

## MassReconnect Guidelines

---

### **Eligible Institution:**

A community college within the Massachusetts public system of higher education under Section 5 of Chapter 15A of the General Laws.

### **Eligible Program:**

An approved certificate or associate degree program offered at a Massachusetts community college.

### **Eligible Student:**

To be eligible for the MassReconnect, an applicant must:

- be not less than 25 years of age as of the first day of classes for which funds are being awarded
- be a permanent legal resident of Massachusetts for at least one year, as of the start of the enrolled term
- be a U.S. Citizen or non-citizen eligible under Title IV regulations; or an approved status designated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- comply with Federal financial aid verification requirements
- complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) annually for consideration of assistance by any designated deadline, as may be determined by the Department of Higher Education
- not be in default on any federal or state student loans for attendance at any institution, or owe a refund for any previous state financial aid program
- has not earned a prior associate or baccalaureate degree, or the equivalent
- enroll, as a matriculated student, on a full-time or part-time basis (minimum of 6 credits, or the equivalent) in an approved undergraduate program of study leading to a certificate or an associate degree
- meet satisfactory academic progress (SAP) according to the institution's requirements and Federal standards
- have a remaining balance owed to the institution for the costs of tuition, fees, books and supplies after all other grant and scholarship aid has been accounted for

### **Award Value:**

Subject to appropriation, MassReconnect assistance awarded to eligible students under this program shall not exceed the calculated cost of tuition and fees, books and supplies, as published in the institution's annual Cost of Attendance (COA), for the academic term, during which the award is made.

---

MassReconnect funds may not be used to cover educational expenses not related to tuition, fees, books, and supplies, unless otherwise approved or authorized by the Commissioner of Higher Education, or his designee.

Higher costs certificate or degree programs that exceed the institution's average tuition and fee costs may require annual approval by the Department of Higher Education.

**Students may be awarded MassReconnect funds as follows:**

**Associate Degree**

Full-Time: Maximum of 3 years, 6 semesters for full-time (minimum of 12 enrolled credits per academic term). An additional year of assistance may be awarded based on extenuating circumstances, with approval of a written appeal.

Part-Time: Maximum of 5 years, 10 semesters for part-time (6 enrolled credits minimum per academic term). An additional year of assistance may be awarded based on extenuating circumstances, with approval of a written appeal.

**Certificate Program**

Full-Time: Maximum of three semesters (summer enrollment does not count toward the 3-semester maximum)

Part-Time: Maximum of six semesters (summer enrollment does not count toward the 6-semester maximum)

**Award Disbursement:**

Each participating institution must verify that each recipient is eligible in accordance with guidelines established for the MassReconnect Program, and that the student is enrolled in an approved certificate or associate degree program. Further, the institution is required to verify that the student has not earned a prior associate or bachelor's degree before funds are awarded and disbursed, which may be done through a signed affidavit after all reasonable attempts were made to secure prior transcripts, if any.

Institutions are required to refund any funds that is deemed to have been improperly awarded and disbursed to recipients who are later determined to be ineligible.