

Steps to Complete Your FAFSA®

FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES



Gather necessary information and documentation.

STUDENTS

- Social Security number
- Date of birth
- Email address
- Permanent Resident Card, if not a U.S. Citizen
- 2023 federal tax return (if the student filed)
- Value of any cash, savings account, and checking account



PARENTS

- Social Security number for each parent on the FAFSA (if the parent(s) has one)
- Date of birth for each parent on the FAFSA
- Email address
- Month and year parents were married, divorced, separated, or widowed
- 2023 federal tax return (if filed)
- Other financial information if applicable: federal benefits received, earned income credit, foreign income, and child support received
- Value of any cash, savings account, and checking account
- Net worth of any investments, businesses, and farms



Create your FSA ID at least 3–5 days before starting the FAFSA.

- Go to studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account.
- Every student needs an FSA ID and every parent listed on the FAFSA needs an FSA ID.
- For assistance, review MEFA's guide, *Who Needs an FSA ID?*, at mefa.org/article/who-needs-an-fsa-id/ and MEFA's webinar, *How to Create Your FSA ID*, at mefa.org/webinar/how-to-create-your-fsa-id/.

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Student: Start the FAFSA.

- Go to fafsa.gov.
- Select *Log In To Start* under the 2025–26 FAFSA.
- Use the student’s FSA ID to log in.



Student: Invite contributor(s), if needed.

- A contributor is any parent providing information on the FAFSA.
- Provide each contributor’s name, date of birth, Social Security number, and email address, exactly as it appears on their FSA ID.



Student: Answer the FAFSA questions and sign the student section.



Parent(s): Receive an email invitation to complete the FAFSA.

- Click on *Log In* and enter the parent FSA ID.
- Once logged in, click *Get Started* on your invitation to the FAFSA.



Parent(s): Answer the FAFSA questions and sign and submit the parent section.

What happens after you submit the FAFSA?

- The FAFSA will be submitted for processing once all contributors have completed their sections.
- Once Federal Student Aid processes your FAFSA (within a few days):
 - The student will receive a FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS), which includes an eligibility overview, a summary of all FAFSA answers, and next steps.
 - Colleges and the student’s state of residence will receive the data electronically.
 - Families will be able to make corrections to the data.
- Colleges may request additional documentation or information from families through a process called verification.

This information is as of 11/26/2024. Check mefa.org for regular updates.

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