



Class of 2020 FAQs on the Birmingham Promise

I graduated from high school in 2020, completed my financial aid, and applied for the Birmingham Promise in the spring. What do I need to do next?

You have completed all steps necessary to be eligible for Birmingham Promise in the fall. Please make sure that we have the correct school on file for you. Also, please respond promptly to any emails or texts you receive from Birmingham Promise as we may need some additional information to complete the verification process on your behalf. You may reach us at [**info@birminghampromise.org**](mailto:info@birminghampromise.org) or call us at **205-843-5967**.

When will my school receive payment from the Birmingham Promise?

Each school has a different timeline for how and when they submit invoices to organizations that are paying tuition on behalf of students. For the Birmingham Promise, we anticipate receiving the invoices starting in August and continuing through the end of the add/drop period for each school. Once schools have invoiced Birmingham Promise on behalf of their student, they will update the student's account. With each school, we have set up a process and timeline that will ensure that students are able to register for classes in a timely manner and will not be charged late fees. Students should expect their account to be updated no later than the end of their school's add/drop period.

Why isn't Birmingham Promise showing up on my financial aid letter?

For all schools other than UAB, Birmingham Promise is being processed as a vendor payment. This means that the payment may not reflect on the student's financial aid letter but will show up on their account once it has been paid.

What does the Birmingham Promise cover?

Birmingham Promise is a last-dollar scholarship program that covers tuition and mandatory fees. Mandatory fees are defined as universal fees that all students, regardless of major or residential choice, are required to pay to attend school. Examples of mandatory fees are: student activity fees, enrollment fees, etc. Examples of non-mandatory fees are: books, housing, equipment fees, etc. If you



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have a question about a specific fee, please contact Birmingham Promise at info@birminghampromise.org.

What does the Birmingham Promise NOT cover?

The Birmingham Promise will NOT cover housing, meal plans, books, or other program-specific fees such as equipment for band, lab equipment, etc.

What does “last-dollar” scholarship mean?

Last-dollar means that Birmingham Promise funds are applied once you have exhausted all eligible public aid (i.e. Pell grants or ASAP). For example, if your tuition bill is \$10,000 and you receive \$2,000 in Pell grants, Birmingham Promise will provide \$8,000 in support. If you do not receive any public aid, you are still eligible for the Birmingham Promise and we will cover the entirety of your tuition bill. Additionally, if you identify outside scholarships that can be used for things beyond tuition and fees, you do not have to exhaust those funds before Birmingham Promise support applies. If you have specific questions about your financial aid package and how Birmingham Promise will apply, please contact us at info@birminghampromise.org or 205-843-5967.

What’s the best way to get in touch with someone at Birmingham Promise?

The best way to get in touch with us is to send emails to info@birminghampromise.org. Emailing us allows us to keep track of inquiries we have responded to and those that require a follow-up. We recognize that many people prefer speaking to someone on the phone, so we have established a hotline number for parents and students to call with questions about scholarships for the Class of 2020. That number is 205-843-5967.

What if my school says they don’t know what the Birmingham Promise is?

Please do not be alarmed if you speak to someone at your school and they do not know about the Birmingham Promise. We are in touch with leadership in the financial aid and admissions offices of every school that Promise students have indicated they will be attending in the fall. However, some staff members may not be fully aware of the initiative at this point. If that happens, please contact us at info@birminghampromise.org or call us at 205-843-5967 so that we can assist.

The logo for Birmingham Promise is a dark blue rectangle with a white border. Inside, the words "BIRMINGHAM" and "PROMISE" are written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters, stacked one above the other.

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Is there a minimum grade requirement for the Birmingham Promise?

There is no initial grade requirement to receive a Birmingham Promise scholarship. Your GPA can, however, affect your admission to certain colleges. Alabama's two-year colleges have open-enrollment policies and no minimum grade requirements. You should check grade requirements at other campuses as you go through the college application process.

Once in college, Birmingham Promise students will need to maintain acceptable grades to keep receiving tuition assistance.

How many years of college will be covered under the Birmingham Promise?

Birmingham Promise will cover undergraduate tuition expenses for up to four years at a public Alabama college or university.

Which colleges are covered by Birmingham Promise tuition assistance?

Birmingham Promise scholarships can be used at any public two-year and four-year colleges in Alabama. Students must follow the normal college application process and be accepted by the school in order to receive tuition assistance from Birmingham Promise. A list of all eligible colleges may be found at www.birminghampromise.org.

Will the Birmingham Promise help pay for graduate school?

No. Birmingham Promise scholarships cover tuition and mandatory fees for up to four years at the undergraduate level.

What does my child need to do to make sure they are eligible for the Birmingham Promise?

To make sure that your student is eligible for the Birmingham Promise, please ensure that they completed their application in spring 2020, that they have completed their FAFSA and sent it to the school they intend to attend, and that they have completed any additional paperwork the school has asked for to complete their financial aid package. Birmingham Promise is handling all payment processes directly with the colleges and/or universities which means that you, as



the parent, do not need to submit any paperwork or documentation to the school on our behalf.

I understand that Birmingham Promise will only cover tuition and mandatory fees, but what if I still need help with housing and other costs? What do I need to do?

If you have expenses beyond tuition and mandatory fees that are not covered by other aid, please contact us at info@birminghampromise.org or call us at 205-843-5967 so that we may direct you to additional resources such as:

- Federal Student Aid Information Center – 1-800-433-3243. (Students can call this number about their FASFA or federal aid such as Pell Grants.)
- Student Loan Support Center – 1-800-557-7394

My child will not graduate from Birmingham City Schools until 2021. When can they apply for the Birmingham Promise?

Expect to start seeing more information about scholarships for the Class of 2021 in September. Please check out our website, www.birminghampromise.org, for updates this fall.

Are there other ways I can stay connected to the Birmingham Promise?

Yes. We have a newsletter. To sign up for it, please visit our website, www.birminghampromise.org, and enter your email under the section titled "Receive Important Updates."