

# A Conversation with Student Financial Services

## Webinar Transcript

**Reggie Gacad:** Hello, everybody. My name is Reggie Gacad. And I want to welcome you to the third webinar of our 2020-2021 Family Webinar Series. I am the assistant director here in the First Year Center. And tonight, I'm joined by my colleague, Andrea Stewart-Douglas, associate director of Student Financial Services. We are so excited that you've chosen to join us for tonight's conversation. Some information before we get started. First, we want to make sure that you know how to submit questions during this webinar. You will notice that we've given you the ability to ask questions via the Q and A feature. Two of our professional staff within the First Year Center are helping to field these questions. We'll answer those that we find applicable to the audience as a whole on this webinar, and we'll respond to more nuanced or personal questions via email next week.

Let's go ahead and make sure you know how to use the Q and A feature. Using the Q and A feature, go ahead and share some of the places that you might be watching from, and we will name a few of these locations here on air. While you do that, we will be showing a PowerPoint created by Andrea's team during tonight's webinar. However, if you prefer to download this PowerPoint and follow along on your own, please follow the link just shared in the chat. As a note, in the chat feature, we will be sharing links and email addresses throughout the duration of the webinar. Third, this webinar is being recorded live. Next week, we will upload this webinar to families.wustl.edu website. Lastly, in a moment, we will hear from Andrea about the services offered by Student Financial Services. If something Andrea says sparks a question, don't forget to send us your question using the Q and A feature. After hearing from Andrea, we'll move into the Q and A portion of this evening. Before passing things along, I want to name some of the places that you folks are joining us from. We have families tuning in from Dayton, Ohio; Los Angeles, California; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania among many other places. Now, since I know you all want to hear more about Student Financial Services, I will turn it over to Andrea.

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** Thank you, Reggie. I'd like to start out by sharing some information about Student Financial Services. SFS provides over \$135 million in institutional scholarships and grants to our undergraduate students. Our counseling team is comprised of seven financial aid counselors with over 80 years of combined aid experience. Our approach to providing aid is highly personalized as we also follow the university's unofficial motto of knowing our students by name and story. All of our students are assigned an SFS counselor as they enter the university and will remain with the same counselor all four years. As a unit, our goal is to keep WashU affordable for your family throughout your entire time with us. So in addition to providing financial aid, we offer very innovative financing and payment plans through our Partners in Education with Parent program, PEP. This gives our family several options to cover their tuition, fees, housing, and meal plan costs. We also provide an interest-free installment payment plan, which allows you to spread all or a part of your semester's expenses into monthly payments. And in addition to offering assistance with financial aid, our SFS counselors meet with students individually, and they go over topics such as finding a job on campus, how to create a budget, and how to even better understand how their financial aid relates to their student account.

So we often get the question, "What's the difference between Student Financial Services and Student Accounting?" The primary difference is that the Student Accounting office is responsible for handling all student billing. They handle all payment processing, refund checks, direct deposit processing. They apply Bear Bucks to student accounts and other transactions. But also, one of the main things that they

do is they manage WebSTAC. And WebSTAC is the portal that students will use to view their bills. Through WebSTAC, students can also take a look at their account activity. They can use the system to add Bear Bucks. And they can even use this system to make updates to their personal information.

Using WebSTAC, students can add parents or other individuals to view and pay their bill. And in order to do this, students must first go into WebSTAC. They then click on Billing & Bear Bucks, and then they click on Pay-View. Students will then be directed to add another payer. And once this step is completed, parents and the other authorized users are added in as a guest. And once that happens, an email will be sent to the parent or other user. They'll be given a user ID and a temporary password. So the parents and the authorized users will then be able to get their information about the student's bill through a system called CASHNet. And just for your reference, here is a screenshot of what CASHNet looks like from your end.

WashU is a 100% paperless billing environment. So that means that all the semester and the monthly billing statements are all going to be online. Each semester, student accounting will bill for tuition, fees, room and board. But now, due to COVID-19, housing assignments for all of our new and returning students are still being processed. And until the housing assignments are finalized, we're not able to create billing statements at the moment. So what this means is that our fall semester billing statement will continue to be delayed this year. However, we do anticipate that a bill will go out sometime in August. And as a result, this means, of course, there will be an adjustment to the payment due date. We do anticipate hearing an announcement and a final decision of how all billing will work by the end of July. So keep watch.

And I'm just going to mention something very briefly about spring bills. Normally, these bills are released on December 1st with balances typically due by January 20th of the following year. But again, because of the changes due to COVID-19, it is possible that these dates will also be adjusted. After the semester's bills are released, monthly statements will begin and there will be a 2% late fee that's going to be assessed for any unpaid month-end balances. Students are also able to view in real time any charges that have been applied to their accounts and changes. I will also give you all a heads up that all students - and this is a mandatory charge. All students will receive a student health insurance charge of \$1,942. But please keep in mind, students can waive out of this charge. The process is fairly simple. In order to waive out, students will need to go into WebSTAC, and there's a special link that is set up that goes to student health that takes the student to a waiver form. The student submits the form. And if all goes well, there will be a waiver approved and that charge will drop off the next statement. So keep that in mind. And students, you need to make sure that you get the waiver requests submitted by September 5th. That's very important.

We provide families with several options for covering their student's costs. One of the most popular ones and most important ones is the installment payment plan. And this is also administered by our vendor, CASHNet. CASHNet allows families to spread all or just a part of the semester's expenses into convenient monthly payments. The thing to keep in mind is that you must enroll for the fall, and then again, enroll for spring. And there will be a \$40 fee that's going to be charged for each semester. And I will tell you that the system is open right now in case you're interested in enrolling right now. Another option is the Partners in Education with Parents, PEP program that I mentioned earlier. And through this program, families can choose several different options.

One option is the Multiyear plan, and this is the plan that allows you to borrow one large initial amount at the start of your student's first year of college. So what you can do is you can borrow the equivalent of

all four years of your student's tuition, fees, room and board, or just a portion of these costs. The key there is that whatever you've borrowed, this is the option that freezes those charges through PEP and they remain at the first year's rate. Another popular option is the Prepay option. And that allows you to prepay all or, again, a portion of tuition, fees, room and board, but this is without borrowing. And this is also a way for you to cover all the way up to four years' worth of charges. This option ensures that you will not be subject, again, to later increases of your prepaid portions.

And another popular option is the Combination. And with the Combination, you can prepay a lump sum portion of charges and then borrow the remaining amount. This option works extremely well for parents who have accumulated savings through, possibly, an education fund. And they, again, will be able to use the combination option to cover most or all of their students' expenses. The main thing to walk away with is that these are the options that provide you with an opportunity to cover future costs at the students-entering-first-year rate. And you can find out a lot more specific information by visiting our website, which is [financialaid.wustl.edu](http://financialaid.wustl.edu). If you haven't done so already, students, I'm going to ask you to please get your federal work-study job application submitted by early August. The reason why that is so important is because we use information from your application to match you to a federal work-study job. So on the application, if you've expressed an interest in a certain department or gaining a particular experience, we are going to take that into consideration and try to match it to the best job opportunity possible on campus.

So the only way that we can do that, however, is for you to get your information in to our office. So please get that in by early August. Now, students who have done that and we have successfully matched you to a position, you're going to hear from us by September 4th. So please look for an email from Student Financial Services where we're going to notify you, one, that you've been assigned to a federal work-study job, but you are also going to receive information about who your employer is. You're going to get information about your supervisor. We're going to give you their contact information. We do that because, one, it is always a good idea for you to call and introduce yourself to your future employer. It's also a good idea just to firm up your plans with your employer. So confirm that you're intending to work. Sometimes the conversation can go into what's your schedule looking like, how many hours are you interested in working. So it's really a good idea to get that conversation done early. That way, when you arrive on campus, you really know how to hit the ground running.

One thing I'll also point out about the email that's extremely important is that the email is going to contain a link. And the link is going to go to a form called the I-9 form. And it's also going to direct you to documents that are required as a part of the form. We do this because you will be considered an employee of WashU. And just like all employees of WashU, you're going to need to complete this process. All of the rest of us have done the same thing. What this means is that you complete the I-9 form, you provide original documents, and this is done to verify, one, your identity; and then two, that you are legally authorized to work as a paid employee in the United States. So again, it's really important to bring your original documentation with you to campus because that's the only thing that we'll accept. Examples of the documents that are accepted include things like your passport, your driver's license, and even your social security card. So guard all of that information as best you can. But please note that there are other documents that will be accepted. The email, again, will contain a link and it will drive you to the list of all the documents that will be accepted.

Now, for students who have not been assigned to a job, don't fear. We will be able to provide you with other job opportunities. So oftentimes what students will do is they'll go to My FA Access and they're going to search through a job listing. Through this system, we're able to identify lots of jobs that have not

been assigned a student. So employers are still working with our office to find students to fill their open jobs, to fill their open positions. So I encourage you all. If you don't get an assignment, again, don't worry. There's still plenty of opportunities for you to find employment. Just begin to take a look at the job listing. If you identify a job that looks interesting to you, the description's there, again, the contact information for the employers listed, take a look at the job. And we encourage you to reach out directly to that department contact. And then from there, you can figure out if this is an opportunity that you want to pursue. And then you and the employer can make further arrangements to move the process forward. But again, I want to remind you, even to do that, you still will need to complete an I-9 form and present original documentation.

And again, if you're a student who is not a federal work-study student, meaning that you've not received a federal work-study award, again, there are still plenty of opportunity for you to find employment on campus. One of the ways that many students find employment is through word of mouth. They speak to their professors. They speak to TAs. Sometimes they can find an opportunity through the Career Center. Trust me, there are hundreds of jobs that students find on their own, again, through word of mouth, through networking. So again, plenty of opportunity for you to find employment if that's something that you desire to do.

So at WashU, we encourage students to seek outside scholarships. The reason why is because there's no penalty for doing so. So if you win an outside scholarship, it does not mean an automatic reduction to your WashU scholarship. What we're going to do is we're going to take the outside scholarship and we will add that into your award. And we'll continue to add that multiple times as long as the total between your financial aid and your outside scholarships don't exceed the full cost of attendance. Now, if that happens, we will need to go in and make some reductions, but we're always going to go and take a look at any federal components first because it's the law. But again, rest assured that when you win these outside scholarships, it does not automatically mean that WashU's going to pull away any scholarship money that we've awarded. We try to avoid that as much as possible. And if you're interested to learn how to transfer those funds to us, it's very simple. Students can have the scholarship committees simply mail the check to Student Financial Services. But a lot of students just simply drop a check off to our office. And as I mentioned before with the process, we'll just take that check, deposit it into your financial aid. And then ultimately, that credit will show up on your student account.

And lastly, as part of our commitment to make WashU affordable for families, we're committed to meeting 100% of need for all admitted students, both domestic and international. Students with a family income of \$75,000 or less will have their full need met with grants, scholarships, and federal work-study. No loans. These same students and those that qualify for Pell Grant will also receive additional grant money to cover their transition to WashU as a first year student. And these grant funds can be used to cover expenses such as purchasing a computer, buying your books and supplies, or even expenses that you might find to cover setting up your dorm room for the first time. And another thing to keep in mind is that WashU increases aid if your family financial circumstances change. So if your family is experiencing any changes due to a job loss, a health crisis, some unexpected expense or cost to your family, we definitely want to hear about this. So I encourage you to please contact your SFS counselor. This person will be more than happy to review your situation, reevaluate your award, and see if there's additional scholarship or grant money that we can provide you to help deal with that situation.

If you have any questions about your award, any of the payments, any of the financing options that I've shared, or if your family, again, is experiencing financial challenges, especially due to COVID-19, we definitely want to hear from you and, again, encourage you to reach out to your SFS counselor. And if

you're not sure who your counselor is, here's a list of all of our counselors and their contact information. You can also find out who your counselor is by logging in to My FA Access, and that person's picture and their contact information will show up.

And for more information about our COVID-19 response as a university, our plans for returning to campus, or just checking out all of the updates that the university has related to COVID-19, I encourage you to check out the website. And the university's website is formally named COVID-19 Response and Recovery. And as I mentioned earlier, more information is definitely forthcoming about our final plans by the end of this month. So now, I am going to turn it back over to Reggie.

**Reggie Gacad:** Thank you so much, Andrea, for sharing that information. Families, we know that some of you have questions regarding COVID-19. The Fall Planning Committee recently held a series of town halls to address university planning regarding COVID-19 itself. I encourage you to review the recorded sessions online for that information. Andrea, while hearing you speak, I was reminded of a question I think many families may be wondering. How many hours per week do students work in federal work-study?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** Students generally work between 8 to 10 hours per week. We generally find that as pretty commonplace. WashU is a very rigorous academic setting. And so students usually find those are the numbers of hours that are pretty comfortable for them. Because not only are they dealing with a lot of homework, but they're very involved with student organizations and within the community. And so the 8- to 10-hour timeframe is typically what we see.

**Reggie Gacad:** Great. Thank you so much, Andrea. We will now move on to the question and answer portion of the webinar. As a reminder, make sure that you ask your questions in the Q and A feature of the Zoom call. If a financial situation changes, what would that look like? So are students able to get more money?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** Yeah. So if a situation changes with a student or family, usually, what we'll want them to do is let us know. The best way to let us know is to complete a form. That is on our website, the Financial Aid website. There's a form. There's actually two forms, but the form that would really apply to this audience would be the Award Reconsideration form. And so essentially, that's a form that's an appeal. So what we're going to do is we're going to ask you to share what the circumstances are. So give us a little background information. We may ask for a copy of your most current tax return, which is the 2019 return. But all of that is done not necessarily to poke around in your business, but it's really to give us a sense of what the financial situation is like. All of this information is used as tools to reassess or reevaluate the award. Our goal is always to try to get more money for the student. And so when we use that information, it's usually for that purpose. Because, again, we're just trying to do all we can to make sure that WashU stays an affordable option for the student and the family.

**Reggie Gacad:** Does the university have scholarships that students are able to apply for after they are accepted?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** Well, our merit scholarships are only awarded in a student's first year. But on the other hand, when it comes to need-based scholarships, those awards can be renewed. So any awards that students received in their first year, we're always going to ask for the FAFSA to be submitted every year thereafter. Again, our goal is to try to ensure that we're able to keep the financial aid for that student. And so in that case, we're able to provide additional scholarships perhaps if the financial circumstances have changed year to year for that family. But when it comes to the merit scholarships,

that's a one-and-done, unfortunately. In the first year-- and those dollars are renewed during the student's four-year timeframe at WashU.

**Reggie Gacad:** Does the university provide scholarships for things outside of tuition? Maybe housing, books, meal plans, etc.?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So the university does not have a formal way of providing scholarship for those things that you've mentioned. If a student finds that they need some additional help and if it's an item that we consider to be a cost of attendance item, they certainly should be working with their student financial services counselor. But if it's things that are outside what we call cost of attendance, I would encourage them to seek out additional help from-- there are several campus resources, and we can share that information with the student and family. But things like winter coats or perhaps maybe if a student might need a suit to interview, we have the Office of Student Success. They have funding available. The Career Center also has funding available. So there's different, again, departments and resources that we can put the student in touch with.

**Reggie Gacad:** Can students receive financial aid for summer classes or courses outside of the fall and spring semester?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** Yes. Well, I will say this. Students can receive financial aid to cover summer course expenses, but they will come in the form of loans. So yeah. There's no grant money. There's no scholarship money. It will be federal student loans that students will need to take.

**Reggie Gacad:** How do students go about transferring or communicating about outside scholarships they may have received?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So again, students can just simply bring their check to us. Drop it off at our service center and we'll be happy to deposit the check for them. They can have the checks mailed directly to our office. And sometimes, students might hear about winning a scholarship before the funds are ready to be remitted, and that's fine. So what the student can do as soon as they find out they've won the award, they can reach out to their SFS counselor. The SFS counselor will sort of put a placeholder on their student account, and we will then just look for the funds to eventually make their way into the university either by check or direct deposit.

**Reggie Gacad:** Great. Thank you. We have some families asking, do students have to reapply every semester or every year for financial aid?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So students don't have to reapply every semester, but certainly, every single year. In order to receive financial aid, you have to submit a FAFSA. We have an early-submission process. So if students can get their FAFSAs in to us by December 15th, we're going to renew their aid and provide notification of that by the end of January. But if they miss that deadline, students will have till the end of March to get [inaudible] timeframe to get their FAFSAs in, and we will give them an update on their awards by mid-May.

**Reggie Gacad:** Great. Thank you. Do students get the full paycheck from work-study or does part of it go to tuition or something else? How does that work?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So students do get their funds from a bi-weekly paycheck, so it's money that's paid directly to them. It's a part of the award. Because students are able to use the funds that they're earning to help pay some of those out-of-pocket expenses that they have. So students have used the funds to pay for toiletry items, for even going out on a Friday night with their friends, or maybe they need

the money to buy gas for their car, or maybe buy clothing, but there's multiple uses for those funds. But again, it's all a part of the expense living day to day as a student at WashU. So the money's paid directly to them. We never take those funds and apply them as a credit to a student account.

**Reggie Gacad:** Great. Thank you. We have a couple of questions regarding work- study. How are hours distributed throughout the week for work-study? Or is that site by site?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So the hours are distributed-- basically, it's an agreement between the student and the employer. And so I mentioned earlier in the presentation that it's a really good idea for the student to reach out to their supervisor. And from there, they might begin to make some preliminary plans on how the student's schedule will be for the week. But if not during that conversation, certainly by the time the student starts on day one, they can certainly work out a plan. But that's an agreement between the employer and the student, primarily.

**Reggie Gacad:** And then as a follow up, how much does a student typically make per hour through work-study? Or does that depend on the specific role?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** It does depend upon the specific role. We are looking at about \$9.45 for the Missouri minimum wage. So there are some positions that will make that. But depending upon the technical aspects of the position, you might have some maybe students that are computer science majors that are doing some computing or coding or what have you that might pay a little bit higher wage. But again, it just really does depend upon the position. But at a minimum, that would be \$9.45 an hour.

**Reggie Gacad:** And then the last of this chunk of work-study questions is, is work-study the only employment option for students on campus?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So work-study is not the only option. There are hundreds of jobs that kind of almost go on unadvertised that we find out that students are finding out through, as I mentioned, word of mouth, networking. There are lots of federal work-study jobs, mind you, through different departments. We've got the library. We've got the athletic center that, have designated certain positions as work-study jobs, but they also offer non-work-study jobs. So it really is a good idea to ask around. Go to the various areas that you have a keen interest in and talk with the staff there. Certainly, you can reach out to our office to see if there's opportunities that we've come across, the Career Center. So there's multiple resources that you can use to find employment. And again, from what I know, a lot of these students are finding jobs on their own.

**Reggie Gacad:** Do students and families have options if there is a financial emergency beyond this time? So throughout the year. And does that process look differently than the one that you described earlier?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So it depends upon the emergency. If it's an emergency where a student needs help paying their balance, let's say, that there's a balance due and the balance is pretty significant or the balance has been out there for quite a while, we definitely want them to work with their SFS counselor. Because from there, we're going to probe. We're going to ask questions. We're going to see if there's anything that we can do from a financial aid perspective to increase that student's award, which would then help resolve in paying down that outstanding balance. But if it's a situation where the emergency is due to maybe a student's car getting impounded or a multitude of other reasons that are not necessarily education-related, there still are resources there on campus that might be able to help a student. And so as I mentioned earlier, I think a good starting point is still our office, but then we can

redirect the student and provide guidance on the appropriate department to speak to depending upon what the issue or the problem is at hand.

**Reggie Gacad:** Does tuition increase each year? I know that you'd mentioned in your presentation about a freezing of funds depending on various options, so.

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** Yes. So tuition, i.e., our costs do increase. But on average, those cost increase are about 3.5% each year.

**Reggie Gacad:** Will the students' financial aid be impacted by outside scholarships that they may receive?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** No. They will not be impacted, for the most part. For the vast majority, they're not. As I mentioned in the presentation, I talk about the fact that sometimes we would need to go in and make an adjustment to reduce the student's award. But if there's an adjustment needed to make sure that the combination of the aid that they have, plus any outside scholarships, that the grand total don't exceed cost of attendance, if to do that means that we've got to go in and make a reduction, we're always going to go to the federal components first because the Department of Ed requires us to do that. So if a student is able to get funding or have their cost met through an outside source, i.e., an outside scholarship, and they've been awarded maybe it's a federal work-study or maybe it's a federal student loan, we're going to go in and reduce that federal piece first because that outside scholarship replaces that federal money. And so that's what we're doing because we're wanting to make sure that we're preserving any institutional funds that we've provided the student. Now, in the event, having done that, if it still works out, that student really went to town and they really got some great money coming in and it does require us to take a look at our scholarship, then I'm afraid that we will need to do that. But it's never the first place that we go. And even then, we'll still have a conversation with the student about, "Which do you want? The outside scholarship or the WashU scholarship?" Because sometimes, that outside scholarship has some other benefits that are connected to it.

So I was working with a student once who had won-- she did a fabulous job in winning outside scholarships. And then there's one scholarship that came through and it was going to take her over the cost of attendance. So rather than just going in and automatically reducing our scholarship, I called out to her and I said, "Listen, I want to find out what you want to do. There's money that you've got from this outside scholarship. But in order for me to make this fit, I'm going to need to reduce ours. Is that okay?" And she said, "It's fine." And the reason why was because connected with that money that she wanted to hold onto from the outside was an internship, a networking opportunity. So she wanted to still be considered whatever-that-name scholarship scholar. That was more important to her than reducing our scholarship or portion of our scholarship, because she knew the value that it meant to be considered a scholarship recipient from that institution. And so hearing that, I thought it makes perfect sense. So again, that's sort of a rare situation. And again, we just try to make sure that we are not making these kinds of decisions independently, that we're getting guidance and consultation from the students before we make that move.

**Reggie Gacad:** Great. Thank you. A question that we received, do all students get assigned an SFS counselor or is it only those receiving financial aid?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So definitely the ones that are receiving financial aid. And we do assign a counselor to all students, but just by virtue of the work that's required. We're not really reaching out or being intentional in communicating with those students, unless they seek us out and they definitely



want to try to establish a relationship or if they have questions about the financial aid process. And that happens a lot of times where students might start out their time at WashU not receiving financial aid, but because of changes in circumstances, they now want to apply for financial aid. And so having an SFS counselor already assigned to that student, they automatically know who they can reach out to and begin that conversation.

**Reggie Gacad:** Great. Thank you. Andrea, would you be able to clarify where students and family members can find the work-study application and information?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** Sure. The work-study application is in the student's checklist. So when a student logs into My FA Access, there is a checklist, and they click on the checklist and it shows there. And so there's a link that will take them to the form that they can then submit. It's a fillable form that they can then submit, and that will come definitely to our office for processing.

**Reggie Gacad:** Great. Thank you. We have a family member ask, can you decide to go with PEP loans at any time during the student's time at WashU, or must this decision be made within that first year?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** That's a great question. So you can sign up for PEP anytime. So same scenario. Maybe you're, one, you don't take advantage of the program, which is fine; but you're, two, you're interested. You can definitely start working with our PEP coordinator on that. And that's all the way up to your student's senior year.

**Reggie Gacad:** In terms of the installment plan, how and when should students and family sign up for that plan? And how do they need to decide-- I'm sorry, when do you need to decide the payment option?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So I'm going to encourage you to go to our website because it actually has the schedule listed there at [financialaid.wustl.edu](http://financialaid.wustl.edu). But I can tell you that student accounting just opened the enrollment on July 1st, and that is for families to sign up for the five-month plan with the first payment being due August 1st, and then it rolls to the 1st of the month thereafter. So if you don't sign up by-- I think it's the 25th of July in order to make your first installment payment by August 1st. You then move forward and it just repeats itself for future years. So then you would then need to take a look at signing up in August for the next four months. So it's kind of a rolling enrollment process or enrollment date. So don't hold me to that schedule, but I certainly want to encourage you to take a look at the website. It's listed all out there for both the fall typical schedule and then also for spring, where our typical five-month schedule is there too.

**Reggie Gacad:** Would you be able to clarify where students can find the health insurance waiver?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So students need to go into WebSTAC. When they do that, there is a link that they can click on that's going to take them to the Student Health Services website. And from there, there's a handful of questions that they would need to respond to. And immediately, they will get a result that says - based upon the responses given - if the insurance that they are covered under is sufficient. If it's not sufficient, then they will not be approved for a waiver, and the \$1,942 that's been charged to their account will stick. But if they are approved for a waiver, they are going to remove that charge from the student's bill. It should be removed, I would think, about 30 days later.

**Reggie Gacad:** As a follow up, is the health insurance cost included in the estimated cost of attendance discussed on the award breakdown, or is it a separate entity?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** Yeah. That's a great question. It is not included. This is an additional expense, an additional charge.

**Reggie Gacad:** How soon would you recommend students and families apply for the PEP loan if they're using this option to pay for room and board?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** So with billing going out sometime next month, I would say, safely by August 1st would be the timeframe that I would-- if I were them, I would sign up for the plan. It's a little tough right now because you don't yet know what those costs will be yet. So I'm going to backtrack. I'm going to say by September 1st. Because by then, you'll know what your charges are. There's still plenty of time to take advantage of the whole freezing and the different options. So I would say September 1st. Technically, really, you have until the end of the year, but we are encouraging students and families to sign up just as soon as they can as close to when the bill drops in order to really know how much you should be enrolling and are signing up for.

**Reggie Gacad:** Great. Thank you. So we are going to ask one last question for the evening. As a reminder, families, any questions that we were not able to address during this webinar will be addressed via email directly to the person who posted the question next week. Andrea, thank you so much for the information that you've shared tonight. What is one last thing that family members can do this summer to prepare for the fall semester as it pertains to this area?

**Andrea Stewart-Douglas:** Good question. I would say, once you get your bill, take a look at what your out-of-pocket expense will be. So what is your net price? We've got a worksheet that is on our website that you can access, and there's a worksheet that you can use. We also have an online tool that you can use that will help you even determine what your bill will be. But right now, I would just wait because everything's a bit unknown. So really just focus on the worksheet. And on that worksheet, what it does is it walks you through what your, again, out-of-pocket expenses will be or what your out-of-pocket costs will be. So you'll be able to quickly identify what your bill charges are. But it's the non-billed or indirect charges that students and families really do need to be planning for. And so those are those things like books and supplies, personal expenses, travel. So all of those things that are not showing up on a university bill that are still real costs, real expenses to the family, I would spend time budgeting that out and then taking a real view, real look at what those true costs will be. And again, on the personal side, if your student is-- another area that we sometimes hear about are prescription medications. Sometimes families don't factor that in. So anything that is going to be a real, true cost to your student while they're away or here at WashU, make sure you're budgeting appropriately for that. And then make sure that you're factoring in not only for the fall semester, but for spring cost as well.

**Reggie Gacad:** Andrea, the information that you've provided this evening was extremely helpful. I am very confident that families of WashU students were able to learn a lot from your presentation. Families, we hope that you were able to take away a lot of great information this evening. Please stay tuned for our upcoming webinars in the 2020-2021 Family Webinar Series. You'll be able to learn more and register for these opportunities at [families.wustl.edu](http://families.wustl.edu). We'll see you all soon.