

ISAC Guidance for Spring 2020 Term Adjustments for Students Impacted by the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

MONETARY AWARD PROGRAM (MAP) GUIDANCE

In order to provide relief for students who were impacted by COVID-19 during the Spring 2020 term, ISAC is allowing colleges to make adjustments to a student's enrollment hours so that they will not be charged with using MAP Paid Credit Hours (MPCHs) for courses they may have withdrawn from, but for which they had incurred charges and received a MAP award.

A payment request type of "COVID-19" has been added to the MAP system in GAP Access that, when selected, will allow colleges to change the enrollment hours for impacted students who may have dropped classes or completely withdrew, but not impact the award amount.

To provide colleges with a consistent approach for identifying students who are eligible for an adjustment to their MPCHs, ISAC is providing guidance that is similar to the [U.S. Department of Education's \(ED\) May 15, 2020 guidance](#) in regard to who qualifies for an R2T4 waiver, but it does include some important differences.

Following is ISAC's guidance in regard to who may qualify for an adjustment to MPCHs due to COVID-19 and when documentation from the student would be required:

- Any institution that moved students from ground-based instruction to distance learning, closed campus housing or other campus facilities, or experienced other interruptions in instruction may consider all withdrawals from students enrolled in ground-based instruction during the covered period to have been the result of circumstances related to the COVID-19 national emergency.
- For institutions that did not undergo changes in educational delivery or campus operations as a result of the COVID-19 emergency, the institution will be required to obtain a written attestation (including by email or text messages) from the student explaining why the withdrawal was the result of the COVID-19 emergency.
- Institutions must also obtain written attestations from students who withdrew from distance education programs explaining why the withdrawal was the result of the COVID-19 emergency.
- Allowable circumstances include, but are not limited to, illness of the student or family member, need to become a caregiver or first responder, loss of childcare, economic hardship, inability to access wi-fi due to closed facilities, or an increase in work hours as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. Information (which in the judgment of the institution is reliable) provided by the family member of a withdrawn student whom the institution is unable to contact is acceptable for documentation purposes.

Adjustments to MPCHs due to COVID-19 may be made for:

- Any students who received MAP in the Spring 2020 term, including second semester and second and third quarter MAP recipients;
- Partial or complete withdrawals; and/or
- Students at institutions that may choose to not implement the R2T4 waiver allowed for under the federal CARES Act.

Following is guidance on submitting adjustments to MPCHs via the MAP system in GAP Access:

- Schools must first have submitted an initial, regular MAP payment request that has been processed by ISAC, and the request for an adjustment must be made on the transaction on which payment was requested during the term.
- To submit the adjustment, select the “COVID-19” payment request type on the Student Detail: Payment screen and check the Request Amount Override box for the term as well.
- Enter the adjusted number of enrollment hours, which can be between 0 and the number of enrollment hours of the previous paid request, and click on the Save Changes button.
 - The Requested Amount will not automatically adjust based on the number of adjusted enrollment hours, but it can be manually changed if it needs to be lowered.
 - The “COVID-19” request type will allow the requested amount to exceed the eligible amount based on provided hours, however, it cannot exceed the amount previously paid.
 - MPCHs will be applied based on the adjusted enrollment hours.
- COVID-19 requests cannot be made on the Enrollment Hours or Payment Generation screens in the MAP system.
- Once all adjustments have been entered on the individual Student Detail: Payment screens, navigate to the Submit Payment Requests screen to submit the generated requests to ISAC, being sure to select the appropriate term.
- COVID-19 payment requests will show a U status code.
- On the Payment List, the Request Type COVID-19 will be listed as V.

For FTP Processing:

- The Payment Request type field will show V as the value.
- If the Payment Request type is V:
 - If Enrollment Hours is greater than the last processed request, the request will receive a result code of 1 and an expanded result code of 1E.
 - If Requested award amount > the last processed request or < = 0, the request will receive a result code of 1 and an expanded result code of 1U.

Here are a few other reminders in regard to processing adjustments for students who have been impacted by COVID-19 in the Spring 2020 term:

- MAP awards can only be used for tuition and mandatory fees.
- If tuition and/or fees were waived for or refunded to a student, then any MAP award amount that exceeds the amount of tuition and mandatory fees that was ultimately charged to the student for the term would need to be returned to ISAC.
 - Schools are encouraged to adjust other aid, if possible, to avoid the need to reduce MAP awards.
 - MAP cannot be refunded to the student.
- Colleges should document in their policies and procedures any actions taken to provide relief/assistance to students who have been impacted by COVID-19, and whatever actions are taken should be applied consistently to all students as much as possible.

ILLINOIS VETERAN GRANT (IVG) & ILLINOIS NATIONAL GUARD (ING) GRANT GUIDANCE

Relying on an approach similar to adjustments allowed for MAP recipients, schools may adjust enrollment hours in GAP Access for IVG and ING recipients so students are not charged with using units for courses they were not able to complete due to COVID-19, while allowing students to retain the full award amount for charges incurred during the Spring 2020 term. Following is ISAC's guidance in regard to who may qualify for an adjustment and when documentation from the student would be required:

- Any institution that moved students from ground-based instruction to distance learning, closed campus housing or other campus facilities, or experienced other interruptions in instruction may consider all withdrawals from students enrolled in ground-based instruction during the covered period to have been the result of circumstances related to the COVID-19 national emergency.
- For institutions that did not undergo changes in educational delivery or campus operations as a result of the COVID-19 emergency, the institution will be required to obtain a written attestation (including by email or text messages) from the student explaining why the withdrawal was the result of the COVID-19 emergency.
- Institutions must also obtain written attestations from students who withdrew from distance education programs explaining why the withdrawal was the result of the COVID-19 emergency.
- Allowable circumstances include, but are not limited to, illness of the student or family member, need to become a caregiver or first responder, loss of childcare, economic hardship, inability to access wi-fi due to closed facilities, or an increase in work hours as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. Information (which in the judgment of the institution is reliable) provided by the family member of a withdrawn student whom the institution is unable to contact is acceptable for documentation purposes.

Adjustments to IVG and ING units due to COVID-19 may be made for:

- Any students who received IVG or ING in the Spring 2020 term
- Partial or complete withdrawals.

To make adjustments:

- Schools may adjust the number of enrollment hours for impacted students in GAP Access without adjusting the award amounts. (No special indicators are needed.) After making adjustments, be sure to save and submit changes to ISAC, and units will be recalculated accordingly.
- **For students who completely withdrew and need enrollment hours adjusted to zero**, an adjustment request will need to be submitted to ISAC's School Services Department using the template provided on the last page of this document.

For IVG and ING recipients who may have interruptions of study during the Summer 2020 term due to COVID-19, schools should make those adjustments according to their existing policies and procedures.

MINORITY TEACHERS OF ILLINOIS (MTI) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM & GOLDEN APPLE (GA) SCHOLARS OF ILLINOIS GUIDANCE

MTI and GA recipients who were unable to complete the Spring 2020 term (second semester/second or third quarter) due to COVID-19 will not be charged with using benefits for the term and may receive an additional term of benefits, if needed, to complete their degree program. Guidelines for providing relief for these students are as follows:

- This relief only applies to students who completely withdrew during the Spring 2020 term due to the COVID-19 national emergency.
- Relief for MTI and GA recipients is not intended to be broadly provided for all students who withdrew during the Spring 2020 term, rather, it is intended for those who were unable to complete the term due to a COVID-19-related circumstance.
- Documentation regarding the reason for the student's withdrawal must be included in the student's file.
 - Schools may, but are not required to, obtain a written attestation from the student explaining why the withdrawal was the result of the COVID-19 emergency.
 - Allowable circumstances include, but are not limited to, illness of the student or family member, need to become a caregiver or first responder, loss of childcare, economic hardship, inability to access wi-fi due to closed facilities, or an increase in work hours as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. Information (which in the judgment of the institution is reliable) provided by the family member of a withdrawn student whom the institution is unable to contact is acceptable for documentation purposes.
- Students who withdrew due to COVID-19 may retain their full award amount for cost of attendance charges they may have incurred for the term. The student would still be subject to teaching requirements associated with 2019-20 benefits received, and award amounts received would be included in a student's repayment amount in the event that the student does not meet the teaching requirements and the scholarship converts to a loan.
- In order to provide this relief for students, schools will need to submit a list of MTI and/or GA recipients who received Spring 2020 benefits and who withdrew during the term due to COVID-19 to ISAC's School Services Department so that adjustments can be made to students' records. A template for providing this list can be found on the last page of this document.
- Schools should retain a copy of the request in the students' files for future reference.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER TUITION WAIVER (SETTW) GUIDANCE

SETTW recipients who were unable to complete the Spring 2020 term due to COVID-19 will not be charged with using benefits for the term and may receive an additional term of benefits, if needed, to complete their degree program. Additionally, students who had a COVID-19-related withdrawal in the Spring 2020 term and were not able to meet the program's eligibility requirement to remain continuously enrolled, will maintain their eligibility status for the Fall 2021 term. Guidelines for providing relief for these students are as follows:

- This relief only applies to students who completely withdrew during the Spring 2020 term due to the COVID-19 national emergency.
- Relief for SETTW recipients is not intended to be broadly provided for all students who withdrew during the Spring 2020 term, rather, it is intended for those who were unable to complete the term due to a COVID-19-related circumstance.
- Documentation regarding the reason for the student's withdrawal must be included in the student's file.
 - Schools may, but are not required to, obtain a written attestation from the student explaining why the withdrawal was the result of the COVID-19 emergency.
 - Allowable circumstances include, but are not limited to, illness of the student or family member, need to become a caregiver or first responder, loss of childcare, economic hardship, inability to access wi-fi due to closed facilities, or an increase in work hours as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. Information (which in the judgment of the institution is reliable) provided by the family member of a withdrawn student whom the institution is unable to contact is acceptable for documentation purposes.
- Students who withdrew due to COVID-19 may retain their full award amount for tuition and mandatory fee charges they may have incurred for the term. The student would still be subject to teaching requirements associated with 2019-20 benefits received, and award amounts received would be included in a student's repayment amount in the event that the student does not meet the teaching requirements and the scholarship converts to a loan.
- In order to provide this relief for students, schools will need to submit a list of SETTW students who received benefits in the Spring 2020 term and who withdrew during the term due to COVID-19 to ISAC's School Services Department so that adjustments can be made to students' records. A template for providing this list can be found on the last page of this document.
- Schools should retain a copy of the request in the students' files for future reference.

GRANT PROGRAMS FOR DEPENDENTS OF POLICE/FIRE/CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS (PFC) GUIDANCE

PFC recipients who were unable to complete the Spring 2020 term (second semester/second or third quarter) due to COVID-19 will not be charged with using benefits for the term and may receive an additional term of benefits, if needed, to complete their degree program. Guidelines for providing relief for these students are as follows:

- This relief only applies to students who completely withdrew during the Spring 2020 term due to the COVID-19 national emergency.
- Relief for PFC recipients is not intended to be broadly provided for all students who withdrew during the Spring 2020 term, rather, it is intended for those who were unable to complete the term due to a COVID-19-related circumstance.
- Documentation regarding the reason for the student's withdrawal must be included in the student's file.
 - Schools may, but are not required to, obtain a written attestation from the student explaining why the withdrawal was the result of the COVID-19 emergency.
 - Allowable circumstances include, but are not limited to, illness of the student or family member, need to become a caregiver or first responder, loss of childcare, economic hardship, inability to access wi-fi due to closed facilities, or an increase in work hours as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. Information (which in the judgment of the institution is reliable) provided by the family member of a withdrawn student whom the institution is unable to contact is acceptable for documentation purposes.
- Students who withdrew due to COVID-19 may retain their full award amount for tuition and mandatory fee charges they may have incurred for the term.
- In order to provide this relief for students, schools will need to submit a list of PFC students who received benefits in the Spring 2020 term and who withdrew during the term due to COVID-19 to ISAC's School Services Department so that adjustments can be made to the students' records. A template for providing this list can be found on the last page of this document.
- Schools should retain a copy of the request in students' files for future reference.

For PFC recipients who may have interruptions of study during the Summer 2020 term due to COVID-19, schools should make those adjustments according to their existing policies and procedures.

AIM HIGH GRANT PROGRAM

Using guidance similar to what ISAC has provided for its other programs, schools are encouraged to consider allowances for AIM HIGH Grant recipients who may have been impacted by COVID-19 in the Spring 2020 term so that future eligibility is not negatively impacted.

Decisions regarding adjustments and how those are handled should be documented in the school's policies and procedures for the program and in the files of impacted students.

OTHER PROGRAMS/SITUATIONS

For any other programs or unique situations for which students may have received benefits during the Spring 2020 term and were impacted by a COVID-19 interruption or withdrawal that may not have allowed the student to receive the full value of the program benefits, schools should contact ISAC's School Services Department for guidance on handling those situations individually.

COMPLIANCE REMINDERS

- For MAP recipients, a record of a COVID-19 adjustment is tracked by the COVID-19 payment option indicator in GAP Access. For students who meet the conditions in ISAC guidance and received an automatic adjustment, additional documentation is not required, however, schools should maintain documentation for students who were required to provide an attestation that their withdrawal was due to COVID-19.
- Schools should maintain in the respective student files any requests submitted to ISAC for a Spring 2020 term adjustment for any of ISAC's other programs.
- Schools should document in their policies and procedures all decisions and processes being implemented and followed in response to COVID-19.
- During the Spring 2020 term, ISAC's guidance was consistent with federal guidance, considering it acceptable to rely on an expired driver's license or state ID so that 2019-20 awarding could be completed and claims submitted in a timely manner. For 2020-21, however, schools are encouraged to consider the timing of when the driver's license, state ID (or other documentation) expired and the individual situation before making decisions to accept an expired document.

The Illinois Secretary of State's office has extended the expiration date for driver's licenses and ID cards that are currently expired or set to expire by September 30, 2020 to November 1, 2020, so students may continue to use a recently expired license/ID until that point.

As always, schools are encouraged to use their best judgement in determining what is acceptable documentation and to document their decisions regarding exceptions in their policies and procedures for future reference.

TEMPLATE FOR SUBMITTING ADJUSTMENT REQUESTS TO ISAC FOR STUDENTS IMPACTED BY COVID-19 IN SPRING 2020 TERM

Please provide the information listed in the table below for each student for whom an adjustment is being requested due to a COVID-19 withdrawal in the Spring 2020 term (second semester/second or third quarter). Schools may submit one list for all programs (in which case, be sure to include the ISAC program for each student) or a separate student list for each ISAC program. Do not include any other documentation you may have collected to make your determination; those records should be retained in the students' files.

Adjustment requests must be submitted by the Financial Aid Director via e-mail to ISAC's School Services Department at: isac.schoolservices@illinois.gov. Please include "COVID-19 Adjustment Request" in the subject line.

To: ISAC School Services Department

From: (Name and Title)

School Name:

Federal School Code:

This is to request that ISAC adjust records for the following students who withdrew from the Spring 2020 term due to the COVID-19 national emergency.

Award Recipient's Name <i>(Include last four digits of SSN only if multiple students with same last name)</i>	ISAC Program <i>(MTI, GA, SETTW, PFC, IVG, ING)</i>	Enrollment Status <i>Full-Time or Half-Time</i>	Original Number of Enrollment Hours	Complete Withdrawal due to COVID-19?
<i>Student One</i>	<i>MTI</i>	<i>FT</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Student Two</i>	<i>IVG</i>	<i>FT</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>Yes</i>

For each of the students listed above, I am requesting an adjustment to the student's benefit usage for the ISAC program indicated so these students are not charged with receiving program benefits for the Spring 2020 term (second semester/second and third quarters).

The submission of this e-mail to ISAC's School Services Department serves as certification that the students listed above withdrew from the institution and were unable to complete the term due to the COVID-19 national emergency and that supporting documentation is being retained in the student's file.

Sincerely,

Please provide:

- **Financial Aid Director Name**
- **Financial Aid Director Contact Information**