

TEXAS · STATE AID REFERENCE

Texas State Aid Cheat Sheet (2026-2027)

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

Texas has one front door. Filing the FAFSA is applying for the TEXAS Grant, TEOG, and the Tuition Equalization Grant; students who cannot file a FAFSA file the TASFA instead, never both. There is no separate state scholarship portal and no statewide merit award. Three things changed recently: the Texas Armed Services Scholarship doubled to \$30,000 a year under House Bill 300, the Texas Transfer Grant ended after fiscal year 2026 with its funds folded into the TEXAS Grant, and the state priority deadline returned to January 15 after two years of temporary extensions. Verified against THECB and the Texas Veterans Commission, August 2026.

The Programs at a Glance

Program	What it pays and who qualifies
TEXAS Grant (need-based, public universities)	Up to \$5,399 per semester in 2026-27, so \$10,798 for fall and spring and up to \$16,197 with a summer award. The state target amount is \$2,500 per semester, so counsel families to plan around the target, not the ceiling. Requires need, Texas residency, 3/4-time enrollment, and one of four entry pathways. No separate application.
TEOG (need-based, public two-year)	Per semester in 2026-27: \$2,134 at community colleges, \$1,840 at public state colleges, \$3,896 at public technical institutes. This is also the on-ramp to the TEXAS Grant: finish 24 hours at a 2.5 GPA and the transfer pathway carries the student into the four-year grant.
TEG (need-based, private nonprofit)	Texas had not published the 2026-27 maximum as of our verification date, so we are not printing one. The award is the smallest of three things: financial need, tuition differential against a comparable public, or the annual program maximum. The private college's aid office gets that number before we do. Ask them.
Hazlewood Act (veterans and their children)	Tuition and most mandatory fees exempted for up to 150 credit hours at Texas publics. Not books, housing, or meals, and not private colleges. Legacy Act transfers unused hours to a child who is 25 or younger on the first day of the term. Likely the largest number available to any military family on this sheet.
TASSP (Texas Armed Services Scholarship)	Up to \$30,000 per year, doubled by HB 300 in 2025. Students cannot apply. They must be appointed by a state senator, state representative, the governor, or the lieutenant governor, and only 185 appointments exist statewide. Converts to a loan if the service commitment is not met.
FAST (Financial Aid for Swift Transfer)	Free dual credit tuition at participating community colleges for students from financially disadvantaged households. Those hours do not count against the TEXAS Grant's 30-hour cap.

Deadlines to Post on Your Wall

Date	What it is	What happens if it is missed
October 1	FAFSA and TASFA open	Nothing yet, but state aid is allocated per campus and awarded until the pot is empty
January 15	State priority deadline, all state aid programs	Eligibility survives, priority does not. The student is now funded only if money remains
September 30	TASSP appointment submission deadline	Gone for the year. There are only 185 statewide
Varies	Institutional scholarship deadlines, often Nov 1 to Mar 1	Separate from state aid entirely, and usually worth more to middle-income families

The Rules That Trip Families Up

- January 15 is a priority date, not a cutoff. Each institution decides for itself what a student must have completed by that date to count as on time. At one college it is a submitted FAFSA; at another it is FAFSA plus admission plus every verification document. Have families ask what a complete file means at their college, and write down who answered.
- The nine-hour floor. The TEXAS Grant and TEG both require 3/4-time enrollment, which is nine hours. Dropping below nine does not shrink the award. It eliminates it for that semester.
- Dual credit does not hurt. The 30-hour cap on the high school pathway specifically excludes dual enrollment and credit by examination. Families believe the opposite and turn down free hours over it.
- Homeschool graduates are not eligible under the TEXAS Grant high school pathway. Plan those students onto the associate degree pathway instead, starting sophomore year.
- The Texas Transfer Grant is gone. Some college aid pages still list it. If a family shows you one, that page is stale.

TEXAS Grant: Check These Four Doors Early

A student needs financial need, Texas residency, at least nine credit hours, no prior bachelor's degree, and one of these four entry pathways:

- High school pathway: graduate from an accredited Texas public or private high school and enroll within 16 months, with no more than 30 attempted college hours. Dual credit and credit by exam are excluded from that count. Homeschool graduates are not eligible under this pathway.
- Associate degree pathway: earn an associate degree from a Texas public or private nonprofit institution and enroll within 12 months. Capped at 90 hours rather than 150.
- Military discharge pathway: enlist within 12 months of graduating a Texas high school, then enroll within 12 months of an honorable discharge.
- TEOG transfer pathway: receive an initial-year TEOG, complete 24 hours at a 2.5 GPA, and transfer to a four-year public.

What It Pays, and What Keeps It

2026-27 TEXAS Grant	Amount	Renewal requirement
Per semester maximum, public university	\$5,399	Year 1: meet the college's satisfactory academic progress standard
Fall plus spring	\$10,798	Year 2 onward: 2.5 cumulative GPA and 24 completed hours per year. Both, not either
With a summer award (three per year allowed)	\$16,197	Ends at 150 attempted hours, five years, or the first bachelor's degree
State target amount institutions are directed toward	\$2,500	Most Texas publics run a TEXAS Grant appeal. Tell families to ask for it by name

Counselor Calendar: What to Tell Students When

When	What to say
Sophomore year	If a parent or grandparent served, check the Hazlewood hours balance now. If the student is homeschooled, start mapping the associate degree pathway. Sign up for dual credit and ask whether the district participates in FAST.
Junior year	Keep taking dual credit. Contact a state legislator's office about a TASSP appointment if the student is headed toward ROTC or officer commissioning.
September, senior year	Create two separate FSA IDs, student and parent, on two separate personal emails. Not school email addresses, which get shut off mid-cycle. TASSP appointments are due September 30.
October 1	File the FAFSA, or the TASFA if the student cannot file a FAFSA. Never both. List every Texas college under consideration. Remind families that filing is a Texas high school graduation requirement, and that filing is not the same as being funded.
November to January 15	Institutional scholarship deadlines land first, several at December 1 or December 15. Then confirm the state file is complete by the college's definition.
February to summer	Verification requests arrive, and this is where funded students quietly become unfunded students. Answer within days, not weeks. Then register for at least nine hours, ideally twelve, to stay on pace for the 24-hour annual requirement.

Three Mistakes That Cost Texas Students Money

- Waiting because the family assumes they earn too much. The TEXAS Grant has no published income cutoff. The priority Student Aid Index of \$6,478 is a ranking tool, not an eligibility bar, and students above it are funded when money allows.
- Dropping to part-time in week three. See the nine-hour floor on page 1. The award is gone for the term, not reduced.
- Letting the 16-month clock run out. A gap year past sixteen months closes the high school pathway for good.

The Texas Trap: The 25th Birthday

Hazlewood is the largest education benefit in Texas, and it has a hard edge almost nobody mentions until it is too late. A child using transferred Legacy Act hours must be 25 or younger on the first day of the semester in which the exemption is claimed. A student who takes two gap years and then goes part-time can age out mid-degree.

Also: all recipients share the same pool of 150 hours and only one can use it per semester; the child must have exhausted or been found ineligible for federal VA benefits first; Hazlewood counts as a financial resource, so it can reduce need-based aid rather than stack on top; and many colleges require the form again every semester, which is the most common way families lose it.

Separate and more generous track: children and spouses of veterans who died in the line of duty, are missing in action, or became totally disabled for purposes of employability from service each receive their own 150 hours, with no age limit and no federal-benefit-exhaustion requirement. Name that track specifically when you call.

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

Official program rules, TEXAS Grant, TEOG, TEG, TASSP	highereds.texas.gov/student-financial-aid-programs
TASFA application and instructions, English and Spanish	highereds.texas.gov/students-families/tasfa
Hazlewood Act rules, forms, and hours balance	tvc.texas.gov/education/hazlewood-act
Exemptions and waivers, the least-known money in Texas	highereds.texas.gov/student-financial-aid-programs/exemptions-waivers
Our Texas state aid guide	collegereadyparent.org/texas
Scholarships at 400+ colleges, all 50 states	collegereadyparent.org/college-scholarships

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Amounts, cutoffs, and deadlines change. Verified against THECB and the Texas Veterans Commission in August 2026. The 2026-27 Tuition Equalization Grant maximum had not been published as of that date, which is why no figure appears here. Always confirm current details with the Coordinating Board and with the college's financial aid office before making financial decisions.