

# ALASKA FAFSA SUMMIT

How To Prepare for the 2024–25 FAFSA® Form

*October 26, 2023*

**Federal Student Aid**  
An OFFICE of the U.S. DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

# Today's Journey

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- 01** Learn the Basics of Applying for Federal Student Aid
- 02** Identify Your FAFSA® Contributors
- 03** Prepare Your Contributors
- 04** Create Your StudentAid.gov Account
- 05** Gather the Information You'll Need
- 06** Understand How To Fill Out the FAFSA Form
- 07** Know What To Expect After Submitting the FAFSA Form
- 08** Q&A



# LEARN THE BASICS OF APPLYING FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID

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# Federal Student Aid Overview

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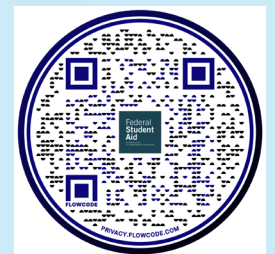
The U.S. Department of Education's office of Federal Student Aid provides more than \$111 billion in grants, work-study funds, and student loans each year to help students pay for college, career school, or trade school.

# Federal Student Aid Overview (continued)

Each year you plan to attend school, you must submit the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®) form. The information you provide on your form will be used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid and will be shared with your state higher education agency and the schools you list on the form.

By completing the FAFSA form, you may be eligible to receive

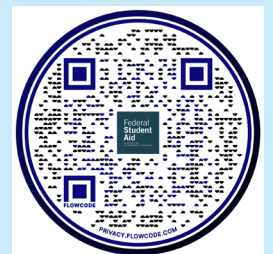
- ✓ federal grants,
- ✓ Federal Work-Study,
- ✓ federal student loans,
- ✓ state grants,
- ✓ grants from your college or career/trade school,
- ✓ scholarships from your college or career/trade school, and
- ✓ scholarships from outside organizations.



# Federal Student Aid Eligibility

To be eligible to receive federal student aid, you must

- ✓ demonstrate financial need for need-based federal student aid;
- ✓ be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen;
- ✓ have a valid Social Security number (except for students from the Freely Associated States);
- ✓ be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a student in an eligible degree or certificate program;
- ✓ be enrolled at least half-time to be eligible for Direct Loan Program funds;
- ✓ maintain satisfactory academic progress in college or career/trade school;
- ✓ provide consent and approval for the transfer of federal tax information directly into the FAFSA® form via direct data exchange with the IRS;
- ✓ sign the certification statement on the FAFSA form stating that you're not in default on a federal student loan, you do not owe money on a federal student grant, you'll only use federal student aid for educational purposes; and
- ✓ show you're qualified to obtain a college or career/trade school education.



# Citizenship and Federal Student Aid Eligibility

You must be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen to be eligible to receive federal student aid. This means you must meet one of the following requirements:

- ✓ You are a U.S. citizen or U.S. national.
- ✓ You are a citizen of the Freely Associated States: the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau.
- ✓ You are a U.S. permanent resident with a Permanent Resident Card, Resident Alien Card, or Alien Registration Receipt Card.
- ✓ You have an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services showing
  - “Refugee,”
  - “Asylum Granted,”
  - “Cuban-Haitian Entrant,”
  - “Conditional Entrant” (valid only if issued before April 1, 1980), or
  - “Parolee.”
- ✓ You hold a T nonimmigrant status (“T-visa”) or your parent holds a T-1 nonimmigrant status.
- ✓ You have a “battered immigrant-qualified alien” status.

# Myth

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- You won't qualify for any federal student aid because you or your family makes too much money, so there's no point in completing the FAFSA® form.



# Fact

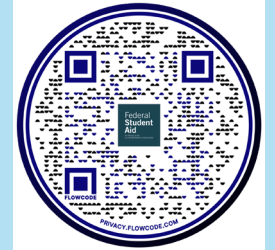
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- Most students are eligible to receive financial aid from the federal government to help pay for college, career school, or trade school.
- While your income is taken into consideration, there is no income cut-off to qualify for federal student aid.



# Add a stop!

Use the *Federal Student Aid Estimator* to see how much federal student aid you may be eligible for before you start your FAFSA® form.



# Introducing Better FAFSA, Better Future

The FAFSA® experience is changing to better support students and parents.

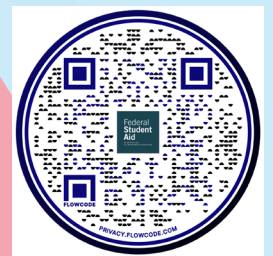
These changes will provide

- ✓ a more streamlined application process,
- ✓ expanded access to Federal Pell Grants and eligibility for federal student aid, and
- ✓ a new user experience for the FAFSA form.

**As a result, the 2024–25 FAFSA form will launch in December 2023.**

# Boost Your Rider Rating!

- ✓ Check out our resources to help you understand key changes to the FAFSA® form and process, such as our “What’s Changed for the 2024–25 FAFSA Form?” video. (Scan the QR code below to watch the video.)
- ✓ Don’t wait until December to begin preparing to complete your 2024–25 FAFSA form.
- ✓ Complete the FAFSA form every year that you plan to attend college, career school, or trade school, and submit your form as early as possible after the form launches.



# IDENTIFY YOUR FAFSA<sup>®</sup> CONTRIBUTORS

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# New to the FAFSA<sup>®</sup> Form: Contributors

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- ✔ Contributor is a new term being introduced on the 2024–25 FAFSA<sup>®</sup> form.
- ✔ A contributor is anyone required to provide information, a signature, and consent and approval to have their federal tax information transferred directly from the IRS into the FAFSA form.
- ✔ Information provided by contributors will be used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid.
- ✔ Contributors who are identified on your FAFSA form are not financially responsible for your education expenses.

# New to the FAFSA® Form: Consent and Approval

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You and any additional contributors identified on your FAFSA® form must provide consent and approval. Even if one of your contributors doesn't have a Social Security number, didn't file taxes, or filed taxes outside of the U.S., consent and approval are still required. If any of your contributors do not provide consent and approval or refuse to provide them, you won't be eligible for federal student aid.

# New to the FAFSA® Form: Consent and Approval (continued)

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When you and your contributors provide consent and approval on the FAFSA® form, you agree to

- ✔ share your personally identifiable information provided on the FAFSA form with the IRS,
- ✔ have your federal tax information transferred directly into the FAFSA form,
- ✔ allow the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to use your federal tax information to determine your eligibility for federal student aid,
- ✔ allow ED to share your federal tax information with higher education agencies and the schools you listed on your FAFSA form, and
- ✔ allow ED to reuse your federal tax information on other FAFSA forms that you're invited to and choose to participate on.

# Who Is a Contributor?

## A contributor is

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- You (the student),
- your biological or adoptive parent(s),
- your spouse, and/or
- you parent's spouse.

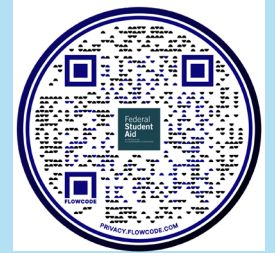


## A contributor isn't

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- nonadoptive grandparents,
- foster parents,
- your fiancé, or
- the other biological parent when they are not married to or don't live with the parent contributor on the FAFSA form.





# Add a stop!

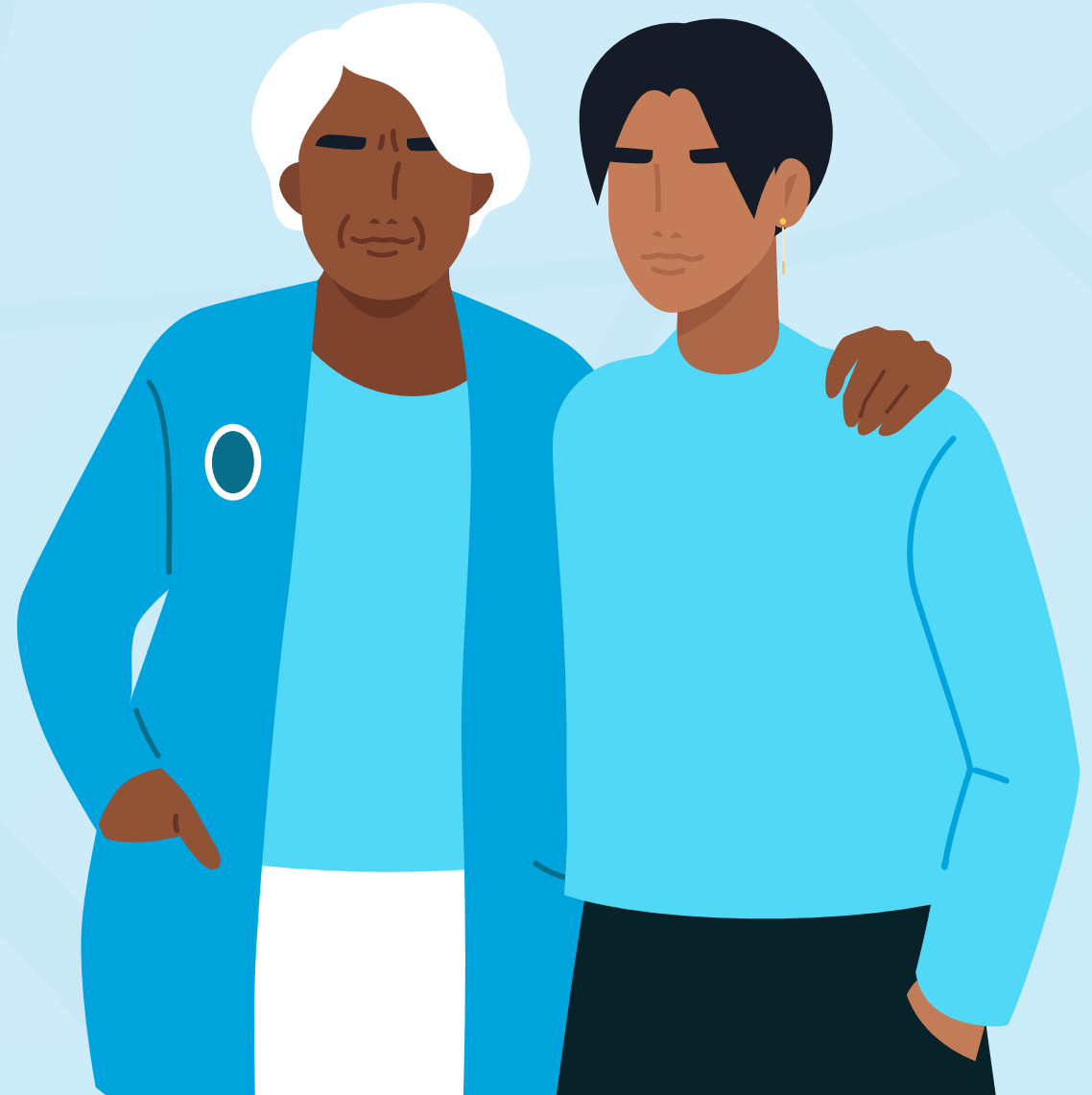
Watch our “Who Is a Contributor on the 2024–25 FAFSA® Form?” video.



# How Are Contributors Identified?

Whether contributors other than yourself are required on your FAFSA® form is determined by

- ✓ dependency status,
- ✓ marital status, and
- ✓ tax filing status.



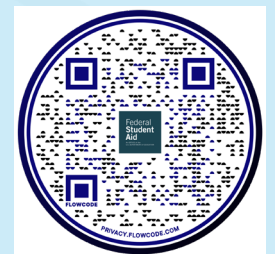
# Dependency Status and Contributors

## Dependent Students

- ✓ You will report parent information when completing your FAFSA® form.
- ✓ At least one of your parents will be identified as a contributor.
- ✓ If your parent is married and did not file taxes jointly with their spouse, your parent's spouse will also be identified as a contributor.
- ✓ If your parents are not married and do not live together, the parent who provides the most financial support will be identified as a contributor.
- ✓ If your parents are not married and live together, both parents will be identified as a contributor.
- ✓ Use the “Is My Parent a Contributor When I Fill Out My FAFSA® Form?” infographic to help understand who may be identified as a contributor before starting your FAFSA form. (Scan the QR code to view the infographic.)

## Independent Students

- ✓ If you are currently married (and not separated), you will report your spouse's information when completing the FAFSA form.
- ✓ If you did not file taxes jointly with your spouse, they will be identified as a contributor.



# Meet Keiran!

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Keiran is excited to begin his first year at college next fall after he graduates high school. His parents are divorced. He currently lives with his father and stepmother, only staying with his mother occasionally, and it is Keiran's father who provides the majority of his financial support. When filing their 2022 tax return, Keiran's father and stepmother filed jointly.



# Pop Quiz Question #1

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**When Keiran completes his 2024–25 FAFSA® form, who will be identified as contributor(s)?**

- A. Keiran's father and mother
- B. Keiran's father
- C. Keiran's father and stepmother
- D. Keiran's father, mother, and stepmother

# Answer

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## The correct answer is B!

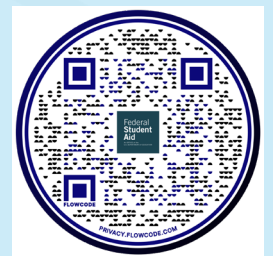
Because Keiran's parents are divorced, the parent that provides the greater amount of financial support will be identified as a contributor on his 2024–25 FAFSA<sup>®</sup> form. Since Keiran's father and his stepmother filed their 2022 tax return jointly, Keiran's father will report information for both of them on Keiran's FAFSA form.

# Independent Dependency Status

If you identify with at least one of the following, then you are an independent student:

- ✓ 24 years old or older by Jan. 1 of the school year for which you are applying for financial aid
- ✓ Married and not separated
- ✓ A graduate or professional student (working toward a master's or doctorate degree)
- ✓ Have children or other legal dependents (other than your spouse) who live with you and receive more than half of their support from you
- ✓ A veteran of or currently serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces
- ✓ At any time since you turned 13, both of your parents were deceased, you were in foster care, or you were a ward or dependent of the court
- ✓ An emancipated minor or in a legal guardianship as determined by a court
- ✓ An unaccompanied youth who is homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless

If you do not identify with any of the above, then you are a dependent student.



# Meet Lucy!

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Lucy is 20 years old and will be starting a program at a career school next fall. She currently lives alone in an apartment that she rents with the money she earns from her job. Her parents do not support her financially, and she only sees them for holidays.





## Pop Quiz Question #2

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### True or false:

Lucy's dependency status will be independent when she completes her 2024–25 FAFSA® form.

# Answer

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## The correct answer is false!

Even though Lucy does not live at home and her parents do not support her financially, Lucy doesn't meet the criteria for an independent student. She will be identified as a dependent student when she completes her FAFSA<sup>®</sup> form, and Lucy will need to provide parent information. Additionally, at least one of Lucy's parents will be identified as a contributor on her FAFSA form.


# Introducing Provisionally Independent Status for Students With Unusual Circumstances

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Starting with the 2024–25 award year, you will be granted a dependency status of provisionally independent if you indicate having unusual circumstances on your FAFSA® form. With a provisionally independent status, you will be able to complete and submit your form without parent information.

Unusual circumstances refer to a situation where you are unable to contact a parent or where contact with a parent would pose a risk to you.


## Examples of unusual circumstances may include



- ✓ human trafficking,
- ✓ legally granted refugee or asylum status,
- ✓ parental abandonment or estrangement, and
- ✓ student or parental incarceration.



## Situations that do not qualify as unusual circumstances include



- ✓ parents refuse to contribute to your education expenses,
- ✓ parents will not provide information for your FAFSA® form, and
- ✓ parents do not claim you as a dependent for income tax purposes.

# Provisionally Independent Students: Next Steps

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After you submit your FAFSA® form and are granted a dependency status of provisionally independent, you will need to provide supporting documentation of your unusual circumstances directly to the school you will attend. Acceptable documentation could include

- ✓ interviews,
- ✓ documented phone calls and statements from various officials,
- ✓ court documents,
- ✓ utility bills, and
- ✓ any other documentation your school requests.

A financial aid administrator at the school will make the final determination of your dependency status, and that decision cannot be appealed to the U.S. Department of Education. You should contact your school's financial aid office if you have questions about the documentation they require.

# Meet Alan!

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Alan will be starting his second year at community college next fall. Alan was raised by a single parent, and he has no contact with his other parent. His single parent completed the required sections of his 2023–24 FAFSA® form for his previous year of community college, but in the time between when Alan completed his 2023–24 FAFSA form and now, his parent has been incarcerated.



## Pop Quiz Question #3

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### True or false:

Alan's situation qualifies as an unusual circumstance, and he will be granted a dependency status of provisionally independent.

# Answer

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## The correct answer is true!

Parental incarceration is an example of a situation that may qualify Alan for an override of his dependency status due to an unusual circumstance. Alan should indicate he has an unusual circumstance when he completes his 2024–25 FAFSA® form, and he will be granted a status of provisionally independent. After he submits his FAFSA form, Alan will also need to contact the financial aid office at his community college to submit supporting documentation such as court documents. His school will review the documentation and make the final determination of his dependency status.



# Students With Special Circumstances

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Special circumstances refer to you or a contributor experiencing a significant change to your financial situation. This can lead to the financial aid administrator at your school making a professional judgment determination, meaning they will adjust data elements on your FAFSA® form to more accurately assess your need for financial aid.

Examples of special circumstances may include

- ✓ loss of employment or financial assets,
- ✓ reduction in income, tuition expenses at an elementary or secondary school, and
- ✓ unusual medical or dental expenses not covered by insurance.

# Students With Special Circumstances: Next Steps

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If you have special circumstances, you should complete your FAFSA® form as instructed on the form. After you submit your FAFSA form, you must contact the financial aid office at your school to request an adjustment and to provide supporting documentation. The financial aid administrator will review the documentation and determine if a professional judgment is warranted.

Each school will determine what documentation is acceptable according to their professional judgment policy, but some examples of acceptable documentation include

- ✓ documented interview between the student and a financial aid administrator;
- ✓ statements from the student, parent(s), spouse, or third parties;
- ✓ statements from school staff;
- ✓ court or legal documents; and
- ✓ other supplementary information on applicant's financial status or personal circumstances.

# Meet Danika!

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Danika is looking forward to their senior year at a state university next fall and has completed the FAFSA® form for each year they've attended school. Recently, Danika's parent was laid off. With the reduction in income, Danika is worried about having enough money to cover their education expenses.



## Pop Quiz Question #4

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### What steps should Danika take?

- A. Indicate unusual circumstances when completing the FAFSA® form.
- B. Contact their school before completing the FAFSA form to ask about special circumstances.
- C. Complete the FAFSA form as instructed and then contact their school about their special circumstances.
- D. There is nothing Danika can do.

# Answer

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## The correct answer is C!

Danika should complete their FAFSA<sup>®</sup> form as instructed. After submitting their FAFSA form, Danika can contact the financial aid office at their school. Danika will need to provide supporting documentation, such as a layoff letter, and the financial aid administrator will make a professional judgment determination.

# PREPARE YOUR CONTRIBUTORS

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# What Your Contributors Need To Know

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- ✓ The answers that you provide on your FAFSA® form will determine which contributors, if any, will be required to participate on your form.

Identified contributors will need to enter your FAFSA form and provide

- ✓ their information, their consent and approval, and their signature in order for your FAFSA form to be complete.

While contributors must provide personal and financial information on

- ✓ your FAFSA form, they are not financially responsible for your education costs.

# Inviting Contributors

When completing your FAFSA® form, you will need to provide information about your identified contributors to invite them to your form. This information includes their

- ✓ first and last name,
- ✓ Social Security number (if they have one),
- ✓ date of birth, and
- ✓ email address.





# Contributors Invited to a FAFSA® Form Complete Four Steps:

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1. Enter the form after receiving an email informing them that they have been identified as a contributor. The link within the email will allow contributors to enter the form.
2. Log in to their StudentAid.gov account using their FSA ID (account username and password).
  - Contributors who don't already have a StudentAid.gov account can create one during this step. Starting in December 2023, contributors who don't have a Social Security number will be able to create an account.
3. Review information about contributing to a FAFSA® form.
4. Provide required information, consent and approval, and signature to complete the required sections.

# CREATE YOUR STUDENTAID.GOV ACCOUNT

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# Boost Your Rider Rating!

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Make sure you and your contributors create a StudentAid.gov account as soon as possible to be ready when the 2024–25 FAFSA® form launches.



# StudentAid.gov Account Requirement

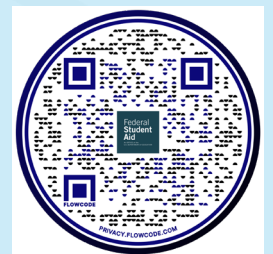
You and your contributors must each have your own StudentAid.gov account to access and complete the online FAFSA® form. Contributors cannot share an account.

To create an account, you and your contributors can visit [StudentAid.gov/create-account](https://StudentAid.gov/create-account) and follow the instructions on the page. Starting in December 2023, contributors who don't have a Social Security number can still create a StudentAid.gov account to complete their required sections of the FAFSA form. (Scan the QR code below to create a StudentAid.gov account.)



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StudentAid.gov



# GATHER THE INFORMATION YOU'LL NEED

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# Information You May Need To Complete Your FAFSA® Form

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While your federal tax information will be transferred directly into the FAFSA® form from the IRS when you provide consent and approval, it's best to have important documents on hand in case you need to enter additional information manually.

These may include

- ✓ tax returns;
- ✓ records of child support received;
- ✓ current balances of cash, savings, and checking accounts; and
- ✓ net worth of investments, businesses, and farms.

# Boost Your Rider Rating!

Remember, along with the important documents, you should also have your contributor's information on hand to invite them to complete their required sections of the FAFSA® form. This includes their

- ✓ name,
- ✓ date of birth,
- ✓ Social Security number (if they have one), and
- ✓ email address.



# UNDERSTAND HOW TO FILL OUT THE FAFSA<sup>®</sup> FORM

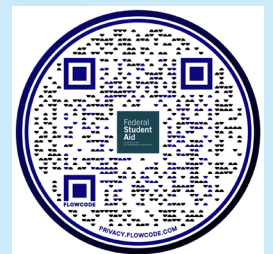
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# Completing Your FAFSA® Form

When the 2024–25 FAFSA® form becomes available in December 2023, follow these steps to complete and submit yours.

1. Visit [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov) and select the “Start a New Form” option.
2. Log in to your StudentAid.gov account to access and start your FAFSA form. Your parent can also start your form on your behalf, but you will still need to enter the form and complete your required sections.
3. Provide your information and answers within the form as instructed.
4. Invite any contributors who are identified based on the answers you provide.
5. Once you and your contributors have provided all of the required information, consent and approval, and signatures on your respective sections of the FAFSA form, submit your form.



# KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SUBMITTING THE FAFSA<sup>®</sup> FORM

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# FAFSA® Form Processing

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After your FAFSA® form is submitted, your information is processed by the U.S. Department of Education's office of Federal Student Aid. The information is then shared with the colleges, career schools, or trade schools that you listed on your FAFSA form so they can begin their process of awarding aid.

If you completed your FAFSA form online, processing can take between one and three days. You can check the status of your FAFSA form by logging in to your StudentAid.gov account.

# FAFSA® Form Confirmation Email

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After you submit your FAFSA® form, you'll receive a confirmation email. Make sure you review it closely as it may include important information:

- ✓ Any critical actions you may need to take once your FAFSA form is processed, such as providing missing contributor information or missing signatures.
- ✓ Your estimated eligibility for a Federal Pell Grant and your estimated Student Aid Index (SAI) will be listed if your form does not have any critical errors that need to be resolved.
  - The SAI is an index number calculated using your FAFSA information to determine eligibility for need-based aid. Starting in the 2024–25 award year, schools will use your SAI to assess how much financial aid they will offer you.

# Introducing the FAFSA Submission Summary

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Starting in the 2024–25 award year, you'll receive a FAFSA Submission Summary after your FAFSA® form has been processed. You can access your FAFSA Submission Summary by logging in to your StudentAid.gov account or by following the steps in the email you'll receive confirming your FAFSA Submission Summary is ready.

Your FAFSA Submission Summary will include four tabs for you to review: Eligibility Overview, FAFSA Form Answers, School Information, and Next Steps.

# After Your FAFSA® Form Is Processed

When your FAFSA® form is processed and the information is provided to the schools you listed on your FAFSA form, the financial aid administrators at the schools will use your FAFSA information and your Student Aid Index (SAI) to prepare your financial aid package. They will send out an aid offer for you to review and accept.



# Find More Information and Updates

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- [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov)
- Follow Federal Student Aid on social media for announcements and resources:



[X \(formerly Twitter\): twitter.com/FAFSA](https://twitter.com/FAFSA)



[Instagram: instagram.com/federalstudentaid](https://instagram.com/federalstudentaid)



[Facebook: facebook.com/FederalStudentAid](https://facebook.com/FederalStudentAid)



[LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/federalstudentaid](https://linkedin.com/company/federalstudentaid)



# FAFSA® Prototype

## College Access Professionals Only

Practice completing the 2024-25 FAFSA Form, by using the Prototype Preview.

Views as a:

Dependent Student

Independent Student

Married Parent filed separately

Married Parent filed Jointly

Unmarried Parents

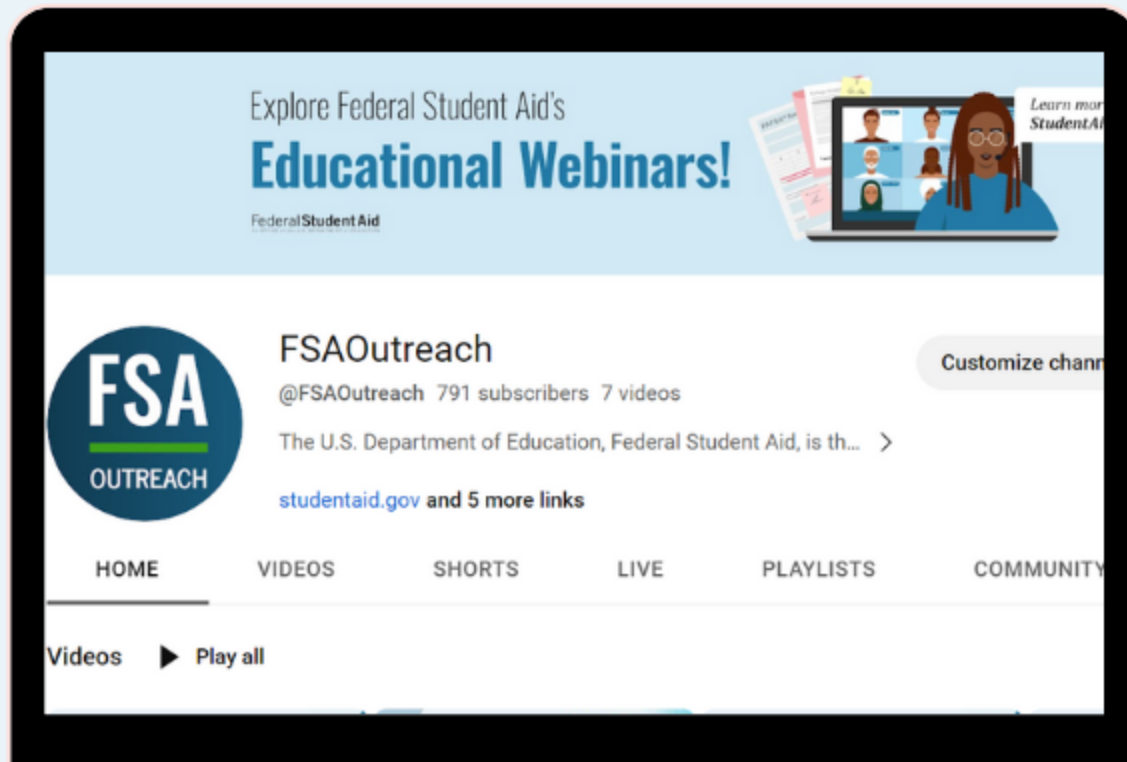
## Accessing the 2024–25 FAFSA Prototype

The 2024–25 FAFSA Prototype URL:  
<https://fsapartners.ed.gov/fafsa-prototype/2425>

Access Code: **prototype2425**



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# Q&A

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# THANK YOU!

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We would love  
your feedback!

