Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2018
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Preface

Reading this guide is the first step in applying to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Fee Assistance Program—and another step toward a rewarding and fulfilling career in medicine.

You must read *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2018* before completing your AAMC Fee Assistance Program application. The information included in this guide is necessary for a smooth application process. **When you apply, you will be asked to certify that you have read, understand the policies and procedures contained in *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for 2018* and that you agree to comply with them.**

If you are a returning Fee Assistance Program applicant, you must read the version of the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials* guide in effect at the time you submit your application because the guide can change from year to year.

Please contact us if you have questions after reading this guide. You will find contact information for Fee Assistance Program staff in the [Contact Us](#) section of this guide and related resources at [aamc.org/fap](http://aamc.org/fap).

Part 1: The Purpose of the Fee Assistance Program

The many costs associated with applying to medical school may discourage some students from applying. The AAMC believes that these costs should not be a barrier to anyone who aspires to become a physician. One resource to help offset some of the application costs is the AAMC Fee Assistance Program.

The AAMC Fee Assistance Program provides financial assistance to students who, without this aid, would find it very difficult—if not impossible—to take the Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®), to apply to medical schools that use the American Medical College Application Service® (AMCAS®), and to fulfill other application obligations.

Part 2: Are You Eligible?

The AAMC’s Fee Assistance Program is self-funded by the AAMC. The AAMC’s eligibility guidelines may differ from federally funded aid programs. Please read the Fee Assistance Program eligibility requirements carefully before starting your application. If you have questions about these requirements, please contact us before submitting your application.

**U.S. Citizenship Status**

You are only eligible for the Fee Assistance Program if you are a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, a lawful permanent resident (LPR) of the United States (also known as a “green card holder”), or have been granted refugee, asylum, or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status by the U.S. government.
If you are a Canadian MCAT examinee interested in the Canadian Fee Assistance Program, learn more about the eligibility criteria and application process and deadlines by visiting the Association of Faculties of Medicine in Canada’s (AFMC) website (English website).

Fee Assistance Program Poverty Guidelines
The award approval for the Fee Assistance Program is tied directly to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ poverty guidelines. In 2018, you are eligible for fee assistance if each household reported on your application (yours and your parents, as applicable) has a 2017 total family income that is 300% of the 2017 national poverty level, or less, for your family size. Please see the AAMC website for the specific Fee Assistance Program poverty guidelines.

Important Requirement: Parental Information
Unlike some federally funded aid programs, for the Fee Assistance Program, your parents’ financial information is always required, even if you are independent. Your parents’ financial information and supporting tax documentation are required regardless of your marital status, your age, your tax filing status (independent or dependent), your parents’ country of residence, or whether your parents are willing to provide documentation. Parental information is described in more detail below.

Your parents’ financial information is considered separately from your financial information. However, each household (yours and your parents) must fall within the poverty guidelines of the Fee Assistance Program described above.

Maximum Number of Awards
You may be awarded fee assistance a maximum of five times during your lifetime. This restriction enables others to benefit from this program.

Part 3: Benefits
Each Fee Assistance Program award includes access to the Medical School Admission Requirements™ website, reduced MCAT registration fees and practice materials, assistance in paying for an updated psycho-educational or medical evaluation (if required to support an MCAT accommodations application), and waived AMCAS application fees. Please see the Fee Assistance Program webpage for information about the specific award benefits.

Effective Date
If your Fee Assistance Program application is approved, your benefits will begin on the date of approval and will expire on December 31, 2019, regardless of when your application was approved. Fee Assistance Program benefits awarded in 2018 are for the remainder of calendar year 2018 and for calendar year 2019.
Not Retroactive
Fee Assistance Program benefits are not retroactive. Benefits may only be applied to purchases made after the Fee Assistance Program benefits have been awarded. Therefore, if you pay full fees for an MCAT registration or an AMCAS application, for example, those fees will not be refunded if your Fee Assistance Program application is later approved. Further, the AAMC is not responsible for any MCAT registration deadlines or medical school application deadlines you may miss while waiting for the review of your Fee Assistance Program application.

Remaining Benefits
For returning applicants, if you were awarded Fee Assistance Program benefits in the previous calendar year, you will see a summary of your remaining benefits.

If you apply and receive fee assistance for two consecutive calendar years, any unused benefits from your first award will expire as soon as your new award is approved.

Part 4: Steps for Applying to the Fee Assistance Program
When you fill out your Fee Assistance Program application, please follow the application prompts and enter the information requested completely and accurately. Failure to do so may result in an investigation. Please see the Violations and Investigations section of this guide for more information.

Tips for Completing Your Fee Assistance Program Application
- Some of your personal information may be prepopulated from the information you provided when you registered for an AAMC profile. You may edit any incorrect information before submitting your application.
- Fields marked with an asterisk are required fields.
- You cannot proceed to the next page of the application if a required field is left blank.
- Enter income and other dollar amounts in whole dollars. Round to the nearest dollar if necessary.
- Review your application summary carefully. Click “Edit” to revise your answers before submitting.

Use of Personal Information
The AAMC recognizes the sensitivity of the information that is submitted as part of your Fee Assistance Program application. Any personal information submitted as part of your Fee Assistance Program application will be treated in accordance with the AAMC Privacy Statement. Supporting materials are retained by the AAMC for a limited time and then securely destroyed. To the extent the AAMC publishes
information related to the Fee Assistance Program, such information will be reported using aggregate statistics.

My AAMC Profile
Information you entered when you registered for an AAMC profile will populate on the first page you see in the application process. You can make any necessary changes to your legal name, preferred name, birth date, and email address on this page. You may also need to add information that was not in your AAMC profile. After you have submitted your Fee Assistance Program application, you can update the information in your AAMC profile as needed.

Be sure that your email address is accurate because this address is tied to certain Fee Assistance Program benefits.

Please note: Any changes you make to your AAMC profile, even for another service of the AAMC, will update your Fee Assistance Program application.

Applicant Information
You will certify your citizenship status and enter your mailing address, phone number, and state of legal residence on the Applicant Information page. You may change information from this page before submission. After submission, you may request changes to your mailing address and phone number by contacting us.

Your citizenship status cannot be changed after you submit your Fee Assistance Program application. Providing false information about your citizenship status may lead to an investigation.

If you do not meet the citizenship standards for the Fee Assistance Program, check “No.” You will be prompted to enter your password into a dialogue box and your application will not be eligible.

Be sure that your mailing address is accurate before submitting your application because it is tied to certain Fee Assistance Program benefits.

Applicant Financial Information
The Applicant Financial Information page has several components. Guidance on how to answer the questions in each component is provided below.

Marital Status
You are required to enter your spouse’s financial information if you are married. Indicate if you were married as of December 31, 2017. If you were not married, or no longer married, as of December 31, 2017, answer “No.”
Family Size
To enter your family size, enter “1” for yourself, “1” for your spouse (if applicable), and “1” for each dependent listed on your 2017 IRS 1040 tax form.

Taxable Income
If you have already filed your 2017 tax return, select “Yes” and enter your adjusted gross income as it appears on your tax return.

If you intend to file a tax return but have not yet done so, select “Not Yet.” Before the April federal tax filing deadline (typically April 15), the AAMC will accept federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) W-2 and 1099 income data and forms in place of a federal IRS 1040 tax form. After the federal tax filing deadline, you cannot select “Not Yet.” If you are required to file a tax return, even if you filed an extension, you must submit an IRS 1040 tax form to the Fee Assistance Program before your application can be processed.

If you are not required to file a tax return, select “Will Not Be Filing.” If you have earned income, you are required to enter the income listed on your IRS W-2 or 1099 form.

Financial Aid
The Fee Assistance Program does not consider financial aid awarded and used for tuition, books, or fees to be part of your income. Any portion of financial aid awarded for living expenses is considered income.

Use the Financial Aid Calculator to determine the amount of aid that you were awarded for living expenses. You will need to reference your school’s Cost of Attendance Sheet or similar documentation, which details the cost of tuition for the academic year and how much students typically pay for books and fees. This information is usually found on the financial aid or admissions sections of your school’s website.

If you received any financial aid, you will be required to submit a copy of your Award Letter and the Cost of Attendance Sheet. We will not accept IRS Form 1098-T Tuition Statement, semester bills, loan statements, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) documentation in lieu of your Award Letter and Cost of Attendance Sheet.

Housing and Food Assistance
Some students live with relatives or are provided housing by a relative or friend. If any of these living situations applies to you, select “Yes.” If you did not receive assistance from a relative or friend or your housing assistance was provided as part of your financial aid award or through a federal, state, or local welfare program, select “No.”

Quantify the value of your housing and food assistance by using the Housing/Food Assistance Calculator. You do not need to be exact.
Income Earned While Living in a Country Outside the United States
If you lived and worked outside of the United States in 2017 and received income that is not reflected on your IRS W-2 or 1099 forms, enter the amount of money you earned. Convert the income to U.S. dollars.

Social Security Benefits
Enter the full amount of benefits you received from the Social Security Administration last year. In addition to retirement benefits, individuals may receive survivor benefits, disability benefits, or other less common benefits from the Social Security Administration.

Financial Gifts
Enter the combined value of gifts of cash that you received last year if that combined value is greater than $200. This amount includes one-time gifts of cash or gifts provided throughout the year for general living expenses.

Child Support
Report the sum of all child support payments you received. Do not include information about child support payments you made.

Alimony or Spousal Support
Enter the sum of alimony or spousal support received. Note: If you indicated that you had already filed your federal tax return, you will not see this question because the income will already have been included in your taxes.

Income or Financial Support Received From Other Sources
If you received income or financial support from sources not listed on the application, please list them here. Some examples are Veterans Administration benefits or an inheritance.

Parental Information
To continue with your application, you must agree to provide your parents’ financial information. Please see the Are You Eligible section of this document for more details on this requirement.

The Fee Assistance Program application contains a threshold question for parental information: “Do you have any living parents?” If you answer “No” to this question, no other information about your parents will be asked. Failure to respond to this question accurately may result in an investigation. Please see the Violations and Investigations section of this guide for more information.

The AAMC defines parents as biological, adoptive, and step. If you were adopted, you do not have to report biological parental information. You are only required to submit information about a stepparent married to one of your biological or adoptive parents as of December 31, 2017.

If you are legally emancipated, you do not know if a parent is living, a parent is incarcerated, or there is another situation that prohibits you from obtaining a parent’s financial information, please contact us.
before submitting your application. Please note, we understand that parents may be unwilling to provide their financial information; however, you must submit this information to be considered for Fee Assistance Program eligibility unless there is an extenuating circumstance that prohibits you from obtaining that information.

Grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians, aunts, uncles, or other relatives are not considered parents for the purposes of this application.

**Marital Status**
If you have living parents, you are required to indicate their marital status as of December 31, 2017. Your parents’ marital status determines what other information is required for this component. If you and your parents are uncertain of your parents’ marital status, please contact us for assistance.

Enter the full name and state of legal residence of each parent. This information can be updated from this page before submission. After submission, you will be unable to edit these fields.

**Parents’ Financial Information**
Depending on the marital status you provided for your parent, you will see one or two tabs to enter financial data. Each tab will represent your parent’s full household. For each household, enter the combined income for your parent and your parent’s spouse (if applicable). The following components make up the Parents’ Financial Information page.

**Family Size**
To enter your parent’s family size, enter “1” for parent, “1” for your parent’s spouse (if applicable), and “1” for each dependent listed on your parent’s 2017 IRS 1040 tax form.

**Taxable Income**
If your parents have already filed their 2017 tax return, select “Yes” and enter their adjusted gross income as it appears on their tax return.

If your parents intend to file a tax return but have not yet done so, select “Not Yet.” Before the April federal tax filing deadline (typically April 15), the AAMC will accept IRS W-2 and 1099 income data and forms in place of an IRS 1040 tax form. After the federal tax filing deadline, your parents cannot select “Not Yet.” If your parents are required to file a tax return, even if they filed for an extension, they must submit an IRS 1040 tax form to the Fee Assistance Program before your application can be processed.

If your parents are not required to file a tax return, select “Will Not Be Filing.” If your parents have earned income, you are required to enter the income listed on their IRS W-2 or 1099 forms.
Housing and Food Assistance
Some parents live with relatives or are provided housing by a relative or friend. If any of these living situations applies to your parents, select “Yes.” If your parents did not receive assistance or their housing assistance was provided through a federal, state, or local welfare program, select “No.”

Quantify the value of your parents’ housing and food assistance by using the Housing/Food Assistance Calculator. You do not need to be exact.

Income Earned While Living in a Country Outside the United States
If your parents lived and worked outside of the United States in 2017 and received income that is not reflected on their IRS W-2 or 1099 forms, enter the amount of money your parents earned. Convert the income to U.S. dollars.

Social Security Benefits
Enter the full amount of benefits received from the Social Security Administration last year. In addition to retirement benefits, individuals may receive survivor benefits, disability benefits, or other less common benefits from the Social Security Administration.

Financial Gifts
Enter the combined value of gifts of cash that your parents received last year if that combined value is greater than $200. This amount includes one-time gifts of cash or gifts provided throughout the year for general living expenses.

Child Support
Report the sum of all child support payments your parents received. Do not include information about child support payments your parents made.

Alimony or Spousal Support
Enter the sum of alimony or spousal support your parents received. Note: If you indicated that your parents had already filed their federal tax return, you will not see this question because the income will have already been included in their taxes.

Income or Financial Support Received From Other Sources
If your parents received income or financial support from sources not listed on the application, please list them here. Some examples might be Veterans Administration benefits or an inheritance.

Application Summary
The Application Summary provides a summary of the information you entered in your application. You can access your application summary at any time. Before submitting your application, you may edit the information you entered by selecting the “Edit” link in the header on the page.
Submission and Certification Statement
To submit your Fee Assistance Program application, you must indicate that you understand and accept the terms of the Certification Statement. If you do not indicate that you understand and accept the Certification Statement terms, you will not be able to submit your application. Adherence to the Certification Statement is necessary to enable the AAMC to maintain a fair process for you and other applicants.

Full Text of the Certification Statement
By selecting “I Agree” at the end of the Certification Statement, you acknowledge that you have read and understand these terms.

I certify that I have read and understand the policies and procedures contained in the Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2018 and that I agree to comply with them. Further, I certify that the information provided in this application is complete and accurate.

I understand and agree to the AAMC Website Terms and Conditions and the AAMC Privacy Statement.

I understand that any alleged violation of this Certification Statement or any alleged activity that may compromise the integrity or security of the Fee Assistance Program application may be investigated. If I violate the terms of this Certification Statement, including the additional terms and conditions stated in the Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2018, or fail to fully cooperate in any investigation, I may face the following consequences, further outlined in the Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2018:

- The AAMC may issue a report of the factual findings of the investigation to legitimately interested parties, both now and in the future.
- I may lose my eligibility to apply to, or receive an award from, the Fee Assistance Program in the future.

I have read and agree to comply with the terms of the Certification Statement, including the additional terms and conditions stated in the Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2018, and I understand the consequences for failing to comply.
Part 5: After You Submit Your Application

After you submit your Fee Assistance Program application, the AAMC performs an initial review and determines whether the financial information you submitted is at or below the Fee Assistance Program poverty guidelines. See the Fee Assistance Program Poverty Guidelines section of this guide.

Your Fee Assistance Program application status will be determined on the basis of that initial review and will be emailed to you from the AAMC. Depending on the status of your application, you may need to take more actions to finalize your application. Below is a description of each application status.

Submitted and on Hold
The status of your application will be Submitted and on Hold if you appear to be eligible for the Fee Assistance Program on the basis of the information you submitted in your application; however, additional information is needed. You will receive details about the supporting documentation the AAMC requires to continue to process your application in the Next Steps component of the application. The status of your application will be Submitted and on Hold until all required documents are received.

Next Steps
The Next Steps component of the Fee Assistance Program application provides information about required documents and allows you to upload your documents directly to your application. You also have the option to claim your initial MCAT test prep benefits and release information to your academic advisor.

Step 1: Would you like to receive MCAT test prep benefits upon approval?
Answer “Yes” if you wish to receive MCAT test prep benefits upon approval. This award is only given once in a lifetime. If you already received MCAT test prep benefits from a previous Fee Assistance Program award, you will not be given the option to claim this benefit. If you select “No,” you can change your response to “Yes” any time before and after approval.

Step 2: Advisor Release
Answer “Yes” if you authorize the AAMC to release your Fee Assistance Program award status to the school-designated advisor(s) at institutions you have attended. The AAMC only provides your award status; detailed financial information is not released. Advisors can only view your award status if you also release your MCAT scores, your AMCAS application information, or both. If you select “No,” you can change your response to “Yes” any time before and after approval.

Step 3: Consent and Certification Forms
The Consent and Certification Form is required for all applicants and their parents (if applicable). Each form must be printed out and hand signed by all parties. If your parent is married, the spouse’s signature is also required.
Step 4: Document Gathering and Upload
Use this component to upload required documentation for yourself and your parents (if applicable). All required documents are listed here, and you can also upload supplemental documents. For more details on required documentation, visit the What You Need to Apply page of the Fee Assistance Program website. If you cannot upload your required documents, you may also mail or fax the documents to the address or fax number listed in the Contact Us section of this document.

During review of your documentation, Fee Assistance Program staff may determine that additional supporting documentation is required. If this occurs, you will receive an email listing the required documents. Your list of required documents also appears in the Document Gathering and Upload component of your application.

Error Explanation Letter
If an error is discovered in your Fee Assistance Program application by you or our staff, you may be required to complete an Error Explanation Letter to document the error and provide revised information. The Error Explanation Letter may only be considered when your application is actively being reviewed by the AAMC.

Please note, submitting an Error Explanation Letter may not change the information you entered and submitted in your application, nor will it prevent the AAMC from initiating or continuing an investigation regarding an application that was submitted with incomplete, incorrect, or inaccurate information. Please see the Violations and Investigations section of this guide for more information.

Submitted and Pending Verification
Once all the required documents are received, your application will go into a Submitted and Pending Verification status. This status means that your application is in line to be verified by the Fee Assistance Program staff. Our goal is to review your application and supporting documentation and contact you regarding our findings within five business days. If our staff determines that additional information is required, your application will be returned to a status of Submitted and on Hold, and an email will be sent with further instructions. Otherwise, our staff will approve or deny your application.

Withdrawing Your Application
Your application may only be withdrawn after it has been submitted, but before the AAMC has approved or denied it. The decision to withdraw your application is final. You will not be able to reactivate or resubmit your application or start a new application for the 2018 calendar year after you have withdrawn your application.
Approved
Congratulations! Your Fee Assistance Program application has been approved, and you may now begin to receive Fee Assistance Program award benefits. Please note, once your application has been approved, you may not change or update your application for any reason. If a material error is found in your application after your application has been approved, the Violations and Investigations section of this guide will apply.

Denied
Your application will be denied if you are ineligible for the Fee Assistance Program on the basis of the information you submitted in your application.

Appeal
If you believe that your application was denied in error, you may appeal the decision made on your application. We will not consider appeals based on a dispute of Fee Assistance Program policies, such as the use of parental income, to make a decision on your application. Submission of an appeal does not guarantee a change in outcome. The AAMC will consider appeals and make final judgments on an application at its sole discretion.

To initiate your appeal, contact us to discuss your situation and to determine whether a legitimate error was made. If the AAMC determines a legitimate error was made, we will reopen your application and approve or deny on the basis of the corrected information.

If the AAMC made a legitimate error when reviewing your application, Fee Assistance Program staff will correct the error upon receipt of verified supporting documentation.

If you made a legitimate error when completing your application, such as an error when entering income information, your application will be returned to you and supporting documentation, including the Error Explanation Letter, will be required. You will be required to resubmit your application after the requested documentation has been provided. After review, you may be asked to submit additional documentation to complete the verification process.

Part 6: Violations and Investigations
For all applicants to be considered fairly, it is critical that applicants adhere to a set of common procedures and that the AAMC investigate those who do not. Investigations are initiated at the AAMC’s sole discretion.
Violations
If an applicant allegedly provides the AAMC with false information, engages in conduct that may compromise the integrity of the Fee Assistance Program, or otherwise violates the applicant certification statement or the terms and conditions of the Fee Assistance Program Essentials for 2018, the AAMC may investigate the alleged claim and may issue a report of the factual findings of the investigation. Further, the AAMC reserves the right to take other action as is warranted in certain circumstances.

Investigation Procedures
The AAMC Policies and Procedures for Investigating Reported Violations of Admission and Enrollment Standards apply and are incorporated into the Fee Assistance Program Essentials for 2018 by reference.

- Any applicant who is the subject of an investigation by the AAMC shall fully cooperate with the AAMC’s investigation, produce all documents and materials requested by the AAMC, and submit to an in-person interview conducted by or on behalf of the AAMC at the association’s request. Applicants shall truthfully and completely answer all questions posed during investigative interviews conducted by or on behalf of the AAMC.

- If the AAMC initiates an investigation, it will notify the applicant prior to issuing an investigation report.

- At its sole discretion, the AAMC may elect to send a fact-based investigation report documenting the violation and subsequent investigation, with any attachments provided by the applicant, to legitimately interested parties, both now and in the future. Legitimately interested parties related to Fee Assistance Program applicants are defined in the AAMC Policies and Procedures for Investigating Reported Violations of Admission and Enrollment Standards.

Arbitration for Investigation Disputes
There is one exclusive remedy available to applicants who wish to appeal or otherwise challenge a decision made by the AAMC to send an investigation report to legitimately interested parties. That remedy is binding arbitration obtained through written submissions before a single arbitrator under the JAMS Streamlined Arbitration Rules and Procedures in the District of Columbia. Examinees electing to proceed with arbitration understand that they are waiving their rights to file suit against the AAMC in any court of competent jurisdiction. The sole issue for arbitration shall be whether the AAMC acted reasonably and in good faith in making its decision.

Loss of Future Eligibility
If a previous Fee Assistance Program application results in an issued investigation report, the applicant will not be eligible to apply to the Fee Assistance Program in the future.
Part 7: Contact Us
Specialists are available to assist you with the Fee Assistance Program application, policies, and procedures. Please contact us with any questions.

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Washington, DC 20001

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Email: fap@aamc.org