

Financial Aid Disbursement Policy 2026-2027

Students at Highland Community College have the opportunity to apply for financial aid through the following federal programs: Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Work-Study, Direct Stafford Loans, and Parent PLUS Loans. Students who are currently in default on a federal student loan are not eligible to receive federal student aid.

Funds from these programs will be disbursed to student accounts on the dates listed in the table below. This disbursement policy applies to students who have completed their financial aid file and all applicable Direct Loan requirements prior to their scheduled disbursement date. Students who complete their requirements after a scheduled disbursement date will receive their disbursement at the next available opportunity.

Financial aid awards are initially based on full-time enrollment (12 or more credit hours per semester). **Beginning with the 2026–2027 academic year, students enrolled in fewer than 12 credit hours may have their Federal Pell Grant and Federal Direct Loan eligibility reduced based on their enrollment level. Direct Loan amounts will be reduced according to the U.S. Department of Education’s required Schedule of Reductions policy. Pell Grant amounts will also be reduced for less-than-full-time enrollment based on the student’s eligible enrollment level.** Additional eligibility requirements may apply to individual financial aid programs.

Summer Pell Grants (Direct Loans are not available during the summer)	Summer 2026 Excess Aid Mailed by:	
Students enrolled in classes beginning June 3, 2026	June 26, 2026	
Students enrolled in classes beginning July 1, 2026	July 17, 2026	
Students enrolled in Summer Blitz beginning July 8, 2026	July 24, 2026	
Fall & Spring Pell Grants & Federal Direct Loans	Fall 2026 Excess Aid Mailed by:	Spring 2027 Excess Aid Mailed by:
Students enrolled in at least 6 credit hours for the semester, with at least 6 credit hours beginning in August for Fall or January for Spring	October 3, 2026	February 26, 2027
Students enrolled in at least 6 credit hours for the semester, but fewer than 6 credit hours beginning in August for Fall or January for Spring	November 6, 2026	April 8, 2027
Students enrolled in fewer than 6 credit hours for the semester or enrolled only in second 8-week courses	November 6, 2026	April 8, 2027
<u>Important:</u> Students must be enrolled in at least 6 credit hours for the semester to be eligible for Federal Direct Stafford Loans. Being enrolled in fewer than 6 credit hours does not qualify a student for Direct Loan funds, even if additional courses may begin later in the semester. Dates are subject to change. Check the website for updates to this policy: www.highlandcc.edu/financialaid. Any late-start enrollment hours that are not started or are dropped will affect financial aid eligibility and may result in funding being owed back to the college and/or the Department of Education.		

Federal Pell Grant & SEOG:

For the first disbursement, Federal Pell Grant funds will be based only on the number of credit hours that have begun

in August for Fall or January for Spring. If a student is enrolled in additional courses that begin later in the semester,

Pell Grant funds for those courses will be disbursed after the courses begin, provided the student remains eligible.

If the funds from these sources of financial aid exceed the student's semester charges, a refund check will be mailed to the student after the applicable disbursement date.

Federal Direct Stafford Loans:

HCC will credit a student's account with anticipated Direct Stafford Loan funds after the student has completed all required loan documentation. All students must complete the Direct Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN), and first-time borrowers must also complete Entrance Counseling, at StudentAid.gov.

Students must be enrolled in at least 6 credit hours for the semester to be eligible for Federal Direct Stafford Loans. To receive loan funds on the first scheduled disbursement date, at least 6 of the student's enrolled credit hours must have begun in August for Fall or January for Spring.

Students who are enrolled in at least 6 credit hours for the semester but have fewer than 6 credit hours that have begun at the time of the first disbursement will receive their Direct Stafford Loan funds on the second scheduled disbursement date, provided they remain enrolled in at least 6 credit hours for the semester and continue to meet all other eligibility requirements.

Students enrolled in fewer than 6 credit hours for the semester are **not eligible for Direct Stafford Loan funds**, regardless of whether additional courses begin later in the semester.

Loan processes completed within the required processing timeframe and by the scheduled dates listed above will allow loan funds to be credited to the student's account. Any excess funds will be mailed to the student after the scheduled disbursement dates.

Work Study:

Students must complete all required hiring documentation before beginning employment. Timecards are tracked through the PAYCOM system and must be approved by the supervisor by the 14th of each month. Payroll dates are on the 25th of each month, unless the date falls on a weekend or holiday, in which case payroll will be issued on the previous business day.

Scholarships and Outside Agencies:

Institutional scholarship amounts vary. Scholarships designated for books, tuition, and/or fees will only cover charges associated with courses appearing on the student's transcript for the fall and spring semesters. Institutional scholarship funds are not refundable to students.

HCC may also receive scholarship or grant payments from outside agencies on behalf of students, which will be credited to the student's account. Any excess funds from outside scholarships or grants will be refunded to the student at a later date.