

### Maximum Pell Grant Eligibility for Dependents of Certain Deceased Servicemembers & Public Safety Officers

The *FAFSA Simplification Act* changed eligibility for what were formerly called “Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants (IASG)” and “Children of Fallen Heroes (CFH) Scholarships.” Beginning with the 2024-25 award year, students who meet the eligibility requirements for Pell Grants under the Special Rule in HEA Section 401(c) will receive a maximum Pell Grant award, regardless of their calculated SAI. To receive a Pell Grant based on eligibility under the Special Rule, a student must be:

- The child of a parent or guardian who died in the line of duty while either (a) serving on active duty as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001; or (b) actively serving as and performing the duties of a public safety officer; and
- Less than 33 years old as of the January 1 prior to the award year for which the applicant is applying (e.g., for the 2024–25 award year, a student must be less than 33 years old as of January 1, 2024, to be eligible).

In this situation, eligible students will have a Scheduled Award equal to a maximum Pell Grant award, regardless of SAI. Other aid for these students will be based on their calculated SAI.

**Public Safety Officer Definition:** A public safety officer generally includes the following:

- Law enforcement officer
- Firefighter
- Member of a rescue squad or ambulance crew
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) employee
- Emergency management or civil defense agency employee
- Chaplain
- Others defined in Section 1204 of the *Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968*

### Identification of Eligibility and Acceptable Documentation:

After the 2023–24 award year the U.S. Department of Defense will no longer provide confirmation that a service member killed in the line of duty meets the revised special eligibility criteria. Further, no comprehensive federal database exists to effectively and efficiently identify public safety officers killed in the line of duty. Therefore, students will self-identify potential eligibility on the FAFSA form, and the school will be required to confirm eligibility by collecting supporting documentation from the student. Once you (the student) document and certify Special Rule eligibility for a maximum Pell Grant award, neither your school nor any other school is required to redetermine that student's eligibility for subsequent award years if the student continues to meet all other Pell Grant eligibility requirements and the age requirement for the Special Rule. Acceptable documentation **may** include, but is not limited to, the following:

- A copy of the servicemember's DD Form 1300 (Report of Casualty) which documents death in the line of duty.
- A copy of the servicemember's DD Form 214 and death certificate, documenting that the date and cause of death occurred during and because of active duty.
- A copy of a Department of Veterans Affairs Death Narrative Document
- A determination letter acknowledging eligibility for certain federal benefits under the Public Safety Officers Benefit (PSOB) program administered by the Department of Justice.
- A written letter of attestation or determination made by a state or local government official with supervisory or other relevant oversight authority of an individual who died in the line of duty while serving as a public safety officer.
- Documentation of the student qualifying for a state tuition or other state benefit accorded to the children or other family members of a public safety officer.
- Other documentation the school determines to be from a credible source that describes or reports the circumstances of the death and the eligible occupation of the parent or guardian.