (students continuing in the same program):

A student’s enrollment status and progress will be checked and documented in his/her file to ensure that s/he is enrolled in an approved program on at least a half-time basis. All payments for continuing students will be based on procedures outlined under Subsequent Pay Periods for new students.

Financial Aid Warning and Suspension

If it is determined that the student is not meeting the satisfactory academic progress listed under Subsequent Pay Periods, the student is placed under a financial aid warning and informed by letter or email. Warning status lasts for one payment period only. The student will still be eligible for the Pell disbursement, but this will happen only once. There cannot be two consecutive financial aid warning periods.

Any student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress as defined above will have their subsequent financial aid suspended. The student has the right to appeal if they have not met Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Financial Aid Appeal and Probation

Students who fail to make satisfactory progress after the warning period lose their aid eligibility unless they successfully appeal and are placed on probation. All students who receive notification that aid has been suspended will receive written procedures to follow to appeal the decision of the Financial Aid Office. Request for an appeal must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office within 10 working days of being notified of the suspension of aid.

REFUND POLICY

Upon written notification of withdrawal, a tuition refund less the deposit will be remitted to individuals enrolled in full-time programs according to the following guidelines. A 100% refund, less the deposit, will be remitted to students who officially withdraw within the first five (5) days of a payment period. No tuition will be refunded to a student who has not officially withdrawn within the first five (5) days of a payment period. A 100% refund, including the deposit, will be remitted only to students who have documented extenuating circumstances that have been approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Written notice of withdrawal is considered to be the completion and submission of an official withdrawal form or a letter that is dated and signed by the student, and addressed to the Executive Director of the Career Planning Center.

All books are nonrefundable.

Return of Title IV Financial Aid

A federally mandated refund must be calculated for all Title IV financial aid recipients who withdraw prior to the completion of the period of enrollment for which he/she has been awarded aid according to the following federal regulations. If a student withdraws on or before the 60 percent point in time of the payment period, a portion of the total of Title IV funds awarded must be returned, according to the provisions of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998. The calculation of the return of these funds may result in the student owing a balance to the school and/or the federal government.

Examples of how these refund policies are applied are available in the Financial Aid Office.