

## TIPS FOR APPLYING

### **DON'T:**

- 1. Apply as a married student before you are married.**  
If you plan to file as a married student, you must be married on the date you sign the form. Don't submit the form before you are married. If you submit your application as a single student, you are not allowed to update your status after the fact.
- 2. Apply as married if you are separated at the time you submit the application.**  
Even though you are legally married, if you are separated at the time you submit your application, answer "SEPARATED".
- 3. Fail to include parent income information (dependent students)**  
  
Dependent students are under age 24, not married or no children. Dependent students must include parent income and parent personal information on the FAFSA application.
- 4. Forget to include yourself (the student) as a part of the household (dependent students).**  
Always include yourself as part of your parent(s) household even if you didn't live there during the tax year.
- 5. Incorrectly report income and assets of parent(s) or spouse.**  
If you are divorced or separated, list only your income and asset information (including only your portion of taxes paid), even if you filed a joint return. If you are married when you sign the FAFSA, combine you and your spouse's income and asset information, even if you were not married during the 2020 tax year. Dependent students, don't forget stepparent income, if applicable.
- 6. Incorrectly report untaxed income.**  
Pay particular attention to cash or any money paid on your behalf not reported elsewhere on the FAFSA form. If you received money for living expenses from another source that was not reported elsewhere, it must be included here.
- 7. Incorrectly report educational tax credits and child support payments.**  
Use section 3 or 4 (student & parent area) on the FAFSA instructions to complete these questions correctly.
- 8. Purposely provide inaccurate information.**  
If you purposely provide false information on your federal financial aid application, you are subject to fines and/or imprisonment under the U.S. Criminal Code. State and local laws may also apply in such cases.

Meridian Technology Center will not discriminate in its programs, services, activities or employment because of race, color, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender expression or identity, national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, or genetic information.

Inquiries concerning application of this policy may be referred to Jeremy Zwiack, Coordinator of Section 504/Title II, Title VI, Title IX, and the Age Act, at Meridian Technology Center, 1312 South Sangre Road, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 74074-1899, or by phone at 405.377.3333. Outside assistance may be obtained from the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights at One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, Suite 320, Kansas City, MO 64106, or by phone at (816) 268-0550, fax at (816) 268-0599 or email at OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov.

## TIPS FOR APPLYING

### **DO:**

- 1. Apply quickly after October 1.**  
Many financial aid programs have limited funding (Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant) that is awarded to those who apply earliest. The ideal time to apply is as soon as possible after October 1 and before November 1. FAFSA applications submitted after November 1 will be accepted. You must renew your financial aid application each award year. The award year runs July 1 through June 30.
- 2. Submit a completed and signed application form. Your FSA ID is the same as your actual signature.**  
Pay close attention to the school year you are applying for when entering your financial aid information.
- 3. Use completed federal tax return information by transferring the data using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool while processing your FAFSA. An award will not be calculated until tax information and verification is complete.**
- 4. Complete FAFSA on the Web at Studentaid.gov.**
- 5. Apply for FSA ID username and password when directed.**
- 6. Use Meridian Technology Center's Title IV school code: 012474.**
- 7. Use the tips at [www.meridiantech.edu/submit-info-tips](http://www.meridiantech.edu/submit-info-tips) when submitting personal information such as tax returns.**

### **Completion Follow-Up**

Our instructors contact completers 6 months after they complete the program to ascertain whether or not the students had jobs related to their training. The completion and job placement outcomes are reported to the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

**For more information about financial aid contact:**  
Meridian Technology Center  
1312 South Sangre Road | Stillwater, OK 74074-1899  
(405) 377-3333, Ext. 298 | [www.meridiantech.edu](http://www.meridiantech.edu)  
Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
**Title IV School Code: 012474**

Rev. 06/09/20



## STUDENT FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION 2023-2024

Financial Aid is available to assist students and their families with educational expenses. Sources of aid are federal, state, institutional, community, foundation, and business and industry programs.

### **FEDERAL & STATE FINANCIAL AID**

**Federal Pell Grant Program** (Title IV Financial Aid) provides aid to which assistance from other federal and non-federal sources may be added. This is a grant with no repayment as long as student meets guidelines. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available online at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov).

**Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant (OTAG)** is a grant from the state of Oklahoma. Grant amounts are determined by enrollment status, financial need to meet the cost of attendance and the availability of funds. The student must be a resident of Oklahoma and complete the Oklahoma residency section on the FAFSA. Submission of the FAFSA serves as your application for these funds. These funds are limited; the priority application deadline is **October 1** or soon after of each year.

**Oklahoma's Promise** is administered by the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education (OSRHE). Students apply at their high school while enrolled in the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, or 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Student eligibility is determined by the OSRHE and is dependent upon enrollment in an approved program. Please advise the Financial Aid Office that you are an Oklahoma's Promise recipient at the time of enrollment to ensure that proper procedures are taken to receive this benefit.

- **Federal Student Loans are not available at Meridian Technology Center.**

### **OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** is designed to assist individuals facing employment barriers or economic disadvantages or individuals that require additional training to secure productive employment. Eligibility is determined by a WIOA counselor. Additional information is available by calling the Office of Workforce Innovation at (405) 624-1450 or visit <https://oklahomaworks.gov/>.

**Vocational Rehabilitative Services** assists individuals who are physically and/or mentally challenged/disabled. Eligibility is determined at the local office by a vocational rehabilitation counselor. Apply by contacting the local office at (405) 624-1450.

**Tribal Grants** may be available for Native Americans. Eligibility is determined by each tribal agency. Contact the appropriate tribal agency office for eligibility requirements and application procedures. If an agency will be paying tuition, books, etc., it is the student's responsibility to obtain an award letter from that agency, and submit it to the financial aid office.

### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Meridian Technology Center Foundation Scholarships**  
These scholarships are available for students who require supplemental assistance for tuition and/or book expenses. Qualifications include demonstrated financial need and ability to benefit from career and technical education. **Apply online at [www.meridiantech.edu/scholarships](http://www.meridiantech.edu/scholarships).**

#### **The Next Step Tuition-Waiver Scholarship**

This scholarship provides assistance with educational costs for in-district students who attend Meridian Technology Center after receiving their diploma or obtaining their GED within two years of their expected high school graduation date. Students must provide the following items: deposit, written career plan/goals, two letters of reference, high school transcript or GED, and proof of residence. The Next Step Scholarship does not apply to enrollment into adult only programs.

#### **Second Year Senior Tuition Waiver**

The Second Year Senior Tuition Waiver provides assistance with educational costs for in-district students who begin a program of study during their senior year of high school and need to complete the second year of the program as an adult student. Secondary students attending Meridian may receive a tuition waiver upon completion of their high school graduation requirements if they attended Meridian while they were enrolled in a Meridian Technology Center district high school.

**Other scholarships** are provided each year by numerous community and civic organizations. The Financial Aid Office will provide applications and information through instructors as these opportunities occur.

### **TUITION AND BOOKS**

Adult students' books and online curriculum will be available in the classroom, for most programs. In-district tuition is \$3.00 per hour and \$6.00 for out-of-district with a \$100.00 deposit due for most career majors. Practical Nursing, Radiologic Technology and Evening Cosmetology require a \$500.00 deposit and may have additional tuition and fees. Please refer to [www.meridiantech.edu/programs](http://www.meridiantech.edu/programs) for career major descriptions, total clock hours, gainful employment, costs and program expense sheets.

## APPLYING FOR FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID

### Step 1: Create an FSA ID & Password

Go to [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) and create an account. You must enter a user name. The user name must be from 6 to 30 characters long. You can use any combination of numbers and/or uppercase and lowercase letters. Choose a user name that you will not forget. Avoid using personal identifiers (first name, last name, date of birth). Dependent students under the age of 24, not married or with no children will also need a parent to apply for an FSA ID & password. The password must be between 8 and 30 characters long. You can use any combination of the following **as long as it contains at least 3 of the 4 criteria:**

- Numbers
- Uppercase letters
- Lowercase letters
- Non-alphanumeric special characters !@#&\*() .? Your password is case sensitive

You will then be asked to verify your email and/or phone number with a verification code sent to each.

### Step 2: Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

After October 1, 2022 and using the 2021 income tax information, you can apply for the 2023-2024 FAFSA. Complete the FAFSA application online at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov). List Meridian Technology Center as a school you plan to attend.

**The Title IV school code is 012474.**

### Step 3: What to have while completing the FAFSA:

- It would be helpful to have a copy of your (and your spouse’s or parents’) income tax forms (1040, 1040A or 1040EZ and W-2s, for 2021, in front of you when you fill out the FAFSA on the Web. It is recommended to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to link tax information. You are encouraged to print the confirmation page after you have submitted your FAFSA.
- Parents of Dependent students will also need marital status date, social security numbers and date of births.

### Step 5: Wait for a Response

The Department of Education will process your FAFSA within 3-5 business days. Once processed, your SAR (student aid report) will be sent to the schools listed. The Financial Aid Office will contact you by email to complete further paper forms for your file.

### Step 6: Award Notification

The Financial Aid Office will send you an award letter after your financial aid file is completed indicating the amount of Pell Grant you are eligible to receive. An official award is not available until your enrollment is finalized and verification completed; however, you may contact the Financial Aid Office for an estimate at any time after providing all requested information.

## FAFSA ELIGIBILITY

To receive aid from the U.S. Department of Education student aid programs, you must:

- Demonstrate financial need as determined by the FAFSA
- Have received a high school diploma or an equivalent such as a General Educational Development (GED) or homeschool equivalency, but not a bachelor’s degree
- Be enrolled as a regular student seeking a certificate in an eligible program for 600 clock hours or more
- Sign the certification statement on the FAFSA stating that:
  - You are not in default on a federal student loan and do not owe money on a federal student grant
  - You will use federal student aid only for educational purposes
  - You will not receive a Federal Pell Grant from more than one educational institution for the same period of time
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen with a valid social security number

- Be registered with the selective service (males only, 18-25 years of age)
- Make satisfactory academic progress
- Have less than 600% lifetime eligibility used (LEU)

An individual’s financial aid eligibility calculation incorporates several components, which includes financial need, the difference between direct educational expenses and family contribution, and earned income from the previous tax year. Family contribution equals parental contribution for dependent students in conjunction with the student’s contribution.

## INDEPENDENT STUDENT

An independent student will not need to submit parental information on the FAFSA. Under the federal definition, an independent student for 2023-2024 is:

- Twenty-four years old (born before 1/1/1999)
- A veteran of the U. S. Armed Forces
- Married
- An orphan or ward of the court
- One who has legal dependents other than a spouse
- Through documentation by the Financial Aid Office and determined to be independent by reason of exceptional circumstances

## DEPENDENT STUDENT

Dependent students are those that do not meet any of the definitions of an independent student. Parents of dependent students must submit parental information on the FAFSA in order for the students to be considered for financial aid.

- Where the student is living at the time of enrollment or if the parents did or did not claim the student on their taxes is not part of the consideration for dependency status.

## EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION (EFC)

For dependent students, EFC is the sum of the parent’s contribution and the student’s contribution calculated by the federal needs analysis formula. It is the total amount of money a family can be expected to contribute toward the student’s education for the award year. For the independent student it is the student’s (and spouse’s, if any) contribution calculated by the federal needs analysis formula.

## STUDENT AID REPORT (SAR)

A SAR is available to the student 3-5 business days after a FAFSA has been submitted. It provides all the information from the applicant’s FAFSA allowing that information to be reviewed and, if necessary, corrected. It tells the applicant if he/she is eligible to receive a Pell Grant. Carefully check the accuracy of the information, make necessary corrections, and respond to any questions and/or special messages on the SAR. Corrections may be submitted by consulting with the Financial Aid Office.

## VERIFICATION

Your FAFSA may be selected for review by the U.S. Department of Education for verification of the information you reported. You may be asked to provide additional documentation for verification purposes. Failure to comply with verification requirements will result in forfeiture of aid. These documents may include, but are not limited to:

- Proof of all income reported on the FAFSA (I.e. copy of federal income tax return transcripts or W2’s and a non-filer document) UNLESS you use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool – using the IRS DRT makes verification easy!
- Completed and signed verification worksheets
- Proof of child support paid and/or proof of SNAP benefits received

## FINANCIAL AID DISBURSEMENT

Pell Grant amounts are calculated using the FAFSA EFC and total clock hours for the program a student attends. Pell Grant disbursements are divided into payment periods and students will only be paid for the eligible hours enrolled. Pell Grants are disbursed twice per month on the 15th and 30th. Students who are eligible for disbursements three working days prior to the 15th will receive their disbursement on the 15th. Students who are eligible three working days prior to the 30th will receive their disbursement on the 30th. For example, if you are eligible on January 7th, you will receive your check on the 15th. If you are eligible on January 14th, you will receive your check on the 30th.

**Disbursements will be paid based on the availability of funds from the U.S. Department of Education** after all required information has been verified, a complete student file is established, and the recipient is attending class. Each recipient will be notified by email once disbursement to their account has occurred. Funds in excess of tuition, fees or books previously deferred are paid in the form of a check to the eligible recipient. If there are excess funds, the student will be notified that these funds are available. After receiving notification, a recipient should take photo identification with a signature to the Bursar’s window to sign your disbursement report and receive the refund check.

## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Satisfactory academic progress means the student is progressing in a positive manner toward fulfilling career major certificate requirements within the stated length of time. To remain eligible for financial aid at Meridian Technology Center, students are expected to progress toward satisfactory completion of a course of study as stated below:

- **Qualitative Requirement (grade based):** Maintaining a cumulative grade of “C”; or 70% (2.0) grade point average or greater. A progress report will be sent to the instructor who will be asked to complete the student’s academic status.
- **Attendance:** Maintaining 90% attendance. No absence is considered excused for financial aid purposes. **Students should keep track of their attendance throughout the program to ensure they are meeting SAP requirements.** Students must also meet 90% of total program hours for program completion.
- **Quantitative Requirement (time based):** Completing an acceptable percentage of the program’s scheduled objectives. The percentage is based upon curriculum clock hours completed to date/total hours of enrolled career major.

To determine if the student maintains eligibility for assistance, the following procedures will be followed:

**First Payment (new students – students enrolled in a new career major):** The student’s enrollment status will be checked and documented in the student’s file to ensure the student is enrolled and in attendance in an approved career major on at least a half-time basis. If the student has met the initial entrance and eligibility standards and all necessary documents for financial aid have been received, the student will receive

the first payment on schedule.

**Subsequent Pay Periods (new students):** To determine the satisfactory academic progress for subsequent pay periods, an average cumulative grade of at least a “C” or above will be documented using the progress report received for the previous payment period(s). If, for the previous payment period the following are met, the financial aid office will disburse the second Pell grant.

- The average cumulative grade is at least a “C” or above
- The cumulative attendance is 90% or better
- The student is proceeding in a positive manner toward fulfilling certificate requirements within 150% of the enrolled career major hours and satisfactory academic progress standards have been met

## Continuing Students (students continuing in the same program):

A student’s enrollment status and progress will be checked and documented in his/her file to ensure that s/he is enrolled in an approved program on at least a half-time basis. All payments for continuing students will be based on procedures outlined under Subsequent Pay Periods for new students.

## Financial Aid Warning and Suspension

If it is determined that the student is not meeting the satisfactory academic progress listed under Subsequent Pay Periods, the student is placed under a financial aid warning and informed by letter or email. Warning status lasts for one payment period only. The student will still be eligible for the Pell disbursement, but this will happen only once. There cannot be two consecutive financial aid warning periods.

Any student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress as defined above will have their subsequent financial aid suspended. The student has the right to appeal if they have not met Satisfactory Academic Progress.

## Financial Aid Appeal and Probation

Students who fail to make satisfactory progress after the warning period lose their aid eligibility unless they successfully appeal and are placed on probation. All students who receive notification that aid has been suspended will receive written procedures to follow to appeal the decision of the Financial Aid Office. Request for an appeal must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office within 10 working days of being notified of the suspension of aid.

## REFUND POLICY

Upon written notification of withdrawal, a tuition refund less the deposit will be remitted to individuals enrolled in full-time programs according to the following guidelines. A 100% refund, less the deposit, will be remitted to students who officially withdraw within the first five (5) days of a payment period. No tuition will be refunded to a student who has not officially withdrawn within the first five (5) days of a payment period. A 100% refund, including the deposit, will be remitted only to students who have documented extenuating circumstances that have been approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Written notice of withdrawal is considered to be the completion and submission of an official withdrawal form or a letter that is dated and signed by the student, and addressed to the Executive Director of the Career Planning Center.

**All books are nonrefundable.**

## Return of Title IV Financial Aid

A federally mandated refund must be calculated for all Title IV financial aid recipients who withdraw prior to the completion of the period of enrollment for which he/she has been awarded aid according to the following federal regulations. If a student withdraws on or before the 60 percent point in time of the payment period, a portion of the total of Title IV funds awarded must be returned, according to the provisions of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998. The calculation of the return of these funds may result in the student owing a balance to the school and/or the federal government.

Examples of how these refund policies are applied are available in the Financial Aid Office.