

Reconnect Today. Tuition-free.

Checklist for Tennessee Reconnect



Whether you have been to college before, or this is your first time, you are just a few steps away from achieving your educational goals. Below are some steps to take to get (en)rolling.

Apply for the Tennessee Reconnect Scholarship

Visit TNReconnect.gov today to apply and learn more about Tennessee's last-dollar scholarship for adults to attend a community college tuition-free. This program will begin with the fall semester of the 2018-19 academic year. Check out all of the eligibility requirements and details at TNReconnect.gov.

Action Step:

- Visit www.TNReconnect.gov and submit the application for the Tennessee Reconnect Scholarship.

Complete the FAFSA

Scholarships and grants from the State of Tennessee, the Federal Government, and most colleges, all have the same starting point: the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You are required to complete the FAFSA to be eligible for Tennessee Reconnect, and you may be eligible for other grants and aid once you file the FAFSA.

Action Step:

- Fill out your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by visiting fafsa.ed.gov and follow the directions on the website. Be certain to file through this website only—the official application for federal financial aid is free.

Complete your Reconnect Success Plan

As part of your Tennessee Reconnect scholarship application, you will complete a questionnaire that will help you identify resources available in your community and at your institution which will support you in completing your degree. Review your success plan carefully and connect with the resources prior to beginning classes or at the appropriate time. This will ensure you have all the support in place for success. You will be required to complete this questionnaire annually as part of maintaining your scholarship.

Action Steps:

- Connect with the resources identified from your Reconnect Success Plan prior to enrollment at your institution.
- Complete your Reconnect Success Plan questionnaire annually as part of maintaining your scholarship.

Talk to a Professional Advisor

Talk about your decision to go to college both with people who support your goals and with experts with the information you need to achieve those goals. Tennessee Reconnect Navigators are professional advisors in your community who can help you access college opportunities. Additionally, every college has admissions professionals who can answer specific questions about their institution. If you know what college you'd like to attend, you can reach out to the admissions office.

Action Step:

- Visit www.TNReconnect.gov to locate either a Tennessee Reconnect Navigator or an admissions representative from an institution to get started.

Choose Your Path

Interested in going to college to gain new skills? Advance in the workplace? Or fulfilling a lifelong dream of completing a degree? Chances are there is a program for you at one of the many Tennessee colleges and universities. Program listings for the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology, community colleges and universities are available on www.TNReconnect.gov. Many programs offer flexible options, evening and online courses, and accelerated programs for working adults.

Action Steps:

- ❑ If you are uncertain about choosing a field of study, there are tools to help you explore career options that best fit your interests. Start with www.LaunchMyCareerTN.com.
- ❑ Visit www.TNReconnect.gov to explore programs offered at institutions near you.
- ❑ Ask staff at your college of interest whether they offer accelerated programs, online, and evening options.

Apply to college

Colleges generally require applications to be completed online. The components of the application will vary depending on the type of institution to which you are applying. Typical application components include contact information, academic history, your desired start date, and your planned course of study.

Action Steps:

- ❑ Visit the admissions portion of the website of the school you want to attend.
- ❑ Be prepared to provide contact information, basic information about your academic history, your desired start date, and your planned course of study. Some institutions may have additional requirements for applications as well.
- ❑ Be prepared to pay a small application fee, depending on the institution. If your institution requires an application fee, that can be paid online using a credit card. If you do not have a credit card, and many applicants do not, the site will advise you how to pay the fee or you can contact the admissions office.

Find out how to finish faster by using your experience

If you have years of valuable work, military, or volunteer experience, you may be eligible to receive academic credit. Many colleges and universities recognize learning gained outside the classroom by awarding academic credit. Institutions have contacts ready to answer questions on how their institution applies credit for prior learning.

Action Steps:

- ❑ When you talk to an advisor or admissions representative, ask about prior learning assessment (PLA) or TimewiseTN, the process of counting learning from your experience towards your future degree. Information for TimewiseTN contacts is available at TNReconnect.gov.
- ❑ Collect your past course history by requesting previous academic transcripts from prior colleges you have attended. Your college will need this information to determine how much of your past credit will apply toward your program.
- ❑ **Tip:** Try contacting the registrar's office or talk to your TRC advisor about requesting your past transcripts.

Prepare to start classes

In addition to the application, most institutions will have additional enrollment requirements. Institutions typically require official copies of your academic transcripts, and proof of a high school diploma or GED. You may also need to submit proof of immunizations. Many schools will require that you meet with your academic advisor in order to map out what courses you will need to take. Pay close attention to deadlines for submitting documents and check your email and mail frequently to ensure you are getting all communications from your institution in a timely manner.

Action Steps:

- ❑ Pay close attention to deadlines for forms and deliverables required by the institution.
- ❑ Meet with representatives at the school in order to determine what classes you need to take to complete the degree you've chosen.

