

# California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant Program

## FAQ for Students

### **1. Who is eligible for the California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant Program (DSIG)?**

- Completed and submitted California Dream Act Application (CADAA) for that academic year.
- Active recipient of a Cal Grant B Award.
- Demonstrate enough financial need (determined by CSAC or the institution).
- Enrolled in a qualifying institution.

### **2. How many DSIG awards are available?**

The program is limited to 2,500 participants annually. Students must meet the criteria for an eligible student, attend a qualifying institution, and perform the required service hours with a qualifying organization.

### **3. How much can I receive?**

The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) will award up to \$3,000 per academic year (up to \$1,500 per semester or up to \$1,000 per quarter).

### **4. What do I need to do to receive the award?**

The California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant Program (DSIG) encourages California Dream Act Application (CADAA) students with a Cal Grant B award to perform community or volunteer service. Students shall perform at least 150 hours per semester or 100 hours per quarter of community or volunteer service.

### **5. Where can I perform my service hours?**

Students can volunteer with any of the organization(s) on the List of Service Organizations or any organization not on the list if it meets the criteria for a qualifying community or volunteer service organization. On-campus community or volunteer service organizations affiliated with a Cal Grant eligible school, such as outreach, student services, and multi-cultural organizations are deemed eligible.

### **6. Can I volunteer at more than one service organization at a time?**

There is no limit to the number of organizations you can volunteer with. All organizations must meet the requirements of a qualifying service organization and be listed on the Grant Application form.

### **7. How do I apply for DSIG?**

Students will need to apply annually to participate in the California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant Program (DSIG). The DSIG Grant Application and directions can be found on the Apply webpage. Students must also meet Satisfactory Academic Progress and complete any necessary verification for their Cal Grant B award.

**8. When is the application due?**

Applications are available beginning July 1st and will be accepted up until all awards are exhausted.

**9. Does DSIG eligibility rollover?**

No, DSIG eligibility is based on the corresponding Cal Grant award year. Students will need to apply annually to participate in the California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant Program (DSIG). The program is open from July 1 to June 30 and follows the annual academic year.

**10. How long can I receive DSIG?**

A student can receive DSIG for as long as they have an active Cal Grant B award. Students can receive the grant for up to 8 semesters or 12 quarters. When a student has exhausted their Cal Grant B eligibility, they will also no longer be allowed to participate in DSIG.

**11. My status changed and I no longer fill out the California Dream Act Application (CADAA), can I still receive DSIG?**

No, a student must be eligible to complete a California Dream Act Application (CADAA) to participate in DSIG.

**12. What is unmet need and how does it affect DSIG?**

Need is established by taking the cost of attendance and subtracting expected family contribution (EFC). If a student does not have enough need they will not qualify for the award. Students should consult with their financial aid office for information regarding their current unmet need.

**13. I am attending school less than full-time, am I eligible for an award?**

Students enrolled half-time and three-fourths time are eligible, but the grant amount will be reduced based on enrollment. For half-time students, 50 percent is awarded. For three-quarter time (three-fourths full-time) students, 75 percent is awarded. Regardless of enrollment, students shall perform at least 150 hours per semester or 100 hours per quarter of community or volunteer service.

**14. I am attending school less than half-time, am I eligible for an award?**

No, in order to receive the grant, a student must be enrolled at least half-time.

**15. I dropped below half time, what happens to my award?**

DSIG will follow your standard Cal Grant B payment process. Payments will be made based on the recipient's enrollment status using the institution's add/drop date, financial aid census date, or its equivalent. Students should consult with their financial aid office for information on how changing enrollment status can affect their financial aid.

**16. I completed the required service hours. How do I receive payment?**

Students can request payment after performing at least 150 hours per semester or 100 hours per quarter of community or volunteer service. Students must submit the Payment

Request form along with documentation of the service hours performed. The Payment Request form and directions can be found on the Request Payment webpage.

**17. How do I show CSAC I completed the required number of service hours?**

Documentation of service hours performed can be submitted on the California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant Program (DSIG) Service Hours Tracker or on any other type of documentation utilized by the service organization(s) if the documentation includes the name and signature of the certifying official.

**18. How will I be paid for my service?**

Student will be notified via email when they are approved for payment. Payment will be processed by the institution of attendance and can take 4-6 weeks. Initial DSIG payment will occur after student receives at least one Cal Grant B payment.

**19. How many hours must I complete before payment?**

Students can request payment after performing at least 150 hours per semester or 100 hours per quarter of community or volunteer service.

**20. I completed less than the required number of hours can I request a partial payment?**

No, a student may only request payment after completing the required number of hours.

**21. What if I transfer to another institution?**

Student needs to re-register and submit a new Grant Application form with validation from the new institution.

**22. What if I attend more than one institution?**

Students must select one campus in charge of disbursement. Students should consult with their financial aid office for more information.

**23. Is the DSIG program open to undergraduates only?**

No, Teacher Credential Program (TCP) students are eligible. Students can only receive the grant for up to 8 semesters or 12 quarters. When a student has exhausted their Cal Grant B eligibility, they will also no longer be allowed to participate in DSIG.

**24. Are 5<sup>th</sup> year programs eligible?**

Yes. However, students can only receive the grant for up to 8 semesters or 12 quarters. When a student has exhausted their Cal Grant B eligibility, they will also no longer be allowed to participate in DSIG.

**25. Do Foster Youth qualify for extended eligibility?**

No, students can only receive the grant for up to 8 semesters or 12 quarters. When a student has exhausted their Cal Grant B eligibility, they will also no longer be allowed to participate in DSIG.