



2019-2020 Rutgers Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program Application Instructions For First-Year Students, New Jersey Residents Only

Celebrating 50 Years of the New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund Program!

EOF Application Instructions

The Rutgers EOF Application is designed for first-year applicants only. The information on the EOF Application is used to make a preliminary determination of your eligibility for the New Jersey EOF program in the *Rutgers Admissions Pre-Screen Process*. Please do not leave any items blank on the application. If you and/or your parent(s) completed a federal tax return in 2016, you will need to refer to copies of this tax return in order to complete the application. If you and/or your parent(s) received nontaxable income during 2016, you will need to refer to copies of those benefits statements to complete the application. Rutgers reserves the right to request copies of these documents with all schedules and worksheets at any time during the preliminary eligibility pre-screen process. Mail the completed EOF Application and requested documents to: Office of University Undergraduate Admissions *Operations Center*, 65 Davidson Road, Room 202, Piscataway, NJ 08854-8097.

Transfer applicants should not complete this form. If you are a transfer student who has previously participated in the New Jersey EOF program at another New Jersey college, please submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application (NJAFSA) as appropriate; submit an EOF Transfer Form from your previous NJ college where you were a recipient of the EOF grant or provide a statement from your previous EOF Counselor/Director on your former NJ college's letterhead certifying prior participation in their EOF program to the Rutgers Office of University Undergraduate Admissions; and contact the EOF Director at the Rutgers undergraduate school you plan to attend.

All students in consideration for the EOF grant must eventually submit the appropriate financial aid application based upon citizenship status, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application (NJAFSA), which provides more detailed financial information. Both financial aid applications require completion of New Jersey State grant questions. For FAFSA filers, answer the NJ State grant questions on the confirmation page. For NJAFSA filers, answer the NJ State grant questions within the form. During the post-admit financial aid application verification process, the Rutgers Office of Financial Aid will request that admitted EOF Scholars submit their family's 2017 IRS federal tax return transcript, nontaxable income statements, and asset verification documents to confirm eligibility for enrollment through the Rutgers EOF program. The EOF Scholar's full name and 9-digit Rutgers University Identification (RUID) number must be written on the income tax documents, nontaxable income statements, and asset verification documents. Final acceptance into the New Jersey EOF program will be contingent upon the results of the required financial aid application and NJ State grant questions.

Preliminarily eligible, first-year, EOF Scholars may be disqualified based upon the results of the FAFSA, NJAFSA, or New Jersey State grant verification process and may be removed from the EOF program and denied admission and/or have their enrollment cancelled.

Mission of EOF

The New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund was created by law in 1968 to ensure meaningful access to higher education for those who come from backgrounds of economic and educational disadvantage. The Fund assists low-income New Jersey residents who are capable and motivated but lack adequate preparation for college study.

The New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund program contributes to the development of a college-educated public that reflects the diversity of New Jersey by working in partnership with Rutgers and the K-12 educational system to provide access to higher education for students from families/communities disadvantaged by low income and the lack of access to the quality educational preparation necessary to attend college. The Fund partners with established pre-college efforts and seeks to initiate additional opportunities to identify and prepare students for college at the pre-collegiate level. At the postsecondary level, the access and opportunity provided by the Fund is not limited to simply meeting first-year (or transfer) student enrollment goals, but to also focus on student success. In this vein, EOF provides support for educational initiatives, support services, and leadership development activities that assist students to improve their chances of success in specific majors and careers fields, and prepares them for the changing world of work and to assume leadership in their communities and the state.

Recruitment, improving student success, developing partnerships with pre-college and the K-12 community, connecting education with the world of work, initiating a research agenda, and enhancing the program's image are linked goals related to the EOF mission and are critical elements established as part of the Rutgers EOF program that will increase students' opportunities for success. For more information about the New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program, visit the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education website at www.nj.gov/highereducation/EOF.

EOF Summer Institute

If you are admitted to one of Rutgers' undergraduate schools as a first-year EOF Scholar, you must attend and successfully complete a free five- to six-week Summer Institute that is designed to smooth your transition from high school to college and sharpen your English, math, and/or science skills. You'll meet new friends, and your EOF Summer Institute tuition and other educational expenses will be paid for. Attendance and successful completion of the EOF Summer Institute, which begins toward the end of June 2019, is a requirement for fall semester enrollment at Rutgers.

Advising/Counseling

Before the fall semester begins, your EOF advisers will help you plan an academic program to meet your interests and needs. Your undergraduate school will provide you with tutorial services and a special staff of academic, career, and peer counselors. With this support, you'll be able to identify your academic strengths, overcome limitations, and define career fields that interest you. In addition, all of the university's other resources are available to help you succeed at Rutgers.

Eligibility Requirements

The New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program provides financial assistance and support services (e.g. counseling, tutoring, and developmental coursework) to students from educationally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds who attend institutions of higher education in the State of New Jersey.

To participate in the Rutgers EOF program, students must apply for undergraduate admission to Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) including the NJ State aid grant questions or a New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application (NJAFAA) as appropriate, and meet all **Requirements for Preliminary Eligibility**. Rutgers has multiple but distinct EOF programs operating at various schools within the Rutgers University system. Because EOF is a campus-based program throughout the State of New Jersey, each individual school is responsible for student recruitment, selection, program services, and its own specific criteria for EOF admission and program participation.

EOF grants are generally available to students from families with a background of poverty, whose annual income and assets fall within the **EOF Income Eligibility Scale with Asset Cap Calculation** as established by the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education/EOF Board of Directors. Families who demonstrate long-term economic hardship, such as the **accumulation of assets that do not exceed 20 percent of the EOF Income Eligibility Scale per household size**, qualify for financial assistance through the EOF program. To be considered for EOF grants, you must meet academic criteria set by the Rutgers school you selected for undergraduate admission consideration *and* your and your family's income and assets must fall within the financial criteria shown on the scale below.

EOF Income Eligibility Scale with Asset Cap Calculation 2019-2020

Household Size (including applicant)	Gross Income Not to Exceed:	Asset Cap Calculation (Based on Household Size) Not to Exceed:
1	\$24,280	\$4,856
2	\$32,920	\$6,584
3	\$41,560	\$8,312
4	\$50,200	\$10,040
5	\$58,840	\$11,768
6	\$67,480	\$13,496
7	\$76,120	\$15,224
8	\$84,760	\$16,952
For each additional household member add	\$8,640	\$1,728

If your and your family's income and assets fall within the financial criteria as shown on the EOF Income Eligibility Scale with Asset Cap Calculation above and you wish to be considered for participation in the Rutgers EOF program, you must meet all **Requirements for Preliminary Eligibility**, which include:

- ✓ Demonstrating an educationally and economically disadvantaged background.
- ✓ Being a New Jersey resident for at least 12 consecutive months prior to fall semester enrollment.
- ✓ Graduating from high school or receiving the equivalent of a high school diploma by the time you register at Rutgers.
- ✓ Being a first-generation college student. (Your parent(s) are not four-year college/university graduates.)

Financial Assistance

Eligible EOF Scholars will receive an EOF grant each semester as part of their financial aid package. Program compliant EOF Scholars can also apply to receive financial assistance for summer session courses as continuing students and other academic opportunities to enhance their experience. Although the EOF program can provide financial help, you and your family are asked to contribute toward the educational expenses as determined by a federally mandated formula and/or state needs analysis, which uses information you provide on the FAFSA or NJAFSA to calculate the amount of your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and/or New Jersey Eligibility Index (NJEI).

Male students (ages 18-25) must register for Selective Service and can do so either by mail, by completing the registration process on the Selective Service System (SSS) website at www.sss.gov or by requesting to register when filing the FAFSA or NJAFSA.

EOF Scholars receive both Tuition Aid Grant (TAG) and EOF grants from the State of New Jersey. In addition, qualified students are eligible to receive grant assistance from the federal government and Rutgers. Financial assistance will vary depending upon your need and eligibility as determined by the FAFSA or NJAFSA and the availability of funds. **The Rutgers priority date for financial aid application submission is December 1, 2018.**

To receive confirmation of eligibility for participation in the Rutgers EOF program and an official offer of financial assistance from Rutgers that includes the EOF grant, TAG, and other need-based aid programs if qualified, you must do the following:

If you are a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen (permanent U.S. resident with a valid Permanent Resident Card I-551 or I-551C, I-94, T-visa or other qualified status for Title IV federal aid eligibility),

- ✓ You must submit your completed 2019–2020 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to the federal processor. To submit your FAFSA online at fafsa.ed.gov, you and your parent must each create an FSA ID, which is used to confirm your identity when accessing your financial aid information and electronically signing your federal student aid documents at fsaid.ed.gov. Ensure that Rutgers receives your FAFSA from the federal processor by including the Rutgers federal school code 002629 in Section 1 (online) or Step Six (PDF). The PDF FAFSA is available for you to print and fill out manually or is screen-fillable if you select “FAFSA Filing Options” at fafsa.ed.gov.
- ✓ You and your parent(s) must use your filed 2017 federal IRS tax return and nontaxable income statements to complete the 2019-2020 FAFSA and answer NJ State specific questions. The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT) is an easy and secure way to access and transfer tax return information directly onto the FAFSA form, saving time and improving accuracy. Although the IRS Data Retrieval Tool is an option when completing the FAFSA, you and your parents may be unable or choose not to use it. If you have already submitted a FAFSA and would like to use the IRS DRT, you must login as a returning user at fafsa.ed.gov. For help with completing the FAFSA, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-433-3243 or visit studentaid.ed.gov.

If you are an undocumented NJ DREAMer (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) who meets all of the eligibility requirements for state aid,

- ✓ You must submit your completed 2019-2020 New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application (NJAFSA) to the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA). To submit your NJAFSA online at www.hesaa.org, you must read and follow full instructions as detailed on the NJAFSA form. You must enter the required authentication information before proceeding to complete the screen-fillable PDF. Ensure that Rutgers receives your NJAFSA from HESAA by including the Rutgers federal school code 002629 in Section H.
- ✓ You and your parent(s) must use your filed 2017 federal IRS tax return and nontaxable income statements to complete the 2019-2020 NJAFSA and answer NJ State specific questions within the form. You and your parent who provided the information listed in Section D of the NJAFSA must sign the form. For help with completing the NJAFSA, contact HESAA Customer Care at 1-800-792-8670 or visit www.hesaa.org.
- ✓ You must be able to file an affidavit stating that you have filed an application to legalize your immigration status or will file an application, as soon you are eligible to do so, in compliance with the NJ Nonresident Tuition Exemption Policy. The policy, pursuant to S-2479 and S-699, allows certain students including undocumented immigrants who meet certain criteria to qualify for in-state tuition at public institutions of higher education and State financial aid. **View the Rutgers Nonresident Tuition Exemption Application and Affidavit and instructions.**
- ✓ You must have attended a New Jersey high school for at least three (3) years and you must submit your official high school transcript(s) including all courses and grades to date along with your completed **Rutgers Nonresident Tuition Exemption Application and Affidavit** to our Office of University Undergraduate Admissions *Operations Center*, 65 Davidson Road, Room 202, Piscataway, NJ 08854-8097.

Preliminarily eligible EOF Scholars admitted to Rutgers must submit all requested documents to the Rutgers Office of Financial Aid and be confirmed financially eligible for EOF program participation prior to the start of the EOF Summer Institute to complete the post-admit FAFSA or NJAFSA verification process. Selected EOF Scholars **will be required** to submit a copy of the 2017 IRS federal tax return transcript and/or nontaxable income statements along with asset verification documents to Rutgers. Visit the Rutgers Office of Financial Aid online at financialaid.rutgers.edu for more information.

You will also need to log onto the New Jersey Financial Aid Management System (NJFAMS) at njfams.hesaa.org and create a user ID and password. You must monitor this account throughout the academic year for status updates and document requests from Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA) for state aid eligibility. If you are selected for State verification by HESAA, you must also submit all requested documents directly to HESAA to ensure eligibility for both TAG (Tuition Aid Grant) and EOF (Educational Opportunity Fund) grants. For more information about state aid eligibility, you may contact HESAA at 1-800-792-8670 or visit www.hesaa.org.