

Impact of Drug Conviction on Federal Financial Aid Eligibility

Under the Higher Education Act, a student may become ineligible for federal student aid upon a conviction of any offense involving the possession or sale of illegal drugs under any federal or state law while receiving Title IV federal financial aid. Federal aid includes: Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal ACG Grants, Federal SMART Grants, Federal Direct Stafford Loans, Federal Direct PLUS Loans, Federal Direct GradPLUS Loans, Federal Perkins Loans and Federal Work Study.

The chart below illustrates the period of ineligibility for FSA funds, depending on whether the conviction was for sale or possession and whether the student had previous offenses. (A conviction for sale of drugs includes convictions for conspiring to sell drugs.)

	Possession of illegal drugs	Sale of illegal drugs
1st offense	1 year from date of conviction	2 years from date of conviction
2nd offense	2 years from date of conviction	Indefinite period
3rd offense	Indefinite period	

If the student was convicted of both possessing and selling illegal drugs, and the periods of ineligibility are different, the student will be ineligible for the longer period.

A student regains eligibility the day after the period of ineligibility ends or when the student successfully completes a qualified drug rehabilitation program. The student will lose eligibility again upon a subsequent drug conviction.

For complete information, please see the FAFSA web page at: <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/faq003.htm> or contact the Federal Student Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID.

Convictions During Enrollment

According to the United States Department of Education, if a student is convicted of a drug offense after receiving Federal aid, he or she must notify the Williams College Office of Financial Aid immediately. The student may be ineligible for further aid in that academic year and required to pay back all federal aid received after the date of the conviction. The Office of Financial Aid will work with the student regarding all of the available options.