



Maryland Higher Education Commission Reinstates Guaranteed Access Awards to Students Impacted by Vendor Error

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) has taken immediate action to resolve a vendor-caused error that led to the erroneous cancellation of Guaranteed Access (GA) Grant awards earlier this month. The Commission has decided to honor all grants that were initially awarded, ensuring that no student is left without financial aid.

The error impacted over 600 students from two distinct groups.

- More than 170 students who were, in fact, eligible for the grant and had their awards wrongly cancelled. These awards have since been fully reinstated after confirmation of eligibility.
- Nearly 460 students who were initially awarded a grant due to a system error that incorrectly determined eligibility. The Commission made the decision to reinstate these awards for this academic year, upholding its commitment to ensure no harm to students.

The funds to honor the awards for the ineligible students, totaling \$6.2 million, are available through the Howard P. Rawlings Program. The availability of this funding is due to the normal attrition of awards that occurs before the academic year begins.

The Commission recognizes the vital role financial aid plays in advancing students' postsecondary success. By honoring these awards, MHEC affirms its commitment to putting students first.

A more secure, modernized system is being developed with stronger safeguards and multi-level approval workflows to prevent this issue from happening again. Deployment is scheduled for fall 2026.