

FAFSA® Tip Sheet

Filing the FAFSA & Getting Financial Aid

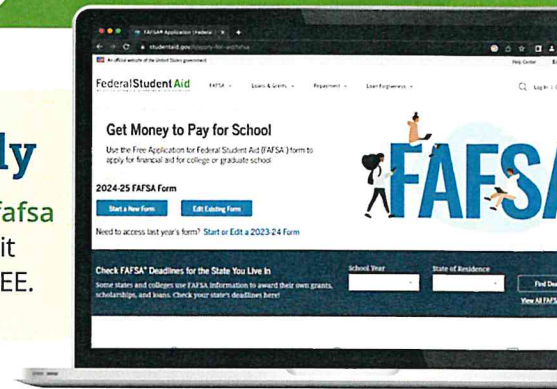


The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) is the most important application you must complete in order to qualify for almost all types of financial aid. Federal and state aid, local programs, and private grants and scholarships all use the FAFSA!



How to Apply

Visit StudentAid.gov/fafsa to complete and submit your application for FREE.



FAQs

Why complete a FAFSA?

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) uses the information provided on your FAFSA to determine your eligibility for aid from federal student financial assistance programs. In Pennsylvania, the FAFSA also helps determine your PA State Grant eligibility. Schools even use FAFSA data to award their own financial aid.

What are the deadlines?

Financial aid deadlines vary by school, state, program of study, and more. **File your FAFSA at the earliest application deadline** for any school you want to attend to ensure you're considered for all financial aid programs. Check with your school for details.

You must complete a new FAFSA Application each year. **For PA State Grant applicants, the FAFSA deadlines are:**

- **MAY 1**—For students attending colleges, universities, and college-transferable programs (excluding community colleges) and for all renewal students
- **AUGUST 1**—If you plan to enroll in a community college, a business, trade, or technical school, a hospital school of nursing, an open-admission institution, or a non-transferable 2-year program

What is the Federal Aid Direct Data Exchange Tool?

All students and contributors must provide consent to have their federal tax information transferred directly into the FAFSA form via the Federal Aid Direct Data Exchange. A contributor refers to anyone who is asked to provide information on a student's FAFSA form.

NOTE: Even if students or contributors don't have a Social Security number, didn't file taxes, or filed taxes outside of the U.S., they still need to provide consent.

What do I need to file my FAFSA?

- Your Federal Student Aid Account (FSA ID)*
- Your Social Security number
- Your alien registration number, if you are not a U.S. citizen
- Your W-2 forms
- Records of child support payments, including the total amount received for the last complete calendar year
- Your federal income tax return and schedules from the prior-prior year (For example, if completing the 2024-25 FAFSA, use 2022 income tax return information.)
- Your current bank statements and records of stocks, bonds, 529 plans, and other investments.
- A personal email address (not a school email address)

If you are a dependent student, you will also need:

- Your parent or spouse's (contributor's) Social Security number

NOTE: A contributor can be a student, student's spouse, biological or adoptive parent, or stepparent who provides information on the applicant's FAFSA.

- Your contributor's income and financial records (as listed above)

* What is a Federal Student Aid account username and password?

When you create an account at StudentAid.gov/fsa-id the username and password (FSA ID) you create will be used to log in to and sign the FAFSA. If you are a dependent student, both you and all contributors must have their own FSA ID with a username and password.