

2026-27 SOUTH CAROLINA STATE SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS

SCHOOL COUNSELOR ANNUAL QUICK REFERENCE | CLASS OF 2027

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MERIT SCHOLARSHIP RULE: A student may receive only one: Palmetto Fellows, LIFE, or SC HOPE.

STACKING RULE: An eligible student may receive one merit scholarship and the SC Need-based Grant in the same year.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY, AWARD AMOUNTS & RENEWAL

PROGRAM & CURRENT AWARD	INITIAL ELIGIBILITY	RENEWAL / CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY
PALMETTO FELLOWS Up to \$6,700 Year 1 Up to \$7,500 Years 2-4	Rank pathway: 3.5 SC UGP GPA + 1200 SAT/25 ACT + top 6%. Early: Grade 10/11 rank and final Grade 11 GPA. Late: Grade 10/11/12 rank and final Grade 12 GPA. Alternative: 4.0 SC UGP GPA + 1400 SAT/31 ACT; no rank. Application: Student and school must complete the CHE process. Early deadline: May 1; Late deadline: July 15 (11:59 pm).	GPA: 3.0 cumulative institutional GPA. Hours: 30 earned each academic year; AP, IB, dual enrollment, CLEP, and hours earned before HS graduation do not count. Limit: Up to eight terms toward the first bachelor's degree. College determines renewal.
LIFE Up to \$5,000 annually	Two-year: 3.0 SC UGP GPA. Four-year: Meet 2 of 3 criteria: 3.0 SC UGP GPA; 1100 SAT/22 ACT; top 30% of graduating class. Application: No statewide application; college determines eligibility from final records.	GPA: 3.0 LIFE GPA. Hours: Average 30 credit hours by the end of each academic year; eligible AP, IB, dual enrollment, and CLEP may count. Limit: 8 consecutive terms at four-year; 4 at two-year (6 for certain 68+ hour associate programs).
SC HOPE Up to \$2,800 freshman year	Institution: Eligible four-year SC institution. GPA: 3.0 SC UGP GPA. Who: Freshman who does not qualify for LIFE or Palmetto Fellows; college determines eligibility.	No renewal: Limited to the first academic year (up to two eligible terms). Pathway to LIFE: Student may earn LIFE for Year 2 with a 3.0 LIFE GPA and an average of 30 credit hours by year-end.
LOTTERY TUITION ASSISTANCE (LTAP) \$75 per credit hour College determines exact award	Institution: Eligible SC two-year institution. Aid step: Complete the FAFSA or have an approved FAFSA waiver. Enrollment: At least 6 credit hours; college determines award under current rules and funding.	Progress: Maintain satisfactory academic progress; at least a 2.0 GPA after 24 attempted hours. Annual step: FAFSA or an approved waiver each year. Limit: Generally, one certificate, diploma, or degree within five years unless progressing in the same field.
SC NEED-BASED GRANT Up to \$3,500 full-time Up to \$1,750 part-time	Need: Complete FAFSA and demonstrate financial need. Enrollment: Degree-seeking at an eligible SC institution. Award: College awards within statewide rules, institutional allocation, and available funding.	GPA: At least 2.0. Hours: Earn 24 credit hours. Annual step: Complete FAFSA each year; continued awards depend on need, allocations, and funding. Foster youth: May receive the maximum grant plus up to \$3,500 toward unmet need, subject to funding.
SCHOLARSHIP ENHANCEMENTS Up to +\$2,500/year starting Year 2	Who may qualify: Eligible LIFE or Palmetto Fellows recipients at an eligible four-year institution. Approved pathways: STEM, Education, or Accounting enhancement programs.	Core requirements: Continue to meet the underlying scholarship requirements and enroll in a CHE-approved program. Planning note: STEM and Accounting require 14 approved math/science hours before Year 2; the college determines eligibility. Education majors must sign a contractual agreement to work in a SC school district for a year for each year they receive the Enhancement.



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COUNSELOR CALENDAR & ACTION CHECKLIST

WHEN	COUNSELOR ACTION
NOW / START OF YEAR	Subscribe to CHE emails; select Palmetto Fellows and High School Counselor topics. Register for SC CAN GO events. Review transferred, reclassified, early-graduate, and homeschool records.
FIRST MONDAY MONTHLY	Review the Palmetto Fellows Application Status Report. If a student is missing, the student may have started but not submitted the application; ask the student to check the dashboard.
FALL 2026	Attend an Early Application workshop. Identify potential applicants using final Grade 11 GPA and Grade 10/11 rank. Encourage college applications and FAFSA preparation.
WINTER / SPRING	Track student and counselor application portions; verify test scores and records. Promote FAFSA First. Watch for early graduates and summer ACT/SAT testers.
MAY 1	Class of 2027 Palmetto Fellows Early Application deadline. Student must submit electronically by 11:59 pm; counselor documentation must be submitted by May 15, 2027.
SPRING 2027	Attend a Late Application workshop. Identify potential applicants using final Grade 12 GPA and Grade 10/11/12 rank.
JUNE 1	Class of 2027 Palmetto Fellows Late Application opens.
JUNE 15	SCDE annual calculation deadline. Reconcile final transcripts and rank reports; confirm calculation date, SC UGP GPA, rank, and class size agree. Archive verified final transcripts and rank reports.
JUNE 30	Send verified final Grade 10, 11, and 12 class-rank reports to Scholarships@che.sc.gov. Do not send multiple unverified versions.
JULY 15	Class of 2027 Palmetto Fellows Late Application deadline. Student must submit electronically by 11:59 pm; counselor documentation must be submitted by July 30, 2027.

FALL 2026 PALMETTO FELLOWS WORKSHOPS

Full application process: Sept. 14 at 1:00 p.m. | Sept. 29 at 9:30 a.m. | Oct. 2 at 11:00 a.m.

Basics & updates: Sept. 24 at 10:00 a.m. | Oct. 7 at 12:00 p.m.

Spring Late Award dates and registration links will be posted on the counselor resources webpage.

START HERE

che.sc.gov/high-school-counselor-resources

Trainings | Applications | Forms | Recordings | Guidance

QUICK REFERRALS	PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS	SCAN FOR COUNSELOR RESOURCES
High-school GPA/rank/transcript: High School or district LIFE, HOPE, LTAP, Need-based Grant awards/renewals: College financial aid office PFS application/designation/transfer/reapplication: CHE/college as applicable Residency classification: College residency office	Palmetto Fellows / CTP: Ms. Kathryn Harris LIFE / HOPE / SC Residency: Dr. Gerrick Hampton LTAP / Need-based Grant / Enhancements: Ms. Tanya Weigold College Access: Ms. Kathy Rollins or Ms. Alantis Seckal Scholarship questions: Scholarships@che.sc.gov	

IMPORTANT: This quick reference summarizes current guidance for the 2026-27 cycle. It does not replace CHE trainings, statutes, regulations, annual appropriations, official program guidance, or individualized advice. Award amounts, dates, and procedures may change.