

2026 C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation's CSBG Scholarship



Application Deadline 4 p.m. June 15, 2026

The Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Scholarship is designed, in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, to supplement the cost of tuition, fees, and program-specific supplies to offset the students' needs.

An applicant can/plan to attend college, university, or a trade school; in-state or out-of-state; remote, on-ground, or hybrid; and be a part-time or full-time student.

This is a competitive scholarship based on income and the interview process. Previous scholarship recipients are eligible to submit an application. All eligible candidates will be interviewed.

Good Luck!

Instructions:

1. Complete the Scholarship Application in its entirety. *Be sure to include the essay separately.*
2. Include entire household income for the past 30 days *for anyone living at the same address as the applicant.*
3. Include *two* personal and/or academic letters of recommendation from unrelated individuals.
4. Provide proof of residency in one of the (7) seven counties served by C.E.F.S. Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Shelby, Moultrie, Christian, or Montgomery. Photocopy of a bill addressed to the applicant, applicant’s parent or guardian is acceptable.
5. Request your high school or college transcript to be mailed to: C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation, Attention Outreach, 1805 S. Banker St., P.O. Box 928 Effingham, IL 62401. If you have a GED, submit proof.
6. Completed applications and all requested documents must be submitted to your county C.E.F.S. Outreach Office by 4 p.m. on the date of the deadline.

INCOME GUIDELINES FOR ELIGIBILITY
Based on 200% of Poverty

Family Size	30 Day
1	\$2,660
2	\$3,607
3	\$4,553
4	\$5,500
5	\$6,447
6	\$7,393
7	\$8,340
8	\$9,287

For family units with more than 8 members, add \$946.00 for each additional member.

County Outreach Offices

CEFS Clay County
Outreach Office
835 West North
Flora, IL 62839
(618) 662-4024

CEFS Effingham County
Outreach Office
1010 Jefferson Ave.
Effingham, IL 62401
(217) 347-7514

CEFS Montgomery County
Outreach Office
8353 IL Route 127, P.O. Box 128
Taylor Springs, IL 62089
(217) 532-5971

CEFS Fayette County
Outreach Office
517 W. Gallatin St.
Vandalia, IL 62471
(618) 283-2631

CEFS Shelby County
Outreach Office
515 N. Cedar
Shelbyville, IL 62565
(217) 774-4541

CEFS Moultrie County
Outreach Office
114 E. Harrison St.
Sullivan, IL 61951
(217) 728-7721

CEFS Christian County
Outreach Office
220 W. Franklin
Taylorville, IL 62568
(217) 824-4712

Please complete the following information

1. _____
Name

2. _____
Address City Zip

3. _____
Cell Phone Alternate Cell/Work/Home Phone Email Address

_____ Sex (Male, Female)
Date of Birth Circle One

4. Race (Select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	American Indian or Alaska Native
<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or African American
<input type="checkbox"/>	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
<input type="checkbox"/>	White
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other-Specify

Ethnicity _____ Hispanic _____ Non-Hispanic _____ Other-Specify _____

5. Disabled (Yes or No) Veteran (Yes or No)

6. Number of people in household _____

7. Household Type

<input type="checkbox"/>	Single
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Parent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Two Adults No Children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Two Parent Family
<input type="checkbox"/>	Two or More Adults with Children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster Parents
<input type="checkbox"/>	Three or More Adults No Children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Parent Adult(s) with Children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: Specify
<input type="checkbox"/>	

Housing Status: ___ Group Home ___ Homeless ___ Owner ___ Renter ___ Shelter ___ Subsidized

8. Marital Status: Single Married Separated Divorced Widowed
(Circle One)

9. Do you have any dependents? _____ If yes, how many? _____

Employment history

Please list jobs held, names and addresses of employers and dates of employment, etc.

1. _____
Job Title Employer

Address Dates

2. _____
Job Title Employer

Address Dates

3. _____
Job Title Employer

Address Dates

Household Information

1. List name and relationship to applicant of **all** persons living at same address with applicant. List all income earned in the last 30 days for **anyone 18 or older**. (Include wages, child support, unemployment, cash earned, TANF, etc.).

<u>Name</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Last 30 day gross income</u>
1. _____		
2. _____		
3. _____		
4. _____		
5. _____		
6. _____		
7. _____		

Household income

1. The gross household income (amount before taxes or deductions are taken out) for the last 30 days was \$ _____ (pay stubs or other proof of income must be attached)

2. Check all sources of income:

<input type="checkbox"/> Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> TANF
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Benefits
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment	<input type="checkbox"/> Pensions
<input type="checkbox"/> Odd Jobs	<input type="checkbox"/> Rental Income
<input type="checkbox"/> SSI	<input type="checkbox"/> Lottery/Gambling
<input type="checkbox"/> SSDI	<input type="checkbox"/> Alimony/Maintenance
<input type="checkbox"/> SSA	<input type="checkbox"/> Workman's Comp.
<input type="checkbox"/> Child Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

School Information

1. School Name _____

City _____ State _____

2. State where the school will be attended _____

3. Intended Major _____

4. Acceptance to School/Acceptance to Program _____

5. Remote In-Person Hybrid (Circle One)

6. Full-time or Part-time (Circle One)

7. College/University, Trade School or Certification Program

Education Information

1. Expected Graduation date _____
2. GPA (of most recent school) _____
3. HS/GED Date _____
4. Transcript: Attach either a high school or college transcript. The Official Transcript is not required.

List any grants or scholarships you have received:

1. Illinois Guaranteed Loan Program \$ _____
2. Amount anticipated from Pell Grant \$ _____
3. Other assistance programs (VA/WIA/etc.) \$ _____

Community Involvement (Yes or No)

Examples of community involvement

Help at food banks, animal shelters, libraries, or hospitals.

Tutoring and Mentoring

Fundraising for Causes (Host bake sales, car washes, or charity runs to support local nonprofits.)

Perform music, theater, or dance at community events or senior centers.

Collect clothing, school supplies, or hygiene kits for shelters.

Read to children at libraries or visit nursing homes to provide companionship.

Essay/Personal Statement

On a separate page, write a brief narrative (250-500 words) describing your future relating to your educational goals. Information provided in this narrative will be used in the evaluation of this application. Applicants only need to provide one essay. Please choose one of the essay questions below. The essay should be double-spaced with a 12-point font.

- 1. Describe your future and educational goals. Explain what you want to study, why you chose this field, and how your career could support programs or services that help the community.*
- 2. Write about a problem in your community that you would like to help solve. Explain how your education and future career could make a difference and what steps you plan to take to achieve that goal.*
- 3. Describe a service, or organization that inspires you. How do your future career goals connect to this type of work, and how could you contribute to helping others through your chosen field?*
- 4. Think about how your talents or interests could be used to serve others. Write about how your education and career plans could create positive change in your community and/or for people in need.*
- 5. Explain how your future career could improve the quality of life in your community. What skills or knowledge will you gain from your education that will help you do this?*
- 6. Imagine yourself ten years from now. Describe your career, the kind of work you are doing, and how your efforts are helping strengthen and support services in your community.*
- 7. Describe a need or challenge in your community that you care deeply about. How could your education and future career help you create or support services that address this issue?*
- 8. Think about a time when you helped others or participated in community service. How did that experience shape your goals for the future, and how do you plan to continue serving your community through your education and career?*
- 9. What motivates you to give back to your community? Explain how your chosen field of study and future career could strengthen or expand community services that help others.*
- 10. Describe a community service program or organization that inspires you. How do your future goals align with the mission of that program, and how might you contribute to similar efforts in your career?*
- 11. Imagine your future as a leader in your community. What kind of community services would you like to create or improve, and how will your education prepare you to make that vision a reality?*

Acknowledgements

I hereby acknowledge that the information relating to the determination of my eligibility requires verification and I authorize others to release such information as may be required for the determination of my eligibility for this scholarship.

I permit the agency to share my information with media.

I understand that I may be contacted for additional documentation.

I affirm that I will use the funds I receive under the C.E.F.S. Community Services Block Grant Scholarship Program solely for expenses related to the pursuit of an institution-defined study. I understand that I am responsible for repaying the funds that I receive should the scholarship funds not be used to assist in meeting my educational expenses related to attendance at the institution.

I further understand that the amount of any repayment is based on regulations published by the Secretary of Education.

I also affirm that, to the best of my knowledge, I have provided C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation with complete and accurate information concerning all financial assistance I have received. I understand that if I failed to provide complete information, all or part of the financial assistance from C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation may be withdrawn.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the information on this application is true and correct.

I give my permission for educational institutions to release my academic and financial records to C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation in consideration of receiving and continuing C.E.F.S. financial assistance.

(Signature)

(Date)

Funding for this program is made available by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Community Assistance through the Community Services Block Grant Program.

Application summary-be sure to include:

- Proof of 30 days income
- Proof of residency
- 2 letters of reference
- Completed application and signature on the statement of education purpose
- Essay on a separate sheet of paper
- Transcripts:
 - If you are a graduating senior, be sure to make arrangement for high school transcripts to be sent to our Main office: CEFS Outreach, 1805 S. Banker St. Effingham, IL 62401.
 - If you are not a recent graduate, we need proof of graduation or a copy of current college transcripts with this application.
 - If you have a GED, submit proof with this application.

Once determined eligible, interviews will be scheduled. If you are awarded a scholarship, additional information will be needed (copies of Social Security Cards for everyone in the household, Driver's License or State ID, signed releases to publicize your award, etc.).

You must attend a college student loan debt workshop if awarded a scholarship.

Good Luck!