NEW HAMPSHIRE · STATE AID REFERENCE

New Hampshire State Aid Cheat Sheet (2027–28)

A two-page reference for counselors and families, for seniors starting college in fall 2027. Free to copy, print, and share.

New Hampshire has no state aid application and no large state scholarship. The **FAFSA is the only form**, and the college's financial aid office hands out the state money. **What changed:** on September 29, 2026 the University System of New Hampshire (USNH) replaced the Pell-only Granite Guarantee with the **New Hampshire Promise**: no tuition at UNH, Keene State, or Plymouth State for students entering in fall 2027 with total family income up to $100,000 and a 2.7 GPA. Tuition only, not fees or housing. Handouts that say free tuition is for Pell students, or for incomes under $50,000, are out of date.

The Programs at a Glance

Program	What it pays and who qualifies
New Hampshire Promise (USNH)	100% of standard in-state tuition, reached through federal, state, and college grants. NH resident, full time, total family income up to $100,000 with typical assets, need shown on the FAFSA, 2.7 GPA. First-year students entering fall 2027 or later, or CCSNH associate degree graduates. No separate application. Not fees, housing, food, or books.
Governor's Scholarship (State Treasury)	$2,000 a year (Pell-eligible, full-time first-year student with the New Hampshire Scholar designation) or $1,000 a year (other eligible students), up to 4 years. NH high school or home education graduate within 3 years, full time, continuous enrollment at a participating NH college. Awarded through the college. Renew: 2.5 GPA ($2,000) or 2.0 ($1,000).
UNIQUE Annual Allocation (State Treasury)	Need-based grant for Pell-eligible NH residents at participating NH public and private colleges; $1,500 full time in 2023-24, the latest published amount. Colleges choose recipients from FAFSA filers.
Saint Anselm Community Commitment	Full tuition. NH, ME, or VT residents (student and parents, 1 year), total family income $100,000 or less, 3.25 HS GPA, must live on campus, first-year only. FAFSA priority Feb 15, 2027. Renew: 2.5 GPA.
Pierce Promise (Franklin Pierce)	Tuition and fees. NH, MA, or VT residents entering fall 2027, household gross income under $80,000, 3.0 HS GPA, must live on the Rindge campus (commuters prorated). Renew: 2.0 GPA, income under $80,000.
Dartmouth need-based aid	Meets full need, no loans. No parent contribution under $125,000; free tuition to $175,000 (typical assets). CSS Profile and FAFSA.
NH Charitable Foundation	$250 to $5,000 (average $3,500) through one application. Bachelor's deadline was April 10, 2026; 2027 date not posted. Two-year programs: rolling.
NEBHE Tuition Break	Discounted tuition at public colleges in other New England states, in approved majors or at flexible campuses. About $8,500 average savings.

Deadlines to Post on Your Wall

Date	What happens	Who
Open now	2027-28 FAFSA (opened September 2026)	Everyone
Nov 1	Early Decision and CSS Profile	Dartmouth
Nov 15	Early Action, the only route into Hamel Scholars (documents Dec 12)	UNH
Feb 1	Regular Decision	UNH, Dartmouth aid documents
Feb 15, 2027	FAFSA priority for the Community Commitment	Saint Anselm
Mar 1	FAFSA priority date. Treat as the NH Promise deadline	UNH, Keene State, Plymouth State
Spring	Bachelor's scholarship deadline (April 10 in 2026)	NH Charitable Foundation
May 1	Enrollment deposit	UNH and most colleges

June 30, 2028 is the federal FAFSA cutoff. It is not a deadline for any New Hampshire program.

The Rules That Trip Families Up

- **The Promise is not Pell-only anymore.** The line is $100,000 in total family income. A family at $85,000 qualifies and often does not know it.
- **Tuition only.** UNH mandatory fees were $3,774 in 2025-26; with housing and meals, an on-campus Promise student still owes about $18,000 a year.
- **It pays last.** Pell, state grants, and merit fill tuition first, then the Promise covers the rest. Merit often lowers what USNH pays, not what the family pays.
- **The transfer route needs a finished degree.** Community college students qualify only after completing a CCSNH associate degree.
- **No state application exists.** Nobody applies for the Governor's Scholarship or UNIQUE grants. They appear in the college aid offer, from the FAFSA.

New Hampshire Promise: Check These Six Things Early

1. Residency. Qualified for in-state tuition at a USNH campus. The college decides; ask early if the family moved.
2. Admission. UNH Durham, UNH Manchester, UNH Professional Studies Online, Keene State, or Plymouth State.
3. Income. Total family income up to $100,000 with typical assets. USNH has not defined typical assets; families with large savings or property should ask.
4. Need. File the FAFSA. No FAFSA, no Promise, even for families who expect only merit.
5. Status. Full time, first-time student, or a CCSNH associate degree graduate. Fall and spring only, normal course load.
6. GPA. 2.7 from the prior school. No test score.
Reviewed every year: FAFSA, academic standing, full-time status. Transfers between USNH campuses keep it.

Campus	In-state tuition, 2026-27	Promise covers	Still on the family's bill
University of New Hampshire	About $16,300	All of it	Fees ($3,774 in 2025-26), housing, food, books
Plymouth State University	About $15,400	All of it	Fees, housing, food, books
Keene State College	About $12,300	All of it	Fees, housing, food, books

2026-27 tuition as reported by the Boston Globe, October 1, 2026. 2027-28 rates are not set.

Counselor Calendar: What to Tell Students When

When	What to tell students
Junior year	Hold the GPA: 2.7 for the Promise, 3.0 (Pierce) or 3.25 (Saint Anselm) for the private programs. Finish the New Hampshire Scholars course plan if offered; it doubles the Governor's Scholarship.
Senior fall, by Nov 15	Create FSA IDs. File the 2027-28 FAFSA and list every NH college. UNH Early Action by November 15 for Hamel Scholars. Dartmouth Early Decision and CSS Profile by November 1.
Dec to Feb	UNH Regular Decision February 1. Saint Anselm FAFSA priority February 15. Watch for the NH Charitable Foundation application (it opened by late January last cycle).
By March 1	FAFSA in for UNH, Keene State, and Plymouth State. This is the practical Promise deadline.
March to May	Compare the bill after aid, not the aid total. Ask each office how merit and state grants interact with the Promise. Deposit by May 1.
Every year after	New FAFSA each fall, full time every semester, check the GPA each spring.

Three Mistakes That Cost New Hampshire Students Money

- **Skipping the FAFSA because the family earns "too much."** The Promise reaches $100,000, and the FAFSA is the only door to it.
- **Applying to UNH on February 1.** Hamel Scholars is offered only through Early Action on November 15.
- **Choosing on the word "free."** Commuting at a Promise campus can cost less than a free-tuition offer that requires living on campus. Compare the full bill.

The $100,000 cliff
The Promise is not a sliding scale. At $100,000 a family pays no tuition; at $100,001 it gets nothing from the Promise. Because it is reviewed from a new FAFSA every year, a raise, bonus, or one-time withdrawal can end it after the first year. Families near the line should ask the aid office about a special circumstances review before income changes, not after.

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

New Hampshire Promise rules	unh.edu/admissions-aid/new-hampshire-promise
Governor's Scholarship and UNIQUE grants	nh.gov/treasury
Free FAFSA and college planning help in NH	graniteedvance.org
Our New Hampshire state aid guide	collegereadyparent.org/new-hampshire
Scholarships at 400+ colleges, all 50 states	collegereadyparent.org/college-scholarships

Produced by CollegeReadyParent.org, an independent, parent-built resource. No paywall, no accounts, no lead forms, no student data collection. Counselors and educators: you may freely copy, print, and distribute this sheet. Questions or corrections: leo@collegereadyparent.org. Verified October 28, 2026 against USNH, the NH State Treasury, and each college named. The New Hampshire Promise is new, and USNH has not yet published its definition of typical assets; confirm current rules with each college's financial aid office before making a decision.