



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

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Claimant Name:

Re: Eligibility for Pell Grants and Other Financial Aid

President Barack Obama announced that the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor are taking measures to enable more workers that are collecting unemployment insurance benefits to pursue job training to assist them in developing their skills while the economy recovers. On May 8, 2009, the President announced that customers receiving UI benefits will receive special consideration for financial aid to help defray the cost of education and/or job training opportunities.

This letter serves to notify you that you may be eligible for Federal Pell grants and other student financial aid to assist you in paying for education and/or job training. Federal Pell Grant scholarships cover up to \$5,350 in education and training expenses. They are accepted at nearly all universities and community colleges and many trade and technical schools. If you do not qualify for a Pell Grant, you may be eligible for other financial aid.

Applying for financial aid and finding training opportunities is not difficult. The U.S. Departments of Education and Labor have created a single web site, www.opportunity.gov, where you can find helpful information. If you are interested in pursuing these opportunities, here are some helpful steps you should take:

- Decide what type of education or training best meets your needs. You may want to visit www.careeronestop.org, or visit your local community college or One-Stop Career Center for help in identifying potential opportunities. To locate the nearest One-Stop Career Center, you can visit www.mass.gov/careercenters or call the toll free number: **1-877-US-2-JOBS** (1-877-872-5627).
- Apply for financial aid. An application is available at www.fafsa.ed.gov or by calling **1-800-4-FED-AID**.

- After you've applied for financial aid and the education or training program of your choice, contact the program's financial aid office. You will be able to bring this letter to a financial aid office for up to 90 days from the date of this letter to verify your status as an unemployment insurance beneficiary. After the 90 days has expired, please contact our agency at (617) 626-6800 to receive current documentation of your unemployment status.
- Make sure to contact your local One-Stop Career Center to assist you in starting the Section 30 process that will determine if you can continue to receive unemployment benefits while enrolled in the program you have chosen. Although the President has strongly encouraged states to allow more kinds of training in their unemployment programs, not every training program excuses you from the requirement that you must be seeking and available for work in order to receive unemployment benefits.
- Finally, if you are seeking other types of financial assistance through the Career Centers, please note that additional eligibility requirements may apply.