

All links are clickable. This form
can be found on the NJ STARS
Resources webpage at
www.bergen.edu/njstars

NJ STARS Application Process Checklist

Self-Identify to njstars@bergen.edu (before or after applying to the college):

Please visit the [How to Apply to the NJ STARS Program](#) webpage. Download the [Self-Identification Form for Prospective NJ STARS Students](#), right-click, and "Save As" to your computer. Read and complete the form, save it again, and email the form to njstars@bergen.edu. When the form is received, you will be identified as a Prospective NJ STARS student and you will be waived from taking placement tests after proof of eligibility is received from HESAA (see Testing section below). If you haven't applied to the college yet, email njstars@bergen.edu after applying so these and the following steps can be completed.

Temporary protection will be placed on your account in July (December for Spring). A notification will display as "NJ STARS Student PROTECTION" in Self-Service in your student portal. This will prevent your courses from being dropped for non-payment.

Admissions: For more information, visit the **Office of Admissions**, Pitkin Education Center- Room SC-110, call 201-447-7195/7196, or email admissions@bergen.edu. Visit <https://bergen.edu/welcome/> for "First Steps for Degree Seekers" but **do not** complete Step 7.

Apply to Bergen Community College ("BCC") at www.bergen.edu (click **Apply Now** at the top of the webpage). Under normal circumstances, applicants will receive an acceptance package within two weeks. Contact Admissions if you do not receive it.

Choose a degree program. AA, AFA, or AS degrees are transfer programs. AAS degrees are programs which is not readily transferable to 4-year colleges/universities. Certificate programs are not eligible.) e.g. **Program:** AS.PS.GEN

You should receive an email within a day or two with your **username and password** for your BCC student portal at my.bergen.edu and other forms and documents where you are required to login with your username and password.

Important: It is imperative that you begin checking your email account for important information or requests for additional information from the Office of Financial Aid, the Admissions Office, Registration, the Bursar's Office, etc.

For assistance with issues with your student portal or student email account, please visit www.bergen.edu/portalhelp, or call the Help Desk at 201-447-7109.

Testing: Prospective NJ STARS students no longer have to take placement tests. For more information, visit the **Office of Testing Services**, Pitkin Education Center- One-Stop, call 201-447-7203, or email testing@bergen.edu.

In 2021, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges unanimously approved a resolution that changed the test used for final NJ STARS eligibility, designating "a student's high school academic ranking as the test of a student's final eligibility for the NJ STARS program." Students are no longer required to take placement tests but may if they wish to do so, however if a student tests and requires remedial courses, they must still register for 12 or more college credits. NJ STARS will only pay for college-level courses.

Prospective NJ STARS students must be waived from taking placement tests before registering their courses for the first time.

Students who self-identified will be waived from taking placement tests after receiving proof of student's NJ STARS eligibility from HESAA in approximately late February of students' senior year.

To be waived from taking tests by other means, please visit <https://bergen.edu/testing/placement-test-waiver-information>.

There are three eligibility requirements that must be met to become NJ STARS students: academic, residency and apply and complete financial aid review for both federal (FAFSA) and state-based (HESAA) financial aid.

Academic Requirement (Proof of Eligibility): Bergen Community College will verify that you are on the HESAA list as reported by your high school guidance office at the end of your junior year. If you were or will be in the top 15% of your class at the end of your senior year of high school, your high school guidance office should have notified you.

After high school graduation but before the semester begins, please submit your **final official high school transcript** to the address **at the top of this page** as proof that you graduated from a New Jersey high school. The State requires that your transcript be an **original** (not a copy), and **must be signed** by the **Guidance Director, Principal or Vice Principal**. Your **class rank, class size and date of graduation** should be on the transcript and your **high school seal** should be affixed.

If your transcript **does not** contain **your class rank and class size**, your high school will also need to submit the [Certification of High School Class Rank Form](#) located on the Information for New Jersey High Schools webpage at <https://bergen.edu/new-students/nj-stars/information-for-new-jersey-high-schools/>. The form should contain the class rank and class size from the end of the appropriate year (junior or senior) and must be signed by the **Guidance Director, Principal or Vice Principal** and the **high school seal** should be affixed. The form should be submitted with your official, final high school transcript.

Residency Requirements:

You should live in Bergen County. (Out-of-county students are eligible but additional requirements must be completed. See below.)*

You should be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen (includes New Jersey Dreamers) and a legal New Jersey resident and have been for a minimum of twelve consecutive months prior to your high school graduation.

Your parent(s)/guardian(s) should also be U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens (includes New Jersey Dreamers) and legal New Jersey residents and have been for a minimum of twelve consecutive months prior to your high school graduation.

***If you are an OUT-OF-COUNTY resident**, you **MUST** be enrolled in majors not available at your home county community college or the program must be oversubscribed for at least one year. You **MUST** also submit your **CHARGEBACK** paperwork EVERY semester you are enrolled in order to remain eligible for NJ STARS funding. Visit <https://bergen.edu/bursar/chargebacks/> for information about chargebacks, deadlines, and to access the Chargeback Form for non-Bergen County residents. You can also pick up the form in the Admissions Office in SC-110. Complete instructions are included with the Chargeback Form.

Financial Aid Requirements: **You will not be eligible for NJ STARS unless both federal and state (HESAA) financial aid reviews are complete!** For help, you can visit the One Stop Center in the Pitkin Education Center and ask for Charlmaine McKinney, the NJ STARS financial aid representative, email Charlmaine at cmckinney@bergen.edu, or email financial.aid@bergen.edu with general questions.

IMPORTANT! The BCC Financial Aid Office uploads your FAFSA to your student record in March. **If your Social Security number is not in your student record, your FAFSA cannot be imported and your federal financial aid review cannot begin.** Your FAFSA and HESAA financial aid reviews must be completed by the State deadline of April 15th each year while you are an NJ STARS/NJ STARS II student whether you qualify for financial aid or not. It is your responsibility as a prospective NJ STARS student and as an NJ STARS student to submit all documentation requested by deadlines. For deadlines, please visit <https://bergen.edu/financial-aid/dates-deadlines/>.

FAFSA (Federal financial aid): Complete your **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Be sure **BCC** is listed (school code 004736), and choose **Associate's Degree** for your Degree Program. Using the **IRS Data Retrieval Tool** may shorten the review process. Login to your BCC student portal, check the Financial Aid section and if your financial aid award package is ready, review and accept your financial aid award package. **If you accept student loans, you must pay them back.**

New Jersey Dreamers: Please complete only the **New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application**. Workshops are available online.

HESAA (State-based financial aid review): Create a new student username and password at <https://njfams.hesaa.org/NJFAMS>.

Check the **"To Do List"** to be sure your FAFSA is listed and the box preceding it is black and contains a check mark. A red box or boxes indicate additional information is requested. Please read the **NJFAMS Student User Manual** for help to ensure that HESAA completes its financial aid review, and contact HESAA at **800-792-8670** if you have any questions or if you need help.

Academic Advising/Registration: Online registration opens on **April 1** for the **Fall** semester. For more information, please visit the Pitkin Education Center- One Stop Center, or call 201-612-5480, or visit <https://bergen.edu/admissions/new-student-advising/>.

New students should visit the One Stop Center or email advising4U@bergen.edu for assistance.

Meet with an Academic Advisor. Be sure you can login to your **BCC** student portal and email at my.bergen.edu first!

Register for 12 or more credits in your program. You will be given a student gmail account after registering the first time. NJ STARS will pay for up to 18 credits. You may take less than 12 credits the final semester **if less than 12 are needed to graduate.**

Withdrawing from courses during the semester **without permission** may result in the **permanent loss** of your scholarship eligibility, **and** you may be billed for withdrawn courses. Email njstars@bergen.edu **before** withdrawing from any courses.

NJ STARS Application/Contract Certification: If you have any questions, please contact njstars@bergen.edu.

After registering full-time, click on the **NJ STARS Application/Contract** and login with your BCC username and password. Read it **carefully**, and sign and submit the contract. An email confirmation will be sent to your **BCC** student gmail account.

An Academic Counselor will be assigned to verify that you are full-time (12 or more credits in your program) and will sign your contract. **The counselor will send an email to your BCC student gmail address before signing if they have any questions/concerns.**

An NJ STARS Representative will verify all steps were completed, sign the contract, identify you as an NJ STARS student in your school record and **extend the protection on your courses**. You will receive an email confirmation that your contract was processed.

After you receive the confirmation email, please read the comments sections in the email and in your contract.* Then click on **Scholarship Maintenance Requirements for NJ STARS Students**, login, read it carefully, and sign and submit the form confirming that you understand the steps necessary to maintain your NJ STARS scholarship. **C** your signed

Bursar/Tuition & Fees: For more information, visit the Bursar's Office, Pitkin Education Center- One Stop Center, call 201-447-7105, or email bursaroffice@bergen.edu.

Your Tuition will be funded by the State **by the end of each semester** as long as you complete all eligibility requirements.

You should **only pay fees** associated with tuition. **Partial payments cannot be paid online.** Payment of all fees is **your responsibility**. Fees should be paid at the Bursar's Office in the One-Stop or mailed to them by posted deadlines. See Payment Deadlines at www.bergen.edu/bursar. NJ STARS does not pay for tuition for audited courses, or for winter or summer courses.

Public Safety: For more information, visit the Public Safety Office, Pitkin Education Center- Room L-154 or call 201-447-7105.

Student ID: # "##@# k 7 "## /p only if you have registered courses at least once "## when your student ID is r

Parking Decal: Click **Parking Decal Request Form**, login with your BCC username and password and complete the email will be sent to your BCC student gmail address when your parking decal is ready to pick up.