

FEDERAL STUDENT AID PENALTIES FOR DRUG CONVICTIONS

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) requires all institutions of higher education to notify all students about the penalties associated with drug-related offenses.

Students will lose their eligibility for federal student aid if convicted of possession and/or sale of illegal drugs for offenses that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving federal student aid. Note: Drug related convictions for illegal activity that occurred during a time in which the student did NOT receive federal financial aid, will NOT result in loss of eligibility. In addition, a conviction that was reversed, set aside, or removed from the student's criminal record will NOT result in loss of eligibility, nor does a juvenile offense, unless the individual was tried as an adult.

The chart below illustrates the period of ineligibility for Federal Student Aid funds, as per type of the conviction and number of offenses. A conviction for sale of drugs includes convictions for conspiring to sell drugs.

	Possession of Illegal Drugs	Sale of Illegal Drugs
1st Offense	1 year from date of conviction	2 years from date of conviction
2nd Offense	2 years from date of conviction	Indefinite period
3 + Offenses	Indefinite period	

If the student was convicted both of possession and sale of illegal drugs, and the periods of ineligibility are different, the student will be ineligible for the longer period.

A student regains eligibility the day after the period of ineligibility ends or when he/she has successfully completed a qualified drug rehabilitation program. Further drug convictions will make the student ineligible again.

Students denied eligibility for an indefinite period can regain eligibility only after successfully completing a rehabilitation program; or if a conviction is reversed, set aside, or removed from the student's criminal record so that fewer than two convictions for sale or three convictions for possession remain, in which case the timelines as indicated in the above chart apply.