

Teacher Assistant Scholarship Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

NEW APPLICANT QUESTIONS:

Q1. What is the difference between the TASF and TASL?

- A. TASF (Teacher Assistant Scholarship Fund) is a program administered by the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority. The program is designed to provide funding to full-time teacher assistants pursuing initial teacher licensure. An applicant must enroll at a North Carolina college or university with an approved teacher education program or at a North Carolina community college with a transfer program leading to teacher certification at a qualifying four-year campus. Applicants already holding a baccalaureate degree and only seeking initial licensure are also eligible. This scholarship does not require service or cash repayment, but the applicant must intend to teach in the North Carolina school systems. Please visit the [TASF](#) website for more program details.

The TASL (Teacher Assistant Scholarship Loan) was a program designed to assist teacher assistants enrolled at North Carolina community colleges and was administered by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. This scholarship loan required service or cash repayment. Unfortunately the state funding for the program has been terminated and the program is no longer offered. Previous recipients should contact Repayment Services at (800) 700-1775, ext. 4654 or (919) 549-8614, ext. 4654 for service or cash repayment details.

Q2. What are the eligibility requirements for the Teacher Assistant Scholarship Fund (TASF)?

- A. The applicant must:
- Be a resident of North Carolina for tuition purposes
 - Be employed at a North Carolina public/federal school for at least one year as a full-time teacher assistant, and maintain full-time employment while pursuing teaching licensure, except for the methods semester and/or student teaching semester when an approved leave of absence is permissible.
 - Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment at a four-year public or private North Carolina college or university with an approved teacher education curriculum or in a North Carolina community college (transfer program), and must take classes:
 - At the community college or four-year institution where enrolled, or

- Through distance education or off-campus courses offered by a North Carolina college or university with an approved teacher education program (with the approval of the student's advisor);
 - Credit earned through Internet or distance education programs is acceptable, as long as the classes can be used to fulfill requirements for initial teacher licensure. (See list of qualifying campuses on the application).
- Be seeking initial teacher licensure
 - Not be enrolled in graduate degree program, such as a master's degree program. Students seeking second undergraduate degrees and students seeking licensure only can be considered
 - Not be in default on a student loan
 - Not already hold teacher licensure
 - Have at least a 2.8 grade point average (applicants with higher grade point averages will generally be more competitive and stand a better chance of receiving funding)
 - Enroll in at least six semester hours of coursework at qualifying campuses for each semester in which funds are received, and complete 12 semester hours of coursework during the academic year to remain eligible for future funding
 - Have a college certification statement signed by an appropriate licensing official at the enrolling institution (four year only)
 - Have the endorsement of the principal of the employing school
 - Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid ([FAFSA](#))
 - If previous TASF and TASL recipient, complete a renewal application and 12 semester hours toward teacher licensure in the prior year while meeting the SAP (satisfactory academic progress) requirements of the enrolling institution for renewal consideration
 - Have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.8 for renewal consideration.

Q3. Am I eligible if I'm a teacher assistant in a private school?

- A. No, only teacher assistants in public and federal schools in North Carolina are eligible for this scholarship.

Q4. When will the applications be available, and how will I be able to obtain one?

- A. The applications will be available on-line in January at www.cfnc.org/tasf

Q5. Do I have to complete the FAFSA?

- A. Yes, all applicants who want to be considered should complete the FAFSA, and submit the FAFSA annually.
- Applicants should complete the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. If you do not receive a Student Aid Report

(SAR) with your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) within 2-3 days, please verify the application has been submitted correctly at www.fafsa.ed.gov or call 1-800-433-3243. If you provide your e-mail address, you will receive information about your application electronically. Since the data is transferred electronically, it is not necessary to mail any FAFSA documents to our office.

- Q6. Where do I mail my application packet including the supporting documentation?*
- A. You may mail the information to: Teacher Assistant Scholarship Fund, NCSEAA, P.O. Box 13663, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-3663
- Q7. If I already have a four-year degree, am I eligible for this program?*
- A. An applicant who has earned a baccalaureate degree can be considered if he/she is working toward initial teacher licensure in a second degree program or a licensure-only program. Applicants enrolled in a graduate level program, such as a master's degree program, are not eligible.
- Q8. Can I take some of my classes through a consortium (partnership) arrangement between a four-year campus and a community college?*
- A. Yes, the required 6 hours may be taken at a two- or four-year institution.
- Q9. Is this TASF funding portable if I elect to enter another eligible school after one semester?*
- A. Yes, the applicant must contact the office of the NCSEAA for details; documentation may be required.
- Q10. Do I have to be enrolled at a four-year campus to receive funds?*
- A. No, you are able to take courses on-campus, through the Internet or through distance education programs from **approved** community colleges or public or private colleges/universities. Click [here](#) for eligible colleges.
- Q11. Can I study Early Childhood Education B-K at a community college and still receive funding?*
- A. The Early Childhood Education B-K is not designed as a transfer program; therefore it is not included in the list of approved transfer associate curriculums within your application. However, funding is permitted if a STANDARD TRANSFER AGREEMENT exists between your COMMUNITY COLLEGE and A FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION to accept the course credits toward teacher licensure at that four-year institution, and you INTEND TO TRANSFER into that program upon graduation from the community college. Applicants pursuing degrees in fields/majors other than education are not eligible.
- Q12. Are the PRAXIS PPST scores required for consideration of this scholarship?*

- A. PRAXIS PPST scores are required from applicants who are classified as juniors or seniors and have not yet been admitted to a teacher licensure program. For 2006-07 these scores will be used only for research purposes; in future years the scores may be used as one measure to determine eligibility. These scores must be forwarded with the TASF application and the required transcripts.

Q13. What are the required supporting documents?

- A. **NCSEEA must have all original documents that require signatures; photocopies or faxes are prohibited.**
- **Application:** this must be completed online by the applicant
 - **Employment Information Form:** : this must be printed after submission of the online portion then signed by both applicant and the school principal
 - **Current official transcript:** if you are currently enrolled in college, a current college transcript must accompany your application. If you are not currently enrolled in college, a transcript from the school you most recently attended is required
 - **College certification statement:** the signature of the licensure officer is required for students enrolled at four-year institutions
 - **FAFSA:** this form is used to determine financial need for federal and state grant programs, and must be completed for TASF funding. This form must be submitted as soon as possible to allow adequate processing time. If you do not receive your SAR within 2-3 days, please verify the application has been submitted correctly by checking online at www.fafsa.ed.gov or call 1-800-433-3243.

Q14. Why do I need an endorsement from the principal of my employing school?

- A. Such an endorsement indicates the principal understands that the applicant intends to pursue a higher education degree, while remaining employed as a full-time teacher assistant. It also confirms the applicant is employed as a full-time teacher assistant.

Q15. Am I eligible for this scholarship if I have defaulted on a student loan?

- A. No, you must first re-establish a satisfactory payment history with the loan agency in order to qualify for the TASF.

Q16. Will all eligible candidates who apply by the application deadline receive Teacher Assistant Scholarship Fund awards?

- A. No. The number of applications received may exceed the scholarship funding. You are encouraged to apply for other financial aid as well.

Note: All scholarship offers will be contingent upon the receipt of sufficient money from the legislature to fund awards

Q17. Who will receive priority when determining scholarship recipients?

A. The following will receive priority:

- Priority consideration will be given to previous TASF and TASL recipients who continue to meet all program requirements and submit their applications by May 31st. If insufficient money is available to fund all applicants in this group, priority will go to those applicants with the highest grade point averages and financial need.
- For funds remaining after renewal candidates are awarded, priority will go to applicants who are not previous TASF or TASL recipients who meet all program requirements and submit their applications by May 31st. Within this group, priority will go to those with the highest grade point averages and financial need.
- Applications received after May 31st will be processed in order of receipt until funds are exhausted.

Q18. When will I be notified of the award decision?

A. Applications received by May 31st will be reviewed in July. Decisions will be posted online in August. We anticipate a large volume of applications; regrettably, we probably will not be able to fund every eligible applicant. Keep in mind that all awards will be subject to funding received from the legislature, and funds can be reduced or cancelled if the appropriation for this program is reduced below last year's level

Q19. Is there a maximum award amount I can receive through TASF?

A. Applicants must be enrolled for a minimum of six semester hours to be considered for funding. Funding levels are dependent upon where the student is enrolled. The following indicates the maximum dollar amounts recipients may be awarded:

- If the recipient is a new TASF applicant, and has never received TASL funding, the total maximum amount that a student can receive through this program is \$25,200.
 - Recipients enrolled at four-year institutions may receive up to a maximum of \$3,600 (\$1,200/term) annually. Recipients enrolled at two-year institutions may receive up to a maximum of \$1,800 (\$600/term) annually.
 - Those who have a combined enrollment of six or more hours at both a community college and a four year institution:
 - If enrolled for at least six hours at the four-year institution, recipients will be awarded up to \$1,200
 - If enrolled at least six or more hours at a community college, recipients will receive \$600.

- Fall, Spring and the combined Summer sessions constitute three terms.
- For previous TASL recipients, the maximum TASL award amount cannot exceed the total of \$14,000 (\$3,500/year).
 - Recipients are awarded \$1,000 per session (Fall and Spring sessions)
 - Recipients are awarded for \$1,500 for summer session.
 - **If you continue enrollment in a community college and have reached the \$14,000 allotted for TASL, you will not be eligible for funding through TASF until you are enrolled in a four-year institution.**

Q20. If I am offered full funding through both the North Carolina Model Teacher Education Program (NCMTEC) and TASF, can I accept both awards?

- A. By working in certain counties that are partners with the NC Model Teacher Education Consortium (NCMTEC) you may be eligible for reduced tuition and other services offered by that program. You cannot receive full awards from both programs. You may, however, be eligible for a supplemental stipend from NCMTEC if you are awarded the TASF and the cost of tuition exceeds the funds provided through TASF.

If you receive the TASF you may also be eligible to take advantage of classes and some of the services provided by NCMTEC, such as PRAXIS test preparation workshops. You should check with NCMTEC regarding these and other services. To determine if you are eligible for services provided by NCMTEC or if you teach in a participating school system, or to determine if you teach in one of the participating counties, contact NCMTEC at (800) 280-6985 or by e-mail at staff@ncmtec.org or visit www.ncmtec.com/partners.htm for a list of participating school systems.

Q21. I am a full-time teacher assistant, but I have taken a leave of absence this semester so that I can complete my student teaching requirements. Am I eligible to receive this scholarship?

- A. You can qualify if you take a leave of absence from your teacher assistant position to complete your methods semester and/or your student teaching semester. You should submit documentation of your leave of absence and of your coursework showing that you will be working on either your student teaching semester or your methods semester; this information should be forwarded to the TASF Program Manager at the NCSEAA prior to the start of the semester during which you will take the leave of absence.

Q22. I am not classified as a teacher assistant, but I work as a counselor assistant in the guidance office of a public school. I am enrolled in a four-year degree

program leading to initial teacher licensure and I meet all other program requirements. Am I eligible for this scholarship?

- A. No, you must be classified as a full-time teacher assistant in a North Carolina public or federal school to qualify for this scholarship.

Remember: For priority consideration, the application and all required materials should be received by the State Education Assistance Authority by May 31st. Applications received later will be processed until funds have been exhausted.

Q23. Is there other funding available for teacher assistants?

- A. Yes, below are some suggestions:

- The Model Teacher Education Consortium offers tuition assistance, PRAXIS preparation courses and other services to teacher assistants who work in one of their partner school systems. To learn more about the agency visit www.ncmtec.org. Please visit [qualifying systems](#), to view a list of the qualifying systems.
- Teacher assistants considering teaching careers and enrolled fulltime may consider the Prospective Teacher Scholarship Loan, administered by NCSEAA. Details are available by visiting www.cnfc.org/ptsl or by calling 1-800-700-177.
- Teacher assistants enrolled fulltime and pursuing graduate teaching licensure in the field of math or science may consider the NC Student Loan Program for Health, Science, and Math administered by NCSEAA. Details are available by visiting www.cnfc.org/hsm or by calling 1-800-700-177.
- You should also contact your advisor and the financial aid office of the campus you plan to attend to determine the availability of institutional funds as well as financial aid deadlines and required forms.
- We also recommend that you visit the Web site for [College Foundation of North Carolina \(CFNC\)](#) or call the toll-free number, 866-866-CFNC for information to help you plan, apply and pay for college. There is no charge for this service.
- Finally, you must complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for consideration for need-based and other funding that might be available for you. If you need assistance completing this form, you can register for one of the aid free FAFSA Day programs offered throughout North Carolina. You can get information online at www.cfnc.org/fafsaday.

Q24. If awarded, when will I receive the check?

- A. Funds are electronically transmitted to the Participating School for deposit in an account maintained by the financial aid office in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 668.163.

RENEWAL APPLICANT QUESTIONS:

Q25. Is the renewal of this scholarship automatic?

- A. No, you must complete a renewal application and submit the required forms annually to be considered for renewal funding.

Q26. What is the minimum GPA required for scholarship renewal?

- A. TASF recipients must maintain at least a 2.8 GPA to be eligible for renewal.

Q27. What must I do if I'm a previous TASF/TASL recipient and desire to renew?

- A. Renewal TASF/TASL recipients must:
- Complete a renewal application
 - Complete 12 semester hours toward teacher licensure in prior year while meeting the satisfactory academic progress requirements of the enrolling institution. TASF applicants are expected to submit an additional transcript reflecting spring grades prior to July 31st. Within this group priority will go to those with the highest GPA's.

Q28. If I'm a renewal applicant, do I need to complete a FAFSA?

- A. All applicants must complete the FAFSA annually. Results should be received by March 31st for priority consideration. The FAFSA may be submitted online at www.fasfa.ed.gov. The data will be transferred electronically to NCSEAA and it is not necessary to mail any FAFSA documents to our office.

GRADUATE QUESTIONS:

- Q29. If I'm a graduate seeking a higher level degree, am I eligible for TASF funding?*
- A. No, funding for graduate level study is not available at this time through the TASF program.
- Q30. What do I need to do when I graduate?*
- A. Recipients should send a copy of your diploma and teaching license to close your TASF file. If you previously received TASF, you should also contact repayment for instructions advising additional items to be returned to SEAA: (800) 700-1775, ext. 4654 or (919) 549-8614, ext. 4654
- Q31. What is the deadline for submitting my verification of graduation?*
- A. It is strongly recommended that the graduate submit his/her information upon graduation, so the process for service repayment can be reviewed and initiated. However, the maximum time available before interest accrues is 90 days from the date of graduation.
- Q32. As a previous TASF recipient, what are the repayment options?*
- A. Loan Forgiveness or cash repayment. For repayment questions, please call Repayment Services at the NCSEAA at (800) 700-1775, ext. 4654 or (919) 549-8614, ext. 4654 to request a [Repayment Agreement](#).
- Q33. As a previous TASF recipient, what are the cash repayment options?*
- A. The applicant can repay using the lump sum option, or monthly cash payments can be established. Please call [Repayment Services](#) at the NCSEAA at (800) 700-1775, ext. 4654 or (919) 549-8614, ext. 4654 to request a Repayment Agreement.
- Q34. As a previous TASF recipient, can I request a deferment?*
- A. Requests for deferred repayment may be granted under specific circumstances. Please call [Repayment Services](#) at the NCSEAA at (800) 700-1775, ext. 4654 or (919) 549-8614, ext. 4654 to request a deferment