

Carnegie Mellon University

Student Financial Aid Office

Federal Student Aid Penalties for Drug Convictions

FAFSA

Students convicted of a federal or state offense or possessing illegal drugs that occurred while they were receiving federal student aid should still complete and submit the FAFSA because they may be eligible for federal aid, and even if they aren't, they may be eligible for state or institutional aid.

Students Convicted of Possession or Sale of Drugs

(Information below is from the Federal Student Aid Handbook)

A federal or state drug conviction can disqualify a student for FSA funds.

Convictions only count if they were for an offense that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving Title IV aid—they do not count if the offense was not during such a period. Also, a conviction that was reversed, set aside, or removed from the student's record does not count, nor does one received when the student was a juvenile, unless the student was tried as an adult.

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
3+ offenses	Indefinite period	

Carnegie Mellon will provide each student who becomes ineligible for Title IV aid due to a drug conviction a clear and conspicuous written notice of their loss of eligibility and the methods whereby they can become eligible again.

A student regains eligibility the day after the period of ineligibility ends or when they successfully complete a qualified drug rehabilitation program. Further drug convictions will make the student ineligible again.

Students denied eligibility for an indefinite period can regain it after successfully completing rehabilitation program (as described below), passing two unannounced drug tests from such a program, or if a conviction is reversed, set aside, or removed from the student's record so that fewer than two convictions for sale or three convictions for possession remain on the record. In such cases, the nature and dates of the remaining convictions will determine when the student regains

eligibility. It is the student's responsibility to certify that they have successfully completed the rehabilitation program.

Standards for a qualified drug rehabilitation program

A qualified drug rehabilitation program must include at least two unannounced drug tests and must satisfy at least one of the following requirements:

- Be qualified to receive funds directly or indirectly from a federal, state, or local government program.
- Be qualified to receive payment directly or indirectly from a federally or state-licensed insurance company.
- Be administered or recognized by a federal, state, or local government agency or court.
- Be administered or recognized by a federally or state-licensed hospital, health clinic, or medical doctor.