What is G3?

G3 is a tuition assistance program for any Virginia resident who qualifies for in-state tuition and whose family income falls below an identified threshold. G3 can be used for designated programs in five of Virginia's most in-demand industries: Early Childhood Education, Healthcare, Information Technology, Public Safety and Skilled Trades.

When you're receiving G3 funding, you're on a "stackable" pathway, which means that most programs start with skills training that leads to a certificate that has immediate value in the job market. And because that certificate is part of an applied associate degree program, a working student can continue to "stack" additional certificates on the pathway to an associate degree.

Am I eligible for G3?

If you are a Virginia resident who meets the requirements below, you are eligible for G3:

- Qualifies for in-state tuition
- Has a total household income of less than or equal to 400% of the Federal Poverty Level (roughly an income of $100,000 for a family of four)
- Is enrolled for a minimum of six credit hours at your local community college
- Has earned a high school diploma or GED
- Is enrolled in a designated G3 program
- Has applied for federal and/or state financial aid

What schools offer G3?

Each of Virginia's 23 community colleges has a list of approved G3 programs – and the program offerings will vary from college to college to match the local business needs in the community.

For example, Tidewater Community College has several maritime programs that are part of G3 given its proximity to waterways, but that program won't be available at schools in the western part of Virginia.

Is G3 "free community college?"

Yes and no.

G3 provides tuition assistance if you are under a specific income level – and only for specific educational programs. G3 is also a "last dollar" program, which means after other aid and scholarships are taken into consideration first. G3 assistance makes up the difference, so if you meet all the eligibility requirements, it would bring your total out-of-pocket costs to $0.

How does G3 tuition assistance work?

G3 assistance makes up the difference between what federal or state financial aid pays for and the cost of tuition, fees and books. This means if you enroll in a G3-eligibile certificate or degree program, you must first complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You may also be required to provide documentation of household income or eligibility for federal assistance.

If you want to come to school and get certifications or a degree that leads to a career, we can help you find money to make it happen – through G3 or other funding.

Do I have to enroll as full-time student?

G3 is for full- and part-time students.

If you are a part-time student, you must enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours (usually two classes) per semester or in an otherwise approved short-term program.

You may also receive additional financial assistance if you qualify for full Federal Pell Grants and enroll full-time (12 or more credit hours in fall and spring semesters, and 6 credit hours in summer – usually four and two classes, respectively). This additional assistance is intended to help offset costs outside of the classroom so you can focus on school without worrying about other expenses.

Additionally, to stay eligible for G3, you must also maintain a 2.0 grade point average (GPA).

Is there a time limit for G3 tuition assistance?
As long as you continue on the same G3 educational program, you have three years to complete an associate degree.

If you complete a certificate with your chosen G3 track and stop school to work, you will still be eligible for G3 tuition assistance if you return within one year. After returning, you then have two years to complete your associate degree before funding expires.

You've mentioned both associate degrees and certificate programs. What's the difference and how do they fit into G3?
An important benefit of G3 assistance is that it applies to different pathways to student success, depending on a person's individual needs and circumstances.

Many G3 programs are made up of multiple levels of training. For some programs, your first semester or two will be made up of specialized training. By the end of those training programs, you'll take a certification exam and earn a workplace credential. Then, you'll take additional courses and training to earn an associate degree.

Some jobs only require a workplace certification, while other jobs may require an associate degree. This program gives you both.

Programs under G3 are stackable, which means you could graduate with two workplace certifications and an associate degree – three from the price of one!

What are some of the benefits G3 tuition assistance?
G3 will provide you the financial freedom to upgrade your skills and prepare you for the right career, right where you live, right now. This assistance will help remove the financial barrier of a higher education and will get you to the job that will best support you and your family.

With G3 assistance, you'll also be studying in career fields that are actively hiring in Virginia. According to data from the Virginia Community College System, people who complete these programs, on average, gain 60% more in wages.

After I graduate, am I guaranteed a job?
Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee a job after going through a G3-eligible program.

Because G3 is offered at your local community college, there are student support services like the Career

Center which can help you find a job as you approach graduation. Virginia's Community Colleges are also actively working with local businesses to learn more about open jobs, career fairs and other opportunities to connect students with positions after they graduate.

I'm ready! How do I apply for G3?
You can apply for G3 as part of the regular enrollment process at your local community college. To get started, visit www.vccs.edu/g3 to learn more about the programs available where you live.