HAWAII · STATE AID REFERENCE

Hawaii State Aid Cheat Sheet (2027–2028)

A two-page reference for counselors and families. Free to copy, print, and share.

Hawaii has no separate state aid agency and no state scholarship portal. Every state-funded award runs through the University of Hawai'i: the admission application is the merit application, the FAFSA is the need application, and one optional form (the UH System Common Scholarship Application) covers several hundred funds. Two things changed in the past year that older handouts get wrong: Hawai'i Promise is no longer last-dollar (Act 235 of 2026), and UH Mānoa's automatic merit ladder now starts at a 3.20 and renews at a 3.20, not a 2.00. No program on this sheet requires an ACT or SAT score. Verified against the UH System and UH Mānoa Financial Aid Services, October 2026.

The Programs at a Glance

Program	What it pays and who qualifies
Mānoa Academic Merit (automatic, no application)	Hawaii residents entering UH Mānoa the fall after high school: **$2,500** a year at a 3.20 to 3.49 GPA, **$3,000** at a 3.50 to 3.69, **$4,000** at a 3.70 or higher, for 8 semesters. Awarded from the admission file in the order applications arrive, until funds run out. No test score, no essay. Renews at a 3.20 college GPA with 12 earned credits every semester.
Regents Scholarship (UH, selective)	Full-time tuition for 8 semesters plus a **$5,600** yearly stipend and a one-time travel grant. Hawaii residents entering as freshmen. Mānoa considers a 3.7 GPA; Hilo and West O'ahu consider a 3.5 to 3.7. About 20 awards statewide (16 at Mānoa, 2 each at Hilo and West O'ahu). Mānoa winners must join the Honors Program. Renews at a 3.5.
Provost Achievement (UH Mānoa, selective)	**$10,000** a year for 4 years. Hawaii residents entering Mānoa as freshmen with a 3.7 GPA and demonstrated community impact. About 80 awards a year, which makes it the award a local 3.7 student has the best shot at. One supplement covers both Regents and Provost. Renews at a 3.0. A student may hold only one Mānoa merit award.
Hawai'i Promise (need-based, community college)	Under Act 235 of 2026, **95% of unmet direct cost** (tuition, fees, books, supplies, transportation) at any of the 7 UH community colleges, with Pell no longer subtracted first. Resident tuition status, at least 6 credits in a degree or certificate program, FAFSA on file, satisfactory progress. No separate application. Greatest need first, while funds last.
B Plus Scholarship (state, need-based)	Up to **$2,000** a year, renewable 4 years. Hawaii residents who graduated from a Hawaii public high school with a 3.0 GPA and a rigorous curriculum, show need on the FAFSA, and enroll at any UH campus (12 credits at Mānoa). Limited funding; file by the campus FAFSA priority date.
Hawai'i Community Foundation (private, portable)	Over **$8 million** a year from 300+ funds through one application. Hawaii residents with need and a 2.0 GPA at any accredited U.S. college, including the mainland. Needs a transcript and the FAFSA Submission Summary. Opens Dec 1, 2026; closes **Feb 1, 2027, 4 PM HST**. Awards arrive May through August.
Also worth knowing	**Mānoa Opportunity Grant**: up to $5,000, need-based, FAFSA by Feb 1. **Second Century**: up to $2,000 for Native Hawaiian students with need, FAFSA only. **Chancellor's Scholarships**: full tuition at UH Hilo and UH West O'ahu, selective. **Hawai'i Scholars Award**: automatic $1,000 a year at UH Hilo, first-come. **HINET**: about $2,675 a semester for community college students on SNAP. **Presidential**: the Regents package for rising juniors with a 3.7 college GPA.

Deadlines to Post on Your Wall

Program	Deadline	Where it's submitted
Mānoa Academic Merit	Rolling while funds last. Apply in the fall; January 5 is the latest safe bet.	UH Mānoa admission application
Regents and Provost (Mānoa)	**January 5** admission; **January 15** supplement. Decisions around early March.	Admission application + New Warrior supplement
FAFSA (UH priority)	**February 1**. Drives Promise, B Plus, Opportunity Grant, Second Century, HCF need review.	studentaid.gov with the campus school code
Hawai'i Community Foundation	Opens Dec 1, 2026. Closes **Feb 1, 2027, 4 PM HST**.	HCF Scholarship Manager
UH Common Scholarship Application	Opens Oct 1. Closes **March 1, 2027, 4 PM HST**. Recommenders by March 8.	UH Scholarship Manager (needs UH username)
Regents and Chancellor's (Hilo, West O'ahu)	**March 1** via the Common Scholarship Application. Hilo Chancellor's sets its own date.	UH Common Scholarship Application
Mānoa STAR (departmental)	Window Nov 15 to **Feb 15**.	STAR portal (needs UH username)

Say this out loud to every senior: March 1 is the last door to close, not the first. The Regents at Mānoa closes January 5 and HCF closes February 1 while families are still drafting Common Application essays.

The Rules That Trip Families Up

- **The admission application is the scholarship application.** Mānoa reads it for the Academic Merit award and pays in the order applications arrive. A 3.6 in September and a 3.6 in March are not the same student to the Office of Admissions.
- **The renewal GPA changed.** Students starting at Mānoa in Fall 2026 or later keep the Academic Merit award only with a 3.20 cumulative college GPA and 12 earned credits every semester. Older siblings renewed at a 2.00. No published appeal.
- **One merit award from Mānoa Admissions.** Academic Merit, Regents, Provost: a student accepts one. Need-based aid (Pell, B Plus, Opportunity Grant, Second Century) stacks on top of whichever it is.
- **Hawai'i Promise now pays before Pell is counted.** If an aid letter shows Promise at $0 because Pell covered it, that may be the pre-2026 formula. Families are allowed to ask whether the award was computed under Act 235.
- **Residency questions on the UH application matter.** Misreading them flags a local student as out-of-state, which triggers a fee, nonresident tuition, and ineligibility for every award on this sheet until corrected.

Mānoa Merit and the Regents: Check These Things Early

1. What is the cumulative GPA, and which rung is it on?

The number Mānoa reads is the cumulative high school GPA on the admission application. A 3.20 is the floor for automatic money. A 3.50 opens the Regents at Hilo and West O'ahu. A 3.70 opens the Regents and Provost at Mānoa. No test score moves any of these.

2. Is the application in by fall, and by January 5 at the latest?

Automatic money runs out on a rolling basis. The Regents and Provost require admission by January 5 and the supplement (an activities list plus a 250 to 400 word community-impact response) by January 15. Roughly 100 awards a year go to students who sent that supplement.

3. Is the FAFSA filed by February 1, regardless of income?

B Plus, the Opportunity Grant, Second Century, and Hawai'i Promise all run off the FAFSA alone, and HCF will not read an application without the FAFSA Submission Summary. Less than half of Hawaii public school seniors file it.

What a Hawaii public school graduate at UH Mānoa is in line for, from two forms:

Cumulative HS GPA	Academic Merit (automatic)	Plus, with need on the FAFSA	Four-year merit total
3.20 to 3.49	$2,500 a year	B Plus up to $2,000; Opportunity Grant up to $5,000; Pell	$10,000
3.50 to 3.69	$3,000 a year	Same supplements; Regents at Hilo and West O'ahu opens at 3.50	$12,000
3.70 or higher	$4,000 a year	Same supplements; Regents and Provost at Mānoa open with the Jan 15 supplement	$16,000

2026–27 resident tuition: UH Mānoa $11,760 a year; UH Hilo and UH West O'ahu $7,632; community colleges $131 a credit.

Counselor Calendar: What to Tell Students When

When	What has to happen
Sophomore and junior year	The cumulative GPA on the senior transcript is the whole merit application. Name the rung the student is on (3.20, 3.50, 3.70) and the one grade that moves it. Create FSA IDs for parent and student. Use a personal email on everything.
Senior fall, Sept to Nov	Apply to UH Mānoa now; automatic money is first-come. Public school seniors: run Direct2UH for Hilo, West O'ahu, and a community college (2.7 GPA admits to the four-year campuses). File the FAFSA. Start the UH Common Scholarship Application once the UH username arrives.
December	HCF application opens Dec 1; Kamehameha Schools and Pauahi Foundation windows close in December and mid-January, earlier than families expect.
January 5 and 15	Mānoa admission deadline for Regents and Provost consideration, then the New Warrior supplement. One activities list, one short response.
February 1	UH FAFSA priority date. HCF closes at 4 PM HST. Mānoa STAR departmental awards close February 15.
March 1 and 8	UH Common Scholarship Application closes at 4 PM HST (transcript uploaded, recommenders named). Recommenders submit by March 8. Once submitted it cannot be edited.
Spring and first year	Tuition deposit locks the merit award. Regents at Mānoa: Honors application and interview by May 1. Every semester: 12 credits earned; 3.20 for Academic Merit, 3.5 for Regents, 3.0 for Provost. New FAFSA every October.

Three Mistakes That Cost Hawaii Students Money

- **Applying to Mānoa in March.** The automatic award is paid until the money is gone. The family that waited for the Common Application deadline applied to Mānoa last.
- **Skipping the Regents supplement because "we won't get it."** One list and one 300-word answer put a 3.7 student in the pool for both the Regents (16 awards) and the Provost (about 80). There is no test score to be short on.
- **Planning the sophomore year on the old 2.00.** A B average with one C in a lab science is a 3.1. The Class of 2027 renews at a 3.20, reviewed every semester, and Mānoa has published no second chance.

The March 1 mirage

Every UH flyer says March 1, because that is when the Common Scholarship Application closes. It is the smallest of Hawaii's three doors. The Mānoa merit ladder runs out of money starting in the fall, the Regents and Provost close January 5 and 15, and HCF closes February 1. Tell students the real deadline is the week they get back from winter break.

Free Resources: No Account, No Cost, No Data Collection

Resource	Where
UH System financial aid and scholarships (official)	hawaii.edu/costs/financial-aid
UH Common Scholarship Application requirements and dates	hawaii.edu/costs/how-to-apply
Mānoa Academic Merit and New Warrior Scholarships	manoa.hawaii.edu/fas/types-of-aid/scholarships
Direct2UH (free direct admission, public school seniors)	hawaii.edu/direct2uh
Hawai'i Community Foundation scholarships	hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/students
Our Hawaii state aid guide, with worked examples	collegereadyparent.org/hawaii

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