

JANUARY 2021

# STC 2021 APPLICATIONS

INFORMATIONAL PACKET



## **WHY SHOULD I APPLY?**

Most families struggle to pay private school tuition. Through this program, thousands of students attending Jewish day schools and yeshivos have received scholarships and as a result have saved thousands of dollars on their tuition obligations.

## **IS IT NECESSARY TO APPLY TO MORE THAN ONE SGO?**

It's like having an extra spin of the roulette wheel for free. This year nearly all our eligible students applied to Empower Illinois. A smaller number also applied to Big Shoulders Fund. By November, a number of schools had more funding at BSF than they had applicants, while there were still plenty of waitlisted students at Empower Illinois. It's really important that you give yourself the best chance possible.

## **I APPLIED LAST YEAR AND DIDN'T RECEIVE AN AWARD. WHY SHOULD I APPLY AGAIN?**

Not every student that applies is awarded a scholarship. There are no guarantees. You also will need to be patient. Most of our 2020 awardees received their awards just in the last few weeks. Scholarships are awarded on a first come first served basis so preparing properly will likely increase your chances of receiving an award.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE AND FOR HOW MUCH MONEY?

**All students that live in Illinois are eligible if their household income does not exceed 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), or 400% if the student received a tax credit scholarship in any previous year.**

However, only students whose household income don't exceed 185% of the FPL can receive the full amount. From 185% - 250% can get 75% of the maximum and above 250% can receive 50% scholarships.

**Certain students are eligible for larger scholarships unless it exceeds full tuition:** Those that are gifted are entitled to 1.1X their maximum. English Learners are eligible for 1.2X. Students with special needs that qualify under the Federal IDEA are eligible for 2X the maximum.

a. Gifted is defined as a student that scores in the top 5% locally in that an area of aptitude such as Math or English. Ask your school if your child qualifies for this category.

b. English Learners are students who were not born in the United States, whose native tongue is a language other than English, and who are incapable of performing ordinary classwork in English; and students who were born in the United States of parents possessing no or limited English-speaking ability and who are incapable of performing ordinary classwork in English. If your child receives Title III services, he/she is likely an English Learner.

c. Special needs students are those who qualify under the Federal IDEA and have an IEP or ISP service plan.

# AM I ELIGIBLE?

Household members	FPL	185% FPL	250% FPL	300% FPL	400% FPL
1	\$12,760	\$23,606	\$31,900	\$38,280	\$51,040
2	\$17,240	\$31,894	\$43,100	\$51,720	\$68,960
3	\$21,720	\$40,182	\$54,300	\$65,160	\$86,880
4	\$26,200	\$48,470	\$65,500	\$78,600	\$104,800
5	\$30,680	\$56,758	\$76,700	\$92,040	\$122,720
6	\$35,160	\$65,046	\$87,900	\$105,480	\$140,640
7	\$39,640	\$73,334	\$99,100	\$118,920	\$158,560
8	\$44,120	\$81,622	\$110,300	\$132,360	\$176,480
9	\$48,600	\$89,910	\$121,500	\$145,800	\$194,400
10	\$53,080	\$98,198	\$132,700	\$159,240	\$212,320
11	\$57,560	\$106,486	\$143,900	\$172,680	\$230,240
12	\$62,040	\$114,774	\$155,100	\$186,120	\$248,160
13	\$66,520	\$123,062	\$166,300	\$199,560	\$266,080
14	\$71,000	\$131,350	\$177,500	\$213,000	\$284,000

Calculating where you are on the FPL chart requires having your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) found on line 8b of your 2019 or 2020 Form 1040 Tax Return, and the number of household members. Larger families can have more income and still be eligible.

If you do not file a Federal tax return, enter total income received for ALL adult household members, including all W-2s, 1099s, UI, PUA, SNAP or SSI benefits, and any additional income received.



## **4 WHO COUNTS AS A HOUSEHOLD MEMBER?**

Definition of household members are people you shared a kitchen with when you were home last Pesach. This includes parents, children (even those) not applying for scholarships, and other household members. Children who dorm in out-of-town yeshivos, girls in seminary in Israel and grandparents that live with you are household members.

Grandparents or married children that you support but don't live in the same home, even if you claim them as dependents, are not household members. Children that live at home but work and file their own taxes, as well as grandparents that live with you but file their own taxes (or don't file at all) can be counted as household members as long as you provide their tax information (or a sworn statement, available on BSF's website, that they don't file, along with any income documentation such as social security and UI benefits).

You count the number of household members that correspond to the year you are reporting your income. If you are using your 2019 income, you don't count a baby born in 2020. If you're using 2020 income, and had a child that got married in 2019, you cannot count that child.

## **5 WHAT DO I NEED FOR MY APPLICATION? DO I NEED ANY DOCUMENTS?**

You will not need any documents on January 12 or 13. Those can be submitted later. You will need some information, such as your AGI from your 2019 tax returns.

You will need internet access, preferably a personal computer with high-speed internet access.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- a.** You can use a mobile device but generally a personal computer is better.
- b.** If possible, connect your computer to the internet with a cable and don't use Wi-Fi.
- c.** If using Wi-Fi, discontinue using all other devices.
- d.** Use Chrome as your browser. Chrome is more likely to work faster than other browsers.
- e.** Make sure autofill is enabled and has your name, home address and email.
- f.** If using someone else's computer, logging into your Google profile could do the trick.

## 6 INSTRUCTIONS FOR BIG SHOULDERS FUND

1. Save sgoapp@bigshouldersfund.org and sgoproc@bigshouldersfund.org to your contacts so emails don't get blocked. Email addresses that end in ".net" are most likely to block emails from Big Shoulders Fund.

2. There is a five page application. You will get your timestamp after completing the first page, but you **MUST CONTINUE** on and complete all 5 pages and receive the confirmation page in order to save your time stamp. You may take your time completing pages 2-5 as long as you complete the full application at one time.

3. Go to the link. <https://www.bigshouldersfundsgo.org/>

There you will find the link to the application on January 12th. You will see a countdown clock. It should refresh automatically at 8:00 a.m.

**4. Have the following information ready:**

a. **Your email address**

b. **Number of people in household**

c. **Household income for 2019** (You must enter the exact dollar amount without dollar signs, commas, or decimals and please do not round or estimate.)

Note: If you are not eligible based on 2019 but anticipate being eligible based on 2020, enter your 2019 income and in the comment box on the last page of the application, write that your 2020 income was lower and what you estimate that figure is.

d. **Home address** (There are separate fields for street address, city, state, and zip)

e. **County** (There's a dropdown menu. For most people it's Cook County.) That is all you need for the first step.

# 7 INSTRUCTIONS FOR BIG SHOULDERS FUND (CONTINUED)

**Note:** You will *NOT* need to upload your tax returns or other income documentation when you apply. If your application is being reviewed at a later date, you will receive an email requesting documentation.

Once you complete the first step of the online application, you will see a confirmation screen with your date-time stamp and receive an email within a few hours confirming your date-time stamp.

**For the second page you will need to know:**

a. Your public school district: Chicago is #299. (If you live outside Chicago, find your district [here](#).)

b. The private school that you want to apply for. (You can change this later if you are unsure.)

**Note:** Do not select the school the child is in currently in but the one he/she intends to go to next year.

You will need to know the county the school is in, which for all except TABG will be Cook County.

c. If your child is gifted, an English Learner, and/or is special needs that qualify under the Federal IDEA.

Once you get a thank you screen, you are done. You should also receive a confirmation email with your timestamp.

**You can practice on our mock application [here](#).**

Review [this](#) cheat sheet from Big Shoulders Fund to make sure you have everything you need.



## 8 INSTRUCTIONS FOR EMPOWER ILLINOIS

For Empower Illinois, all you need to do on January 13 is to quickly complete a short one page reservation form. All other information is to be filled out at a later date when you receive a link to complete the full application.

All you need is your:

- a. First name
- b. Last name
- c. Phone number
- d. Email
- e. Home address
- f. First and last names of all students you are applying for.

On Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. applicant families can visit [EmpowerIllinois.org](https://EmpowerIllinois.org) to access the reservation forms and begin your application. You cannot submit your reservation form until 7:00 p.m. This will enable you to fill out all of the information, including all the names of your children that you are applying for, without rushing.

On the first page of the reservation, you will be asked to provide your name, phone number, home address, email address, and all your students' names. On the second page of the reservation, you will be asked to confirm this information.

# 9

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR EMPOWER ILLINOIS CONTINUED.

The timestamp is recorded based on your submission of the second page of the reservation.

**Note: Do NOT pause to review page two! Simply click the Captcha and submit.**

To get an idea of what the reservation pages will look like, see the screenshots.

Beginning Friday, January 15, 2021, you can use your student portal to complete part two of the application. You can complete part two whenever you are able, but Empower Illinois encourages you to submit your application before January 25, 2021, to have the best chance at receiving a scholarship.

**SEE NEXT PAGE FOR SAMPLE APPLICATION**

RESERVATION PAGE I

**Tax Credit Scholarship Reservation**  
(Reservación para la beca)

**Please Note - You can fill out this page but will only be able to move on to the next step after 7pm CST.**

**You must complete this page in order to have your submission screened and to be invited to participate in the full Empower Illinois application process.**  
(Debe completarse esta página para que sea revisada su reservación y para después poder ser invitado/a a participar en el proceso entero de aplicación de Empower Illinois.)

Parent/Guardian First Name (Nombre/Nombre de padre/guardián)\*

Parent/Guardian Last Name (Apellido del padre/guardián)\*

Phone Number (Número de teléfono)\*

Email Address (Correo electrónico)\*

Confirmation of Email Address (Confirmación de correo electrónico)\*

Address Line 1 (street address) (Línea 1 Dirección (Número y calle))\*

Address Line 2 (apartment, suite, unit, building, floor, etc.) (Línea 2 Dirección (apartamento, unidad, edificio, piso, etc.))

City (Ciudad)\*      State (Estado)\*      Zip Code (Código Postal)\*  
           

Note: Order of students on this page is the order in which scholarships will be awarded, subject to the availability of funds.  
(NOTA: Las becas se otorgarán conforme al orden de estudiantes en esta página, siempre y cuando haya fondos disponibles.)

Child #1 (Niño/a #1)  
First Name (Primer nombre)\*      Last Name (Apellido)\*  
     

[Add Another Child \(Añadir otro hijo/a\)](#)

**Tax Credit Scholarship Reservation**  
(Reservación para la beca)

The following boxes are required for the reservation submission to be considered eligible:  
(Las casillas marcadas con un asterisco (\*) son obligatorias para que el envío de la reserva se considere elegible.)

**Agree (Marque la caja) Acepto?**  
I hereby confirm that I am the parent or custodian of the child(ren) listed on this form, and I hereby authorize Empower Illinois to access information needed for income eligibility determinations under the Tax Credit scholarship program.  
(Confirmando que soy el padre/a madre o el tutor/a tutor de los menores indicados en este formulario y autorizo a Empower Illinois a acceder a la información necesaria para las determinaciones de elegibilidad según los ingresos de acuerdo con el programa de becas por crédito fiscal.)

**Agree (Marque la caja) Acepto?**  
I declare that the information on this form is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and complete. I agree, if requested, to send additional information to support statements on this form. By submitting this application, I also acknowledge that I have read and agree to the terms of the Terms & Conditions and Empower Illinois Privacy Policy. Under this policy, among other things, consent to the Illinois Invest in Kids Act, authorize Empower Illinois, its service providers, and others as permitted by law to access information needed for income eligibility determinations. I also acknowledge that Empower Illinois may share the information it collects, including names, contact information, and all other information provided by me on the application, with its service providers, schools listed on the application and related school systems, and others as required by law under the Illinois Invest in Kids Act, in order to administer scholarship programs and make income eligibility determinations.  
(Declaro que la información incluida en este formulario es, a mi entender, correcta y completa. Acepto, de solicitar, enviar información adicional para respaldar las declaraciones realizadas en el formulario. Al enviar esta solicitud, también reconozco que he leído y acepto los Términos y las condiciones y la Política de privacidad de Empower Illinois. De acuerdo con esta política, entre otras cosas, conforme a la Ley de inversión en los niños (Illinois Invest in Kids Act), autorizo a Empower Illinois, los proveedores de servicios y otros, según se permita por ley, a acceder a la información necesaria para las determinaciones de elegibilidad según los ingresos. Asimismo, reconozco que Empower Illinois podrá compartir la información recopilada, incluso los nombres, la información de contacto y toda otra información brindada por mí mediante esta solicitud, con los proveedores de servicios, las escuelas indicadas en la solicitud y los sistemas educativos relacionados, y otros según lo exija la ley conforme a la Ley de inversión en los niños de Illinois, para administrar los programas de becas y realizar las determinaciones de elegibilidad según los ingresos.)

**Agree (Marque la caja) Acepto?**  
I authorize Empower Illinois to contact me by email and/or text message with additional information related to the mission of Empower Illinois, including information about how parents, grandparents, and guardians can be involved to support making this scholarship possible. My consent or lack of consent will have no effect on my scholarship eligibility.  
(Autorizo a Empower Illinois a comunicarse conmigo por correo electrónico y/o mensaje de texto para enviar información adicional sobre la misión de Empower Illinois, incluso información sobre cómo los padres, los abuelos y los tutores pueden involucrarse para que la beca sea posible. Mi consentimiento o falta de consentimiento no afectará de manera alguna la elegibilidad de mi beca.)

[Continue \(Seguir\)](#)

Family Scholarship Helpline: (800) 616-7606 or [scholars@empowerillinois.org](mailto:scholars@empowerillinois.org)

Time until next step becomes available: 03:44  
(Tiempo hasta que el siguiente paso está disponible.)

**Tax Credit Scholarship Reservation**  
(Reservación para la beca)

**Attention! You are not finished yet!**

You must click submit before closing this page in order to receive a timestamp.  
(Debe completarse esta página para que sea revisada su reservación y para después poder ser invitado/a a participar en el proceso entero de aplicación de Empower Illinois.)

**Parent Details**


Empower Illinois  
(222) 222-2222  
email@best.com

200 N. LaSalle St  
Chicago, IL, 60601

**Student Details**

- Test Student

I'm not a robot


  
hCAPTCHA  
Privacy - Terms

**Submit**  
(Someta)

**Submit to complete your reservation.**  
 (Someta para completar su reservación.)

Family Scholarship Helpline: (800) 616-7606 or [scholars@empowerillinois.org](mailto:scholars@empowerillinois.org)

# APPLICATION DAY HANDY SHEET

## TIMES

### **BIG SHOULDERS FUND**

TUESDAY JAN 12TH. ADVISABLE TO BE READY AT 7:30AM. GOES LIVE 8:00AM

### **EMPOWER ILLINOIS**

WEDNESDAY, JAN 13TH,  
6:30PM PRE-APPLICATION, 7PM LIVE

## WEBSITES

[BIGSHOULDERSFUNDSGO.ORG](http://BIGSHOULDERSFUNDSGO.ORG)  
[EMPOWERILLINOIS.ORG](http://EMPOWERILLINOIS.ORG)

EXACT WEBSITES WILL BE RELEASED RIGHT BEFORE THE APPLICATION TIMES

## LIVE INSTRUCTIONS NUMBER

WILL BE AVAILABLE 7:30AM TUESDAY AND 6:30PM WEDNESDAY PRIOR TO APPLICATION LIVE TIME

**563-999-1235**

## HELPLINE NUMBER

AVAILABLE ALL DAY TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY

**773-754-3130**



# WEBINAR THIS SUNDAY



# BE PREPARED

## JOIN US THIS SUNDAY!

JANUARY 10th | 8:30pm

# 2021 STC APPLICATION WEBINAR

Comprehensive instructions | What's needed  
Eligibility | Practice Application | Tips and information  
Q&A Session

### Special Guests:



Meika Slotsema



Anthony Holter, Meggan Muller

## REGISTER

<http://bit.ly/STCApplications2021>



Email us with questions at:

[STC@AgudahIL.org](mailto:STC@AgudahIL.org)

## CALL IN NUMBER:

US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592

Webinar ID: 999 6459 8835

QUESTIONS?  
EMAIL: [STC@AGUDAHIL.ORG](mailto:STC@AGUDAHIL.ORG)  
OR CALL 773-279-8400

