

The **College Opportunity Fund (COF)**, created by the Colorado Legislature, provides a stipend to eligible undergraduate students, which pays a portion of your total in-state tuition when you attend a Colorado public institution or a participating private institution. To apply, go to: [COF](#).

What is the purpose of this program?

As stated in the law, the program is designed to "increase citizens' awareness of the value of and need for a postsecondary education, and ... make citizens aware of the financial support provided by the general assembly to students and institutions of higher education." In other words, the Legislature believes that students will be more likely to consider postsecondary education if they know that there is financial support from the State for their education.

What is the College Opportunity Fund (COF)?

The **College Opportunity Fund (COF)** stipend is a new method of providing Colorado general fund monies to higher education institutions in Colorado. In the past, the state legislature provided the equivalent of a block grant to schools; now, schools will be paid by the State based on individual students' credit hour enrollment (not a fixed, standard amount for each semester).

How do students apply for this stipend?

Students will apply on-line at the **College Opportunity Fund (COF)** Web site run by the College Access Network (formerly the Colorado Student Loan Program), who has been designated as the state agency which will manage the applications and payments for the COF program.

What happens if I don't apply for a stipend?

If you are eligible for a **College Opportunity Fund (COF)** stipend and fail to apply, you will be responsible for paying the full amount of in-state tuition, including the amount the state would have supplemented had you applied and qualified. To put it simply, students should sign up, or they will pay more of the in-state tuition costs.

What students qualify for College Opportunity Fund stipends?

Undergraduate students who are classified as Colorado residents for tuition purposes are considered eligible students. This applies to both current undergraduates as well as students who will first enroll in the Fall of 2005.

Is the COF stipend available for graduate students?

No, the COF program is only for undergraduate education.

Can an out-of-state student qualify for the COF?

Eligible students are those who are classified as Colorado residents for tuition purposes. If you live and attend a high school in another state, or another country, you may be classified as a Colorado resident. Such situations could include a military station outside of Colorado, having a divorced parent who is a Colorado resident, being a permanent Colorado resident but having a parent who is employed in another country (and that is where the family resides), etc. These residency criteria are set in statute.

Will the stipend cover the total amount of in-state tuition?

No. The stipend is designed to increase public awareness that the state helps offset the costs of undergraduate education at public and participating colleges and universities. The stipend replaces the current funding method which provides funds directly to an institution. With the stipend estimated to be worth \$2,400 at public institutions, the student's estimated

share of tuition for undergraduate education will not decrease from the current rates. Students remain responsible for paying the full cost of tuition and fees, which may continue to be covered through grants, work-study, loans, or personal resources.

Is there a limit on how many credit hours the stipend will fund?

The COF stipend is paid on a per-credit-hour basis. Although there is no semester or yearly limit on credit hours for which a student can receive the stipend, a lifetime limit of 145 semester credit hours has been set. Students exceeding 145 credits can apply for a waiver of this limit.

What happens if a student withdraws from a course, or from the entire semester?

The COF stipend will be determined by the student's credit hour enrollment at the end of the course add/drop period. If students subsequently withdraw from a course, or from the entire semester, their stipend will still be paid against applicable tuition charges, and those credit hours will count toward the maximum of 145.

Will the College Opportunity Fund pay for all of my courses?

No, the following courses will NOT be paid for by the **College Opportunity Fund** (COF):

- basic skills;
- courses taken under the "Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act";
- high school fast-track courses;
- continuing education courses;
- international baccalaureate courses;
- advanced placement courses;
- undergraduate credit hours over the 145 credit hour limit; and
- graduate courses.

Will a check be sent to me?

No, the **College Opportunity Fund** (COF) stipend goes to the institution or institutions where you are enrolled. The stipend will be applied and noted on your student account. You will be able to check, on-line, to see how many credit hours of the 145 limit that you have used so that you can plan your higher education to best use the stipend.