



Getting Organized to Complete the FREE Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA

What is the FAFSA?

FAFSA is the FREE Application for Federal Student Aid and universal application for federal financial aid at all eligible colleges and universities. It is available to complete on-line in English or Spanish at www.fafsa.ed.gov



Where to Start?

Students and families must complete the FAFSA as early as possible every year the student plans to attend higher education. One FAFSA per student attending college per year.

October 1 of the year before the student will attend school is the earliest date the FAFSA may be completed. For example, if you plan to attend college in the Fall of 2020, the earliest date your family can complete a FAFSA is October 1, 2019. As the name suggest, no fee is charged to file a FAFSA. Student apply on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov

One parent and the student must apply for a FSA-ID to electronically sign the FAFSA form at www.fsaid.ed.gov. it is best to do this BEFORE you begin to complete the FAFSA. You will use the same username and password every year.

Beware: Scam web sites charge families to submit your FAFSA information. Don't be scammed into paying! It's Free!

To be eligible for federal and state financial aid students must;

- * Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non citizen
- * Have a valid Social Security number
Parent don't need a SSN for their children to apply for aid (they do need one to create their FSA-Id)
- * Comply with selective service registration if male, aged 18-25
- * Have a high school diploma, GED, or home-schooled
- * Be enrolled at least half time and be enrolled as a regular student working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program at a school that participates in the federal student aid programs.
- * Not have a drug conviction for an offense that occurred while you were receiving federal student aid such as grants, loans, or work-study
- * Not owe a refund on a federal grant or be in default on a federal student loan
- * Complete all requirements requested by the Department of Education.



What will you and your parent(s) need?



- Social Security Number
- Driver's license if you have one
- W-2 forms and other earning records for the prior tax year for the Federal Incomes Tax Return for the prior tax year.
- Untaxed income records—Social Security, Child Support, Worker's Compensation, Non-educational Veteran's Benefits, or welfare records
- Current bank statements
- Business records only if the business has greater than 100 employees
- Farm records only in the farm is not your primary residence
- Current investment records such as stocks, bonds, and rental property
- Your alien registration card if you are not a U.S. citizen

If you filed your 2018 taxes, you can link them using the IRS data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT) to your FAFSA. Otherwise you will have to estimate your income and then update your tax information on the FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov when you have the updated information.



What is financial aid?

Financial aid is money that is given, borrowed or earned to pay for college. This money comes in the form of grants, scholarships, work-study jobs and student loan. Most of it is awarded based on financial need but some comes in the form of scholarships or institutional work-study based on merit. Financial aid makes it possible for students to access post-secondary education regardless of their abilities to pay.

Unique Family Situations

Students must include at least one biological or adoptive parent's information on the FAFSA unless they are 24 years of age or older, a veteran, ward of the court, married, in graduate school, supporting dependents by providing more than 50 percent of their support, have both parents deceased, foster youth or unaccompanied homeless youth.

If a students' parents have divorced or separated, they should answer only the questions about the parents that they lived with most during the last 12 months. If the student did not live with one parent more than the other, answer only the questions about the parent who provided most of your financial support during the last 12 months. If this parent is remarried, the step-parent's financial information must be included on the FAFSA.

