

Seeking...

**FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
RENEWAL INFORMATION**



2009 - 10



2009-10

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Renewal Information

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It's Your Award...Keeping it is Your Responsibility!
Read Carefully...Learn How to Keep Your Award!

www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/ssfad/bf -
Your Source for Bright Futures Information and Updates

KEEPING THE BRIGHT FUTURES OFFICE INFORMED...

Activate your User ID and PIN - Know it, Use it, Be Responsible for your state financial aid!

Notify the Bright Futures office of a change in postsecondary institutions or demographic information:
Internet Access

- Use your User ID and PIN to update your postsecondary institution and demographic information. You may access your User ID and PIN at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org by selecting **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications, Application Status & Award History**, and then **Get My User ID and PIN**.

Follow the screen instructions to view or update your student record.

With the User ID and PIN you may:

- **view your award status;**
- view your spring renewal grade point average (GPA) and earned hours reported by your postsecondary institution;
- view your disbursements and hours remaining for disbursement (after the drop/add period);
- view all correspondence sent from the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) – Note: All OSFA correspondence is sent via e-mail;
- update your e-mail address, demographic, and postsecondary institution information; and
- view your state financial aid history.

Toll-Free

You may also call OSFA toll-free at 1-888-827-2004 to update your postsecondary institution or demographic information.

RENEWAL, REINSTATEMENT OR RESTORATION

There are three methods by which you may be classified to continue receiving Bright Futures funding for a Florida Academic Scholarship (FAS), Florida Medallion Scholarship (FMS), or Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship (GSV) after the first year following high school graduation.

RENEWAL

You are a renewal student if you received an award during one or more terms of the immediately preceding academic year. Renewal of your award for subsequent academic years is determined by the Florida Department of Education based on completed hours and cumulative college grade point average submitted by your postsecondary institution. Your eligibility status will be posted to your Financial Aid Recipient History web screen each summer. Go to www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/renewpg.htm on the Bright Futures Web site for complete renewal information.

REINSTATEMENT

You are a reinstatement student if you were an **eligible student** who did not receive funding during the previous academic year and would now like to apply for scholarship funding. Go to www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/reinstategpg.htm on the Bright Futures Web site for reinstatement information and to complete a *Reinstatement/Restoration Application for Students*.

RESTORATION

You are a restoration student if you:

- a) did not meet the GPA renewal requirement during a prior renewal evaluation period, but met the GPA requirement in a subsequent renewal evaluation period; or
- b) did not meet the minimum credit hours requirement during a prior renewal evaluation period, but met the minimum credit hours requirement in a subsequent renewal evaluation period as well as the minimum GPA requirement (available to students not meeting the hours requirement in the 2009-10 academic year and after); or
- c) were initially eligible for an FAS award, dropped to FMS award eligibility for one year or more, met the FAS requirement in a subsequent renewal evaluation period, and are once again eligible for FAS funding.

Note: The Florida Legislature is authorized to change eligibility and funding requirements.

NEW!

Restoration may be allowed if you lose your award due to not meeting the **minimum credit hours requirement during the 2009-10 academic year and thereafter**. **If you do not meet the minimum credit hours requirement, you will lose your eligibility for renewal for one academic year**. You may **apply for restoration** the following academic year after the required earned hours and GPA for renewal have been met. This will be your **one-time restoration** opportunity.

Go to www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/restorepg.htm on the Bright Futures Web site for restoration information and to complete a *Reinstatement/Restoration Application for Students*.

RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

- If you receive funding during the current academic year (fall through spring) you are automatically evaluated for renewal at the end of the spring term. Renewal cumulative grade point average (GPA) and completed hours requirements are outlined in the table below.
- The postsecondary institution where you are enrolled as degree- or certificate-seeking is the home postsecondary institution. That postsecondary institution determines the courses to be included in your renewal postsecondary institutional cumulative GPA.
- You may request that a financial aid officer at the home postsecondary institution use your high school dual enrollment courses to your advantage when calculating the renewal postsecondary institutional GPA.
- If you earned the Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) award or Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) award in high school, you may not renew to the Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) award as initial eligibility for the award was based on high school academic accomplishments.
- Academic Top Scholars (ATS) renewal eligibility is based on the FAS annual renewal requirement. Renewal of the FAS award will also earn renewal of the ATS award.

Enrollment requirements for maintaining your award...

You may choose to enroll and receive Bright Futures funding for only one term during the academic year. Beginning in the 2009-10 academic year, renewal criteria includes completion of a minimum of 12 semester hours per term funded for full-time students (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours) or prorated for part-time students and the minimum cumulative GPA requirement.

	Florida Academic Scholars Award	Florida Medallion Scholars Award	Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award
Minimum Cumulative GPA Required for Renewal (unrounded & unweighted)	3.0*	2.75	2.75
2009-10 Minimum Hours Required Per Term Funded (full time)**	12 semester*** (earned hours)	12 semester*** (earned hours)	12 semester*** (earned hours)

*Florida Academic Scholars with 2.75-2.99 will renew as Florida Medallion Scholars.

Note: Beginning with the 2009-10 academic year, you must earn at least 24 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) **if funded full time for the entire academic year. If you are funded full time (12 or more semester hours or the equivalent) for only one term, you must earn at least 12 semester hours for that term. If you are funded part time for any part of the academic year, you must earn a prorated number of credit hours.

***Or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours.

- If you are funded three-quarter time (9-11 semester hours or the equivalent) for a term, you must earn at least 9 semester hours for that term.
- If you are funded half-time (6-8 semester hours or the equivalent) for a term, you must earn at least 6 semester hours for that term.
- Visit www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/ssfsd/bf and select the link **Required Hours for Renewal** for details on full time and part time hour requirements.

You must reimburse the postsecondary institution for the cost of any course(s) dropped or withdrawn after the initial drop/add period. Non-refunded hours may affect your renewal eligibility.

- Summer grades and hours may be earned during the summer after spring evaluation to meet the scholarship annual renewal requirements. You must ask a financial aid officer at the home postsecondary institution (that reported your spring renewal grade and hours) to submit a summer grade and hours update to the Bright Futures office indicating the adjusted cumulative GPA and/or hours so you may be reevaluated. A *Reinstatement/Restoration Application for Students* **is not** required.

Emergency situations...If you experience a verifiable illness or other circumstance beyond your control and do not meet the renewal requirements, you may request a Postsecondary Institutional Appeal.

- You may request that the financial aid office at the home postsecondary institution you attended conduct a review of the courses included in the cumulative GPA.
- In the case of illness or emergency beyond your control, you may provide pertinent documentation regarding the illness or emergency to the appropriate home postsecondary institution.
- The home postsecondary institution will review your request and report recommendation of approval/denial. Appeal request guidelines may be offered through the financial aid office of your home postsecondary institution.
- An institutional academic progress appeal is to be filed within 30 days of the date of the ineligibility notice sent to you or by the date established by your institution's financial aid office, whichever is later. Ineligibility notices are posted to your Financial Aid Recipient History web screen during the summer following spring evaluation.

REINSTATEMENT REQUIREMENTS

If you did not receive scholarship funds for the last academic year (fall through spring), you must reinstate your scholarship in order to receive funding.

- You must complete a Reinstatement/Restoration application available on the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) Web site at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org by selecting **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications, Apply Here**, and then *Reinstatement/Restoration Application for Students*. Please note that the academic year for which you are applying is at the top of the application. New applications are available February 1 each year.
- If you do not receive award funding within the academic year following your graduation from high school, you must apply to reinstate your award **within three years of high school graduation** and then receive funding the immediate subsequent academic year.
- Once you have received funding (for a minimum of one term), you are eligible to apply for reinstatement up to seven years from high school graduation.
- OSFA recommends that applications *be submitted* online by **July 1** for a timely **fall** disbursement *or* by **December 15** for a **belated fall or timely spring** disbursement. The deadline for submission of 2009-10 academic year reinstatement applications is **May 30, 2010**.
- If you are determined eligible for reinstatement, you will receive the Bright Futures award (FAS, FMS, or GSV) for which you were last determined eligible.

Enlisting in the Military

- If you are initially eligible and enlist in the United States Armed Forces immediately after high school graduation, you **must** (within three years after separation from active duty):

- request reinstatement by completing and submitting a *Reinstatement/Restoration Application for Students* online and
- submit an official **DD Form 214** via U.S. mail to verify time served in the military.
- If you are receiving a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and discontinue your education to enlist in the United States Armed Forces, you must commence the remainder of your seven-year renewal period upon the date of separation from active duty. To reinstate the scholarship, you must:
 - complete and submit a *Reinstatement/Restoration Application for Students* online and
 - submit an official **DD Form 214** via U.S. mail to verify time served in the military.

The DD Form 214 should be mailed to: Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, 325 W. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400.

RESTORATION (ONE-TIME OPPORTUNITY) REQUIREMENTS

If you lose your scholarship due to a low grade point average (GPA), it can be restored.

- If your unrounded and unweighted cumulative GPA, as reported by the home postsecondary institution, was less than a 2.75 and you were ineligible for funding, you may apply for restoration in an **academic year after** which the 2.75 cumulative GPA requirement is met. (The 2.75 GPA must be met before the fall term for which you are applying.)

NEW! For Students Funded in 2009-10 and After:

If you lose your scholarship because the required number of hours was not earned, it may be restored after you have met the requirements.

- If you do not meet the minimum credit hours requirement you will lose your eligibility for renewal for one academic year. You may **apply for restoration** the following academic year after the required hours are earned (for which you were enrolled at the level defined by the Florida Department of Education) and the required GPA for restoration has been met. This will be your **one-time restoration** opportunity.

Note: Summer grades and hours may be earned during the summer after spring evaluation to meet the scholarship annual renewal requirements. You must ask a **financial aid officer at the home postsecondary institution** (that reported your spring renewal grade and hours) to submit a summer grade and hours update to the Bright Futures office indicating the adjusted cumulative GPA and/or hours so you may be reevaluated. ***A Reinstatement/Restoration Application for Students is not required.***

Restoration Process

- To request restoration, you must complete a Reinstatement/Restoration application available on the Office of Student Financial Assistance Web site at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org by selecting **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications, Apply Here**, and then *Reinstatement/Restoration Application for Students*. Please note that the academic year for which you are applying is at the top of the application. New applications are available February 1 each year.
- In addition to the application, the financial aid office at the Florida postsecondary institution where you last attended as degree- or certificate-seeking must certify online the postsecondary institutional cumulative GPA that will determine your eligibility to restore.

- If you last attended an **out-of-state** postsecondary institution, you must request that your official transcript be submitted to: Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, 325 W. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400.
- OSFA **recommends** that applications *be submitted* online by **July 1** for a timely **fall** disbursement *or* by **December 15** for a **belated fall or timely spring** disbursement. The deadline for submission of 2009-10 academic year restoration applications is **May 30, 2010**.
- Funding is not available prior to restoring the scholarship nor is it retroactive for prior years.

	Florida Academic Scholars Award	Florida Medallion Scholars Award	Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award
Minimum Cumulative GPA Required for Restoration (unrounded & unweighted)	3.0*	2.75	2.75
Minimum Hours Required Per Term for Restoration if enrolled full time	12 semester** (earned hours)	12 semester** (earned hours)	12 semester** (earned hours)

*Florida Academic Scholars with 2.75-2.99 will restore as Florida Medallion Scholars.

**Or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours.

If your Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) award is renewed the following academic year to a Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) award due to receipt of a 2.75-2.99 cumulative GPA, your FAS can later be restored.

- You have a **one-time opportunity** to restore your scholarship.
- Each subsequent renewal period, you will automatically be evaluated for restoration to the FAS award if your cumulative GPA is reported by the home postsecondary institution at the minimum required 3.0 or above. No application is required.
- Funding will then be available to you at the FAS award level beginning in the fall of the upcoming academic year. This will be the **one-time restoration** opportunity.
- An FAS who loses the scholarship and then restores to and accepts funding as an FMS, **may not be awarded a second restoration to the original FAS level.**

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING for 2010-11

The Florida Legislature is authorized to change funding criteria. Students will receive the cost per credit hour award amounts as specified in the 2010-11 General Appropriations Act.

Current academic year award amounts for Bright Futures recipients attending 4-year, 2-year, semester hour, quarter hour, and clock hour institutions may be viewed on the Bright Futures Web site at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/ssfad/bf by selecting **Award Amounts** under the **Student Quick Links** heading.

SCHOLARSHIP LENGTH

Available hours of funding for your Bright Futures FAS or FMS award

- You may receive funding for up to 110% of your program of study or 132 semester hours (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours) toward completion of a certificate or a **first** baccalaureate degree, or for up to seven years from high school graduation (if the student was initially funded within three years after high school graduation), **whichever comes first**. This also applies if you are in a 3/2 program and are classified as an undergraduate. Graduate or undergraduate classification is determined by the postsecondary institution. Unused hours may **not** be used for further course funding after you earn a baccalaureate degree.
- If you are in an undergraduate program of study that requires more than 120 semester hours (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours), you may apply for an extension of hours for funding. This application will be e-mailed to you automatically when you approach the last 30 semester hours (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours) of your scholarship program.

NEW!

Available hours of funding for your GSV award

- You may receive funding for up to a maximum of 90 semester hours (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours) toward completion of a certificate or first baccalaureate degree, or for up to seven years from high school graduation (if you were initially funded within three years after high school graduation), **whichever comes first**.

Important:

- Following graduation, you may request to discontinue award communications with the Bright Futures office by contacting Customer Service toll-free at 1-888-827-2004.

LOANS

The Florida Department of Education, OSFA also serves as a guaranty agency for the Federal Family Education Loan Program. Call 1-800-366-3475 for assistance with the student loan process.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Is it possible to earn a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship for the first time as a college student?

No. You must graduate from a Florida high school and you must apply and qualify for a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship your last year in high school before graduation.

Where can I use the Bright Futures award?

The Bright Futures Web site provides a complete list of eligible Florida public and private postsecondary institutions at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/eligpsi.htm.

Are there enrollment requirements to receive Bright Futures funds?

Yes, you must enroll in a degree or certificate program of study for a minimum of 6 non-remedial semester hours (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours) per term by the end of the drop/add period. Visit www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/fundrequire.htm for additional information.

Will dropping a class or withdrawing from school after the drop/add period affect my renewal eligibility?

You should contact your postsecondary institution's financial aid office regarding the institution's policy on withdrawal. Review the renewal requirements at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/renewpg.htm on the Bright Futures Web site.

Beginning with Bright Futures students funded in the 2009-10 academic year...

- If you drop or withdraw from Bright Futures funded hours after the last day of the drop/add period, you will be responsible for reimbursing the postsecondary institution for the cost of any course(s) dropped or withdrawn.
- You may make a written appeal for hours dropped or withdrawn (due to verifiable illness or emergency) after the last day of the drop/add period to the financial aid office at the home postsecondary institution. The postsecondary institution will then make a recommendation to the Florida Department of Education.
- The department may accept or deny the postsecondary institution's recommendation for exception. Non-refunded hours may affect your renewal eligibility.

May I receive course funding at two different postsecondary institutions during the same term?

Yes. You must notify the financial aid office at your **home** postsecondary institution. Your home postsecondary institution is where you are enrolled as degree- or certificate-seeking and will be the postsecondary institution from which Bright Futures funds are disbursed.

What if I enlist in the military?

Specific guidelines for eligible students who enlist in the military are available at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/reinstategp.htm. Additional information is available on page 5 of this brochure.

How much funding will I receive for the Bright Futures award?

Your funding is determined by the Bright Futures **award level received** (Florida Academic Scholars/FAS, Florida Medallion Scholars/FMS, or Gold Seal Vocational Scholars/GSV) and **the type of institution** you attend. For detailed funding information on current year award amounts, at the various types of postsecondary institutions, visit www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/awardamt.htm.

How long can I use the Bright Futures award?

There are restrictions to Bright Futures award funding. Go to www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/renewchart.htm for complete information. Additional information is available on page 8 of this brochure.

Are there restrictions to my Bright Futures funds?

- A maximum of 45 semester hours (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours) may be funded in one academic year (fall through spring).
- All hours are paid at the established cost per credit hour. Graduate hours may be funded at the established cost per credit hour only if they are used to satisfy undergraduate degree requirements. Graduate or undergraduate classification is determined by the postsecondary institution.
- No remedial course work is funded.

Where does the scholarship money come from?

All Bright Futures awards are fully funded by the Florida Lottery and administered by the Florida Department of Education.

Can I receive funding for a summer term?

Based on Florida Bright Futures Scholarship funding for the 2009-10 and 2010-11 academic years, FUNDS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR SUMMER 2009 OR SUMMER 2010 TERM AWARDS.

Activate your User ID and PIN - Know it, Use it, Be Responsible for your state financial aid!



Florida Department of Education

www.fldoe.org

