

2017-18

Bright Futures Student Handbook

Chapter 3: Renewing Your Award



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Renewal Requirements

A student who receives funding during the current academic year is **automatically** evaluated for renewal at the end of the spring term and does not submit a renewal application. The student's institution sends the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) each student's GPA and hours earned. Eligibility notifications are then posted to each student's online Financial Aid Recipient History (FARH). A spring/summer cohort student at the University of Florida who receives funding during the current academic year (spring and summer) is evaluated for renewal at the end of the summer term.

Students who do not meet the annual minimum renewal GPA requirement in their first year of funding will be permitted a one-time restoration in a subsequent summer or academic year renewal period (end of spring term). Students who do not meet the minimum earned hours requirement or who fail to meet the minimum GPA requirement **after** their first year of funding will NOT be permitted a restoration opportunity.

Summer grade and hours earned after spring evaluation may be used to meet the scholarship renewal requirements if the student has a one-time restoration opportunity available. A student must ask a financial aid officer at the home postsecondary institution (that reported his/her spring renewal grade and hours) to submit a summer grade and hours update to the Bright Futures office indicating the adjusted cumulative GPA and hours.

Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement

The renewal cumulative GPA requirements are outlined in the table below.

	Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) ¹	Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS)	Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV)
Minimum Cumulative GPA (unrounded and unweighted)	3.0	2.75	2.75

¹ Academic Top Scholars (ATS) renewal eligibility is based on the FAS annual renewal requirement.

Credit Hour Requirement

A student who receives funding during the current academic year (fall through spring) is **automatically** evaluated for renewal at the end of the spring term. The annual credit hour renewal requirement for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program is the measure of the number of credit hours a student must earn based on the student’s enrollment type per term. The enrollment type of a student is based on credit hours funded after the institution’s Drop/Add period.

The table below shows standard scenarios for required credit hours per a student’s enrollment type, but does not represent all possible enrollment scenarios. Therefore, OSFA encourages students to use the **Bright Futures Credit Hour Interactive Tool**, located on the [Bright Futures Home Page](#). This tool allows students to customize the credit hour requirement to their individual enrollment scenario per term.

Annual Bright Futures Credit Hour Renewal Requirement by Term Course Load

Term 1 Hours Funded	Term 2 Hours Funded	Annual Earned Hours Requirement
Full-Time (12 or more)	Full-Time	12 + 12 = 24
	Three-Quarter Time	12 + 9 = 21
	Half-Time	12 + 6 = 18
Three-Quarter Time (9-11)	Full-Time	9 + 12 = 21
	Three-Quarter Time	9 + 9 = 18
	Half-Time	9 + 6 = 15
Half-Time (6-8)	Full-Time	6 + 12 = 18
	Three-Quarter Time	6 + 9 = 15
	Half-Time	6 + 6 = 12

(For example: A student who is funded **full-time** in Term 1 and funded **three-quarter time** in Term 2 is required to earn a minimum of **21** credit hours by the conclusion of the spring term.)

Renewal into a Different Scholarship Type

- Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) with 2.75-2.99 GPA at the end of the renewal period will renew as Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS). If the GPA is improved above a 3.0 in a subsequent renewal period, the student will restore as a FAS, using the **one-time restoration** opportunity.
- A student who earns the FMS, Gold Seal CAPE Scholars (GSC), or Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) awards in high school may not renew to the FAS award.
- A GSC or GSV award may not renew to the FMS.

Reinstatement Requirements

Reinstatement / Restoration Online Application

An eligible student who did not receive funding during the previous academic year and would now like to apply for scholarship funding is a reinstating student.

- If a student did not receive award funding in the academic year immediately following his/her graduation from high school, the student must apply within two or three years of high school graduation to reinstate the award (depending on the student's year of high school graduation). *(See 'Program Length' in Chapter 2 for specific information related to the student's high school graduation year.)*
- **Students graduating from high school in the 2010-11 academic year and thereafter -** Once a student has received funding for a minimum of one term and met annual renewal requirements, he/she is eligible to apply for reinstatement up to five years from high school graduation.

Applying for Reinstatement

- A student must complete a Reinstatement/Restoration Application available on the OSFA website by selecting **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications**, and then ***Reinstatement/Restoration Application*** within the **Applicant Quick Links menu** (or use the direct link above). Please note that the academic year for which a student is applying is at the top of the application. New applications are available in February each year.
- For students who did not receive funding during the academic year immediately following high school graduation, the deadline for submission of the *Reinstatement/Restoration Application* for both fall and spring (or equivalent) of the year in which seeking funding is May 30. However, OSFA recommends that applications be submitted online by July 1 for a timely fall disbursement or by December 15 for a timely spring disbursement.
- For students who did not receive funding during two academic years immediately following high school graduation, submission of a *Reinstatement/Restoration Application* is required by August 31 for a disbursement during the immediate subsequent academic year.
- If determined eligible for reinstatement, the student will receive the Bright Futures award (Florida Academic Scholars, Florida Medallion Scholars, Gold Seal CAPE Scholars or Gold Seal Vocational Scholars) for which he/she was last eligible prior to reinstatement.

Students Who Enlist in the Military

An initially eligible student who enlists active duty in the United States Armed Forces after high school graduation and wishes to begin using the Bright Futures award must:

- Complete and submit a [Reinstatement/Restoration Application](#) online;
- Submit an official copy of the DD Form 214 to verify time served; and
- Commence the remainder of the two-year reinstatement period upon the date of separation from active duty. *(See 'Program Length' in Chapter 2 for specific information related to a student's high school graduation year.)*

A student who is receiving a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and discontinues his/her education to enlist in the United States Armed Forces must commence the remainder of the renewal period upon the date of separation from active duty. To reinstate the scholarship, the student must:

- Complete and submit a [Reinstatement/Restoration Application](#) online; and
- Submit an official copy of the DD Form 214 to verify time served.

The DD Form 214 should be mailed to OSFA at the address at the end of this chapter.

Students Who Engage in a Full-time Religious or Service Obligation

An initially eligible student who engages in at least 18 months of a full-time religious or service obligation immediately after high school graduation and wishes to begin using the Bright Futures award must:

- Complete and submit a [Reinstatement/Restoration Application](#) online;
- Complete and submit the [Religious or Service Obligation Reporting Form](#); and
- Complete and submit the required documentation listed below.

The religious or service obligation provision is only valid for initial funding and does NOT allow a student extension of time if the student has already received a disbursement.

Additional Documentation

For students returning from a [Religious Service Obligation](#), submit to OSFA, on the organization's signed letterhead, details of the duration and purpose of the service obligation.

For Returning [Peace Corps](#) Volunteers, provide a copy of your **Description of Service (DOS)**.

For Returning [AmeriCorps](#) Volunteers, provide a copy of your completed AmeriCorps **Future Plans or Early Termination Request** (CNCS Form V-732).

All required documents should be mailed to OSFA at the address at the end of this chapter.

Restoration Requirements

A one-time restoration opportunity is available under limited circumstances.

- A scholar who did not meet at least the 2.75 GPA renewal requirement, but DID meet the hours renewal requirement during the first year of funding (end of spring term or end of summer term for spring/summer cohort students) has a one-time opportunity to restore the scholarship.
- A scholar who was initially eligible for an FAS award, but then dropped to FMS award eligibility due to not meeting the 3.0 renewal GPA requirement has a one-time opportunity to restore to FAS.

Students seeking to use the one-time restoration opportunity should ensure they understand their home postsecondary institution's policies concerning what courses are considered in the cumulative GPA and how cumulative GPAs are calculated. The institutional cumulative GPA for Bright Futures is unrounded and unweighted.

Restoration requirements can be satisfied by using one of the following options:

- Take summer classes that your institution will apply towards your cumulative GPA based on their institutional policies (or fall term classes for spring/summer cohort students) and request that the financial aid office submit a summer grade and hours update to the Bright Futures office indicating the adjusted cumulative GPA and hours; or
- Raise cumulative GPA above the renewal requirement before the fall term for which the student is seeking funding (or spring term for spring/summer cohort students) and submit a [Reinstatement/Restoration Application](#).

A student who fails to meet the **minimum earned hours** requirement in ANY academic year renewal period (end of spring term or end of summer term for spring/summer cohort students), will **NOT** be permitted a restoration opportunity. Restoration cumulative GPA and earned hours requirements are outlined in the table below.

	Florida Academic Scholars (FAS)	Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS)	Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV)
Minimum Cumulative GPA (unrounded and unweighted)	3.0	2.75	2.75
Minimum Hours Required per Term IF Enrolled Full-Time (12+ hours)	12 semester hours (earned)*		
Minimum Hours Required per Term IF Enrolled Three-Quarter-Time (9-11 hours)	9 semester hours (earned)*		
Minimum Hours Required per Term IF Enrolled Half-Time (6-8 hours)	6 semester hours (earned)*		

* Or equivalent in quarter or clock hours.

Applying for Restoration

If a student's last status was ineligible for not meeting renewal requirements and the student did not receive funding during the previous academic year, the student will need to submit a [Reinstatement/Restoration Application](#).

- New applications are available in February each year.
- The financial aid office at the Florida postsecondary institution where the student last attended as degree- or certificate-seeking must certify online the postsecondary institutional cumulative GPA and/or earned hours that will determine his/her eligibility to restore.
- A student who last attended an out-of-state postsecondary institution must request that his/her official transcript be submitted to OSFA at the address at the end of this chapter.
- The deadline for submission of the Reinstatement/Restoration Application for both fall and spring (or equivalent) of the year in which seeking funding is May 30. However, OSFA recommends that applications be submitted online by July 1 for a timely fall disbursement or by December 15 for a timely spring disbursement.

Appeals Process

A student may request a Postsecondary Institutional Appeal due to verifiable illness or circumstance beyond student's control.

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

Website Addresses

Reinstatement/ Restoration Application	https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org/ua/SAWREINREST.asp
Financial Aid Recipient History	https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org/disb/SAWMELGaudit.asp
Eligible Postsecondary Institutions	https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org/admin/SAWELIGPSI_ByProg.asp
Bright Futures Credit Hour Interactive Tool	http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/PDF/BFCreditHourTool.xlsx

OSFA Mailing Address

Florida Department of Education
Office of Student Financial Assistance
Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program
325 West Gaines Street
Suite 1314
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400