

# The Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance



## ***ACTION LETTER***

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Action Letter #1  
January 2014

### **2013-2014 PROGRAMS GUIDELINES UPDATES**

Dear Colleague:

This Action Letter provides guidance to Massachusetts public institutions in their administration of Massachusetts Tuition Waiver programs. The clarifications of Massachusetts Tuition Waivers Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) filing requirements that are contained in this Action Letter become effective as of award year **2014-2015**.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance at 617.391.6070 if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance

# MASSACHUSETTS STATE TUITION WAIVER PROGRAMS

The following clarifications to Massachusetts Tuition Waiver programs FAFSA filing requirements become effective with award year **2014-2015**.

## **I. NEED-BASED AND NON NEED-BASED MASSACHUSETTS TUITION WAIVERS**

Students who are attending Massachusetts public colleges and universities **MUST** complete an appropriate year Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and comply with all other requirements in order to receive consideration for the following tuition waiver programs that are under the purview of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education:

- 1. Massachusetts Need-Based Tuition Waiver**
- 2. Massachusetts Non Need-Based Tuition Waivers**

Massachusetts **Non Need-Based** Tuition Waivers that require Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion consist of the following programs:

- Mass Transfer Waiver
- Paul E. Tsongas Scholarship Tuition Waiver
- Washington Center Program
- Incentive Program for Aspiring Teachers Tuition Waiver
- Collaborative Teachers Tuition Waiver
- Career Advancement Program Tuition Waiver
- High Technology Scholar/Intern Tuition Waiver
- Department of Children and Families Adopted Child Tuition Waiver and Fee Assistance Program
- Department of Children and Families Foster Child Tuition Waiver and Fee Assistance Program
- Valedictorian Tuition Waiver
- Stanley Z. Koplik Certificate of Mastery Tuition Waiver
- John and Abigail Adams Scholarship Tuition Waiver
- Commonwealth September 11, 2011, Tragedy Tuition Waiver

**Effective with award year 2014-2015, the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance will establish an award identifier for each of the above-referenced non need-based tuition waivers and make the new award identifiers part of the FY15 year-end**

**financial aid data file layout. As such, Massachusetts public institutions will be required to specify the award identifier for each of the non need-based tuition waivers that require FAFSA filing, as they report student award data for those programs to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, commencing with the submittal of their FY15 year-end financial aid data files and every fiscal year thereafter.**

## **II. MASSACHUSETTS CATEGORICAL TUITION WAIVERS**

Massachusetts Categorical Tuition Waivers consist of programs for the categories listed below. Categorical tuition waiver applicants DO NOT have to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), **UNLESS**, those students are also applying for need-based financial aid programs during the same academic terms in which they are being considered for those categorical tuition waivers.

- 1. Veteran Tuition Waiver**
- 2. Native American Tuition Waiver**
- 3. Senior Citizen Tuition Waiver**
- 4. Member of Armed Forces Tuition Waiver**
- 5. Client of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation or Commission for the Blind Tuition Waiver**

In cases where the categorical tuition waiver applicant is not required to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, that applicant **MUST** complete and sign a school-approved and designed Application for Massachusetts Categorical Tuition Waiver. Copies of completed Applications for Massachusetts Categorical Tuition Waivers must also be retained in the financial aid office. The Massachusetts Categorical Tuition Waiver Application shall collect, in addition to applicant's name, address, social security number or student's school ID number, the following information, certifications and agreements:

- the specific Massachusetts categorical tuition waiver that the student wishes to be considered for
- a certification that the student has been a lawful Massachusetts resident for at least one year prior to the start of the the academic terms for which the Massachusetts categorical tuition waiver is being sought
- a certification that the applicant is a United States citizen or eligible non-citizen
- an agreement and certification that the student will also complete an appropriate year Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), **IF**, he/she will be applying for need-based financial aid during the same academic terms for which he/she also is seeking the Massachusetts categorical tuition waiver
- a certification that the student is in compliance with Selective Service Registration Laws
- a certification that the student is not in default of any federal student loans or owe a refund for any previously received financial aid
- a certification that the applicant is not in default of any Massachusetts State student loans or owe refunds to any Massachusetts State financial aid programs

- an agreement that the student will furnish the institution with any and all documentation that is required in the determination of their eligibility for the Massachusetts categorical tuition waiver

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