

Post-Hurricane Sandy Student FAQ's

FINANCIAL AID

Q: I was expecting my financial aid or work study payment and it has not yet arrived. When can I expect funds?

A: Financial aid payments generated during and right after Hurricane Sandy were delayed. Financial aid checks which are mailed by the Central Office of CUNY needed to be diverted to a post office that was open for processing the checks. They are a few days late in reaching you. CUNY Scholar Card payments will be delayed one day. Direct deposit payments will be 1 or 2 days late, depending on the bank where you have your account. We expect no further delays.

Q: I am at a temporary address. How can I get my financial aid check?

A: You must inform your college Registrar and Financial Aid Offices of your temporary address where you can receive your check. To sign up for electronic payment method (CUNY Scholar Support Card) visit <http://www.cuny.edu/admissions/financial-aid/info-resources/scholars-support.html>

Queensborough and New Community College students only: please visit CUNYfirst Self Service to update your address or enroll in electronic payment methods.

Q: If I still don't get my payment what should I do?

A: Contact your college Bursar Office for further guidance.

Q: What if I need to transfer to a different school?

A: If you wish to transfer to a different school, you should contact the financial aid office at your new school as soon as possible so that the new school can request your federal financial aid records. This early contact will also allow the new school to provide you with information needed to support a request for financial aid.

Q: What are my options if my aid eligibility was impacted by a Hurricane Sandy but my application does not reflect this change?

A: The Financial Aid Office at your college is authorized to use professional judgment in order to more accurately reflect the financial need of students and families affected by a disaster. If you feel that your eligibility for aid was impacted by the hurricane, you should contact the financial aid office at your school to ask for a re-assessment of eligibility.

Q: Do I need to claim on my FAFSA any disaster-related support I received from either the state or the U.S. Department of Education?

A: No. If you received any special aid from the federal government or from your state, for the purpose of providing financial relief, it should not be counted as income, other resources, or other financial assistance when determining your eligibility for federal student aid.

Q: What if documentation that I need to apply for financial aid has been damaged or lost because of the hurricane?

A: It is possible that you may be asked to provide documentation to verify information from your financial aid application. If the documentation being requested has been lost or destroyed by the hurricane, you should immediately inform your college Financial Aid Office. They may make a determination not to require those documents.

Q: I have a federal student loan and I will not be able to complete my school year due to the hurricane. What are my options?

A: If you are a federal student loan borrower who will not be able to complete your school year as a result of the hurricane, you will be provided with an extended “in-school” status until you officially withdraw or re-enroll in the next regular enrollment period, whichever is earlier. This action will prevent you from entering repayment status on your loans. Contact your CUNY college to request this action.

Q: I was displaced from my home in the recent hurricane. As a result, I am having trouble making payments on my federal student loan. What are my options?

A: If you are a borrower in repayment who was adversely affected by the hurricane, you qualify for administrative forbearance of loan repayment for a period of up to three months. During forbearance, payments are temporarily postponed or reduced. However, *interest* is still charged during the forbearance period. You should contact your lender or loan servicer to request this forbearance.

Q. My family was impacted by Hurricane Sandy. Are there any resources available to us?

A. You can review the websites below for disaster resources.

- [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#)
- [DisasterAssistance.gov](#)
- [American Red Cross](#)
- [The National Hurricane Center](#)

Q: I have questions regarding my financial aid and completing my FAFSA application?

A: Students and parents with questions about their federal student aid can call 1-800-4FEDAID (1-800-433-3243). You may also visit the Financial Aid Office at your respective school.

Q: I will not be able to complete this term due to the hurricane. What should I do?

A: Contact the Registrar's Office at your school and request to officially withdraw from the term. Contact the Financial Aid Office for an understanding of the financial implications.

REGISTRATION

Q: How will I make up the lost class time? Will there be a make-up time period to get course work done?

A: Yes. In order for faculty and students to make up missed coursework, Colleges and their faculty will inform students how they will complete courses this semester. You should consult with your instructor(s) regarding the specific approach to make-up required coursework for each class. Additionally, CUNY has extended the withdrawal period to November 16th (Nov 12th for LaGuardia CC, New Community College, Kingsborough CC and Law School) to provide additional time to advise students in their best interest.

Q: I have a serious storm-related situation that has prevented me from getting to classes. What should I do? Will I be penalized?

A: Participation and regular attendance in class is essential to your academic success. If you cannot attend classes as a direct result of Hurricane Sandy, you are advised to discuss with your instructor(s) the reason(s) you cannot attend and discuss alternative options. Keep in mind your overall attendance and participation may impact your grade. Excessive absence may result in a failing grade or significant reduction in earned grade. Please refer to your class syllabus for minimum participation and attendance requirements. If in doubt, consult your instructor.

Q: What do I do if I can't attend a make-up day? Will I be penalized if I can't attend a make-up day?

A: Participation and regular attendance in class is essential to your academic success. If for any reason you cannot attend a scheduled make-up day or participate in the assigned make-up activity, you are advised to discuss with your instructor the reason you cannot attend and request an alternative. Keep in mind your overall attendance and participation may impact your grade. Excessive absence may result in a failing grade or significant reduction in earned grade. Please refer to your class syllabus for minimum participation and attendance requirements. If in doubt, consult your instructor.

Q: What happens if I stopped attending classes but it is because I was dealing with a significant personal hardship related to the storm?

A: Initially you are encouraged to discuss such hardships with your instructor and inquire whether an incomplete grade in the course, with the mutual agreement to make up the remaining work and complete the course, is an option. When an incomplete grade is not possible, you should withdraw officially. If withdrawal is after the extended deadline and you have not yet officially withdrawn, you are advised to file an appeal for withdrawal after the deadline and provide a statement and any documentation regarding your specific circumstances. Appeals are considered on a case by case basis.

Q: What if my circumstances related to the Hurricane prevent me from returning to class for the remainder of the semester?

A: You should withdraw officially. If withdrawal is after the extended deadline and you have not yet officially withdrawn, you are advised to file an appeal for withdrawal after the deadline and provide a statement and any documentation regarding your specific circumstances. Appeals are considered on a case by case basis.

Q: What will be recorded on my academic record and transcript if I withdraw from classes?

A: A grade of “W” will be recorded on your transcript when you withdraw.

Q: Will CUNY consider reimbursement of my tuition and fees if I withdraw from classes?

A: Reimbursement is considered upon appeal and on a case by case basis. If you withdraw from classes as a direct result of Hurricane Sandy and have extenuating circumstances, CUNY will provide a full refund of tuition, fees, and other institutional charges, or provide a credit in a comparable amount against future charges. You must provide sufficient documentation that your withdrawal was due to Hurricane Sandy.

Q: What are the extenuating circumstances that would result in a successful appeal?

A: Extenuating circumstances are considered on a case by case basis. You may discuss your college’s appeals process with the campus Office for Students’ Affairs.

Q: If I withdraw from classes will the semester of Financial Aid use up a term of eligible aid I may be entitled to receive?

A: Yes, currently there is no extension of TAP or Title IV maximum term limits.

Q: Will withdrawing from classes as a result of Hurricane Sandy affect my academic eligibility for Title IV financial aid?

A: For the purpose of Title IV, if a student fails to meet an institution's satisfactory academic progress standards due to the storm, upon appeal, the institution may use the exception provided in §668.34(c)(3) to find that because of "other special circumstances" the student is nevertheless meeting its standards. You must provide documentation to support that your inability to maintain satisfactory academic progress was due to Hurricane Sandy. Consult your college financial aid office for appeal process instructions.

Q: Will withdrawing from classes as a result of Hurricane Sandy affect my academic eligibility for TAP financial aid?

A: For the purpose of TAP, students are eligible for a one time waiver if he/she fails to meet the TAP satisfactory academic progress and pursuit standards due to extenuating circumstances. Currently, there is no extension of the TAP one time waiver to apply for the purpose of Hurricane Sandy. You must provide documentation to support that your inability to maintain satisfactory academic progress was due to extenuating circumstances. Consult your college financial aid office for appeal process instructions.