



PREPARING TO APPLY

NAVIGATING APPLICATION EXPENSES

Applying to medical, dental, or another health professions school requires an upfront investment. This is a condensed version of our extensive guide available here: <https://bit.ly/HPA-CostofApplying>.

SAMPLE MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATION EXPENSES

	Range of costs	Sample cost
MCAT preparation	Varies widely (minimally ~\$300)	\$500
MCAT registration	\$315	\$315
School selection resource: MSAR	\$28	\$28
Primary common application to MD schools: AMCAS	\$170 for the first med school \$40 for each additional	20 schools: \$930
Transcript fees	Varies by college	Princeton: \$2.75
Letter storage fees	Varies by college	
Secondary application fees	Approx. \$50-\$150 per school	National median ¹ : \$1,200
CASPer test	\$10 to take, \$10 per school to distribute scores	\$40
Interviews: travel to and from the school's city/town	~\$0-500 per interview	3 interviews
transportation within school's city/town	~\$0-100 per interview	@\$400 each: \$1,200
lodging	~\$0-200 per interview	
interview suit and shoes	varies	
Deposits	May be non-refundable, but varies from school to school	
Second look visits: travel to/from the school, lodging	Optional, varies	
		Total: \$4,216

This is only a sample. Expenses vary significantly with the most variation tied to type of standardized test prep, number of applications, and number of interviews.

GENERAL ADVICE

- Sometimes it makes sense to cut costs but sometimes it's in your best interest to make some financial sacrifices to reach your goals. Work with mentors and reflect carefully on your needs as you navigate this.
- There is often a tradeoff between time and money. Sometimes it makes sense to slow down to maximize results and sometimes it doesn't. Take time to weigh the pros and cons.
- Throughout this process, be a self-advocate. Work with an advisor or mentor who can help you reach out professionally and appropriately to schools regarding your financial situation.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Have a frank discussion with family regarding their level of support early in the process, as it may affect your decisions moving forward.
- Have a frank discussion with HPA advisors about the strength of your candidacy in relation to your goals. Apply only if you feel confident that you can meet your goals. Having to reapply increases the time/financial/emotional cost of applying.

¹ National median data from the AAMC Matriculating Student Questionnaire: <https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/students-residents/report/matriculating-student-questionnaire-msg>

- Apply for a credit card that offers points for travel / lodging. Use this credit card for application expenses, then use the points accumulated toward interviews.

FEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Participating in fee assistance programs is one of the most significant ways to save money. Read through the websites for these opportunities to see if you might qualify.

Premed students

- The [AAMC Fee Assistance Program](#) (FAP) provides ~\$1500 savings on MCAT prep, MSAR, and AMCAS, and many medical schools will waive secondary application fees if you qualify for the FAP. Apply for the program before you begin MCAT study. Benefits last for up to two calendar years.
- If you apply to osteopathic (DO) medical schools, an [additional fee assistance program](#) is available.

Pre dental students

- The [Fee Waiver for the Dental Admission Test](#) (DAT) covers 50% of the DAT fee (currently \$475). Apply as close to January 1 as possible as the waivers are given on a first come, first served basis beginning on January 1.
- The primary application (AADSAS) [fee waivers](#) cover up to three total program designations. Apply as soon as the application opens in the summer as the waivers are given on a first come, first served basis beginning when the application opens.

APPLICATION EXPENSES

- **Standardized test preparation:** on the least expensive end, you can borrow and use free trial resources; on the most expensive, there are summer immersion packages that cost more than \$15,000. Consider what you need as a learner to maximize your confidence and readiness for the exam.
- **Standardized test registration:** register early for best access to test dates and location of choice. Aim to take the test only once.
- **Primary applications and school selection:** Each school you include on your primary is potentially an investment of \$100+ in terms of primary fees, secondary application fees, essays, and travel expenses for interviews. Do research on the front end using official resources like the [AAMC Medical School Admissions Requirements \(MSAR\)](#). Work with HPA to craft your list, taking into account your academic metrics, state residency, interests, and other factors.
- **Transcript and Letter Collection fees:** Colleges where you took classes may charge to send your transcripts to the application services. Colleges may also charge to store/process your individual letters of recommendation and send them on to your schools.
- **Secondary applications:** Each school will require a secondary application fee and responses to school-specific questions and thus require an additional investment of time and money. Research secondary application fees and the questions asked on the secondaries in past years before applying. If you don't think you'd realistically complete a school's secondary given the cost or content, leave them off your initial school list and save that \$40 upfront AMCAS fee.
- **Interview clothes:** You will need a suit and dress shoes. Focus on comfort rather than price. Shop at thrift and consignment stores and outlets, or at the end of a season for deals.
- **Interview visits:** Consider this expense when planning your glide year location and your school list. You may be able to coordinate interviews at multiple schools within the same geographic region. Staying with student hosts will save on lodging.
- **Deposits:** Often required to hold a seat at a school, sometimes refundable by a certain deadline. Research schools' policies so that you will be prepared for these.
- **Second Look Visits:** Optional chance to return to a school to learn more about it.

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