SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE

Financial Aid Frequently Asked Questions

San Diego Mesa College Financial Aid is working under guidance from the U.S. Department of Education addressing concerns expressed by institutions whose students are directly or indirectly affected by COVID-19. We have prepared this FAQ to answer questions that you may have if you and/or your family has been impacted by the corona virus COVID -19. Due to the nature of the emergency and the large amount of proactive changes from State and Federal agencies you may find that some of the information presented is no longer accurate, we apologize in advance.

Where can I find information, campus updates, resources and support services?
For important campus information regarding COVID -19, click on the link:
http://www.sdmesa.edu/covid19/index.shtml

I have questions about my Financial Aid, but the college is closed. What can I do?
Please email your questions/concerns directly to your assigned Financial Aid staff and Technician which can be found here: **http://www.sdmesa.edu/financial-aid/staff.shtml**. Disclosure of your financial aid password and student ID is required. Federal regulations on privacy laws (FERPA) have not been waived and we take seriously that your information is not compromised by making sure that you, the student, is the one receiving your confidential information.

I have been asked to submit additional documents to the Financial Aid Office. Should I use my regular email to send them?
You should never send any document that contains confidential or Personal Identifier Information (Name, SSN, Date of Birth, etc) via regular email as this is an unsecure method of communication. We are currently working to establish processes that will allow students to submit additional documents with confidential information to the Financial Aid Office via mySDCCD portal, stay tuned. Until that option is available, please contact your assigned staff and Technician via email. Your assigned Financial Aid staff and Technician can be found here: **http://www.sdmesa.edu/financial-aid/staff.shtml**. Disclosure of your financial aid password and student ID is required.

I don't have a financial aid password. What options do I have?
Please complete the Financial Aid Password selection form by clicking the following link: **http://www.sdmesa.edu/financial-aid/documents/Password%20form.pdf**. **Be sure to follow the instructions on the form and submit by fax (619) 388-2824** or *via mySDCCD portal (this option is coming soon).* Maintaining the security and confidentiality of your protected information is critical to our office. To meet federal requirements (FERPA) and SDCCD policies, the financial aid developed a password system, as the procedure that allows our office to comply with these disclosure policies. The password system allows students to validate the identity via phone or email. **For more information on FERPA, please visit: https://www.sdccd.edu/students/consumer-information.aspx**

Our finances have been affected by COVID-19. What can I do?
If your parents (dependent student) or you or your spouse (independent student) have been financially affected by COVID-19, please download, complete and submit via fax, or upload via mySDCCD portal (option is coming soon) the 2019 – 2020 Income Reduction Request from our link: **http://www.sdmesa.edu/financial-aid/documents/2019-2020/2019-2020%20Income%20Reduction%20Request.pdf**
Our financial aid staff will be able to review your family's ability to help with your educational expenses if their employment is affected by situations that were beyond your control such an illness and if the income this year will be significantly less than the income reported on your FAFSA (2017 income was reported on the FAFSA for 2019-2020. In some cases students will need to provide income information form the years, 2018, 2019, or the academic year (July 2019 – June 2020) to

determine which income information will best benefit the student. As a note, the 2018 income is to be reported on the FAFSA for 2020-2021). For further review of your family income situation, please email your assigned Financial Aid Technician which can be found by clicking the link: **http://www.sdmesa.edu/financial-aid/staff.shtml.** Disclosure of your financial aid password and student ID is required.

I need to apply for a federal student loan and submit the request form, but it requires a "wet signature". How can I meet the requirement?
Although the campus is closed, Financial Aid will accept the loan application submitted via fax or mySDCCD portal (option is coming soon) to expedite processing. The original form signed in "blue ink" (wet signature) must be mailed to our office to the following address:

San Diego Mesa College
Financial Aid Office
7250 Mesa College Drive
San Diego, CA 92111

For additional information, please contact our office at: mesaaid@sdccd.edu.Disclosure of your financial aid password and student ID is required.

I have not received my refund check. What options do I have?
While the SDCCD campuses and offices remain closed, we do not have access to returned mail to verify if any particular check was returned. A procedure is currently under development to allow certain flexibility to required check void and re-issue processes for financial aid recipients whom are also eligible for a refund. You can send your questions to our office general email: mesaaid@sdccd.edu. Disclosure of your financial aid password and student ID is required.

What happens if I need to drop a class?
The Department of Education does not have the authority to be lenient regarding compliance requirements related to unit requirements. Financial aid eligibility is verified based on the units you are enrolled in at the financial aid "Freeze Date", February 19th, 2020 for Spring semester. You must be enrolled half time to remain eligible for financial aid. Unless the class was a late start class that you did not attend, dropping a class will have no effect on your 2nd Pell disbursement, however, it may affect other types of aid yet to be disbursed. For additional information, please contact your assigned Financial Aid Technician which can be found at the following link: **http://www.sdmesa.edu/financial-aid/staff.shtml.** .Disclosure of your financial aid password and student ID is required.

What happens if I withdraw from classes?
Unfortunately, the Department of Education does not have the authority to be lenient regarding compliance requirements related to withdrawals. If you withdraw (officially – you drop the class on mySDCCD portal or unofficially – stop attending classes and receive an "F" grade or Incomplete), the Financial Aid Office is required to perform a calculation called *the Return of Title IV* to determine how much of the financial aid you received for the term that needs to be returned. The later in the term you withdraw, the more of your financial aid will be considered "earned" and the impact on your financial aid will be smaller.
On Friday, March 27, 2020, The President of the United States signed into law the 2020 CARES Act. This act provides administrative relief to students and schools alike. If a student withdraws from school due to COVID-19, the student will not be responsible for repaying any federal student aid that the calculation identifies as a student responsibility. For additional information or questions, please contact our office at: mesaaid@sdccd.edu.Disclosure of your financial aid password and student ID is required.

What happens if I decide to take a semester off?
If you do not enroll, you will not receive financial aid for that semester. However; your eligibility for the future semester may not be affected. We recommend that you see your general counselor any time your enrollment plans change to make sure that you are still on track to graduation.

I did not meet the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress and would like to submit an appeal. How do I do that?

During the period in which the SDCCD campuses and offices are closed, the appeal process will be slightly modified. Please complete the 2019 – 2020 Appeal Form by clicking the link: **http://www.sdmesa.edu/financial-aid/documents/2019-2020/2019-2020%20Financial%20Aid%20SAP%20Appeal%20-%20Mesa.pdf**

Submit the completed form via fax 1(619) 388 – 2824 or postal mail to:

> San Diego Mesa College
> Financial Aid Office
> 7250 Mesa College Drive
> San Diego, CA 92111

Be sure to carefully read the full document as it explains how to complete the appeal form. Although we are working remotely, you are required to meet with an academic counselor and develop an academic plan. Due to campus closure, you will not be required to submit a copy of the academic plan signed by a general counselor. However, you must meet all other requirements and procedures in order for us to review the appeal petition.

On Friday, March 27, 2020, The President of the United States signed into law the 2020 CARES Act. This act provides administrative relief to students and schools alike. If a student withdraws from school due to COVID-19, the student will not be responsible for repaying any federal student aid that the calculation identifies as a student responsibility. It further benefits the student by authorizing schools from excluding in the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) calculation any unit for which the student withdrew as a consequence of COVID-19 pandemic if the student fails SAP and is required to submit an appeal.

For additional information or questions, please contact our office at: mesaaid@sdccd.edu.
Disclosure of your financial aid password and student ID is required.

Will Federal Work-Study students be paid due to campus closure?

While colleges remain closed, and under the guidance of the U.S. Department of Education schools can make Federal Work Study payments for hours not worked. For the month of March, students will be paid based on their current weekly assigned hours. Starting with the month of April and while the college remains closed, students will be paid their monthly Federal Work Study wages based on the SDCCD maximum of 25 hours per week until your assigned award is depleted. Some students will exhaust their awards sooner than others depending on the number of prior hours work and fund balances. For additional information, please contact Skyler Dennon at: sdennon@sdccd.edu.
Disclosure of your financial aid password and student ID is required.

What additional Information and resources are available?

News from the California Community Colleges Chancellors Office (CCCCO) - Communication Division

https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Communications-and-Marketing/Novel-Coronavirus/co-communications-to-collegeshttps://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Communications-and-Marketing/Novel-Coronavirus/co-communications-to-colleges

Financial Aid Contact
For additional information, please feel free to contact us via email at **mesaaid@sdccd.edu**.

Caveat:
The information on this document is accurate as of 04/05/2020. We will continue to update as needed