



A Deep Dive Into the CSS Profile™

A MEFA Institute Webinar

How to Participate in This Webinar

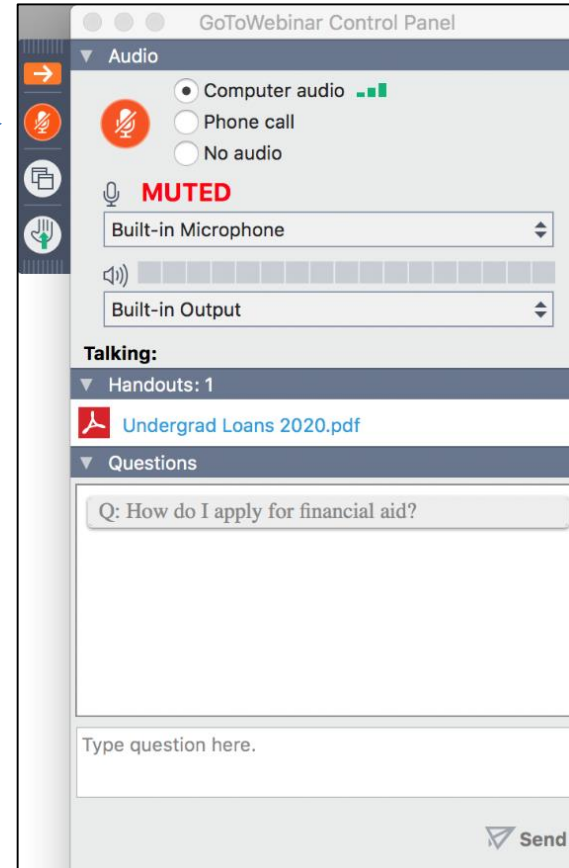
The microphone icon lets you know if you can be heard.
The presenter may mute everyone during the webinar.

The hand icon may be used if the presenter wants to
take a vote

Check the quality of your sound here

If the presenter provides handouts for the webinar, you
will find them here

Have a question during the webinar? Type it in the
Questions section



About MEFA



Not-for-profit state authority created in 1982
helping families plan, save, and pay for college

What is the CSS Profile?

- The College Board's online financial aid application
- Required by ~250 colleges/universities/scholarship programs
 - Check each college/university's financial aid website
- All colleges also require the FAFSA[®]
- Used to award non-federal financial aid funds
- Opens October 1st each year
- Available for both domestic and international students



Why Do Institutions Use the Profile?



- Collects more detailed information than the FAFSA
- Allows schools to ask customized questions
- Permits families to provide special circumstances

Start Here: cssprofile.org

The screenshot shows the CSS Profile website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Getting Started, Fee Waivers, Divorced or Separated Families, and International Applicants. The main banner features a purple background with a circular image of two women talking. The text on the banner reads "Apply with CSS Profile" and "Each year CSS Profile gives access to more than \$9 billion for thousands of undergraduate, graduate and professional students." Below this are two buttons: "Sign In to Fall 2021/Spring 2022" (highlighted in yellow) and "Sign In to Fall 2020/Spring 2021". Below the banner are three circular icons with text: "Check participating Schools and Scholarships", "Learn how to apply", and "Completing the CSS Profile for the Noncustodial Parent". At the bottom, there is a "Site Topics" section with three columns: "Getting Started", "Fee Waivers", and "Divorced or Separated Families".

High school seniors should apply for 2021-22

List of colleges that require the Profile

More info

More info

Info for noncustodial parents

Overview webinar

Additional Resources on Homepage

Resources



Creating a CSS Profile Account for Parent Use

PDF Document | 69.59 KB



CSS Profile Waiver Request for the Noncustodial Parent

PDF Document | 186.65 KB



CSS Profile Fee Waivers

PDF Document | 100.52 KB



CSS Profile Student Guide

PDF Document | 111.02 KB

For any parent, including all noncustodial parents, not using the student's account

Participating Institutions and Programs

2021-22 Participating Institutions and Programs

The following colleges, universities, and scholarship programs use CSS Profile and/or IDOC as part of their financial aid process for some or all of their financial aid applicants in the populations listed below. Please check schools' websites or contact the institution for more information.

CSS Code	Institution Name	Institution State	CSS Profile – Domestic Students	CSS Profile – International Students	CSS Profile – Noncustodial Parents	IDOC
Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾
1003	Alabama A&M University	AL	No	No	No	Yes
5007	American University	DC	Yes	No	Yes	No
3003	Amherst College	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
0193	Armenian Student Assoc of Amer	RI	Yes	Yes	No	No
3075	Babson College	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Application Process

- Sign in
 - Use **student's** College Board account from SATs/AP tests
 - OR parents create a new student account using **parent's** information
- Left-hand sidebar will show different sections
- User *is* permitted to jump ahead to a different section
- Click *Save and Continue* to move to next section
- Each section is checked when completed
- Don't have to do the application all in one sitting
- When logging back in, will be directed to first incomplete section
- Answers are automatically saved as you go

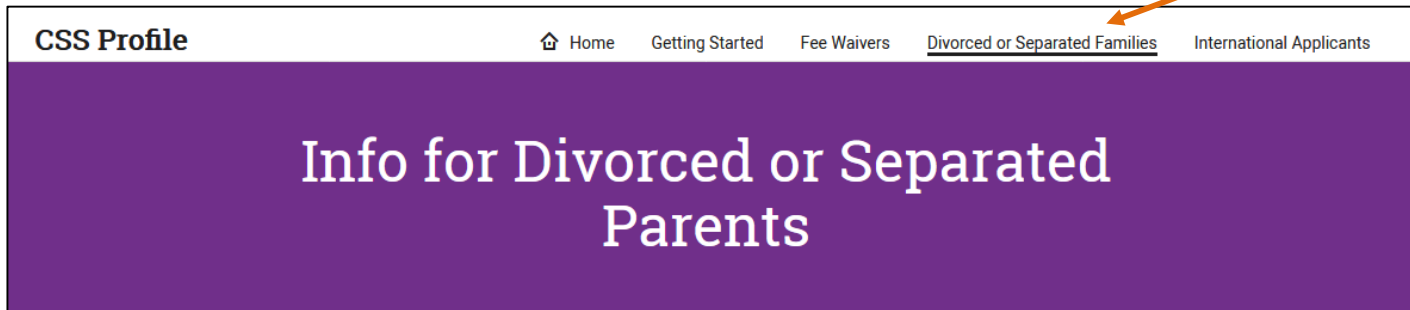
Application General Tips



- To exit, click *Save and Continue* and then close the browser
- Use buttons in application, not web browser, to navigate
- Click into an answer field and help tips will appear
- Questions with an asterisk are required, but families should answer all questions to which they have answers, such as the SSN
- Can leave an answer blank if it does not apply and is not required

Parent Information

- Report all parents and step-parents (up to 4) (include deceased)
- Legal guardians should be reported as parents (different from the FAFSA)
- Custodial parent, current spouse, and student provide info
 - Provide list of colleges
- Some schools require noncustodial parent info (check school's website)
- Student supplies email address of noncustodial parent
 - Either after school selection or in dashboard after submission
 - It is student responsibility to follow up with noncustodial parent



CSS Profile

[Home](#) [Getting Started](#) [Fee Waivers](#) [Divorced or Separated Families](#) [International Applicants](#)

Info for Divorced or Separated
Parents

Noncustodial Parent Instructions

- Noncustodial parent will receive an email request to submit the Profile
- Noncustodial parent completes a separate Profile
 - Use same website: cssprofile.org
 - Must create own College Board account
 - Will use student's CBFinAid ID (included in email)
 - Will create a **student** account with **parent** information
 - No student financial info provided, just student demographic info
 - Does not select colleges but sees them listed
 - Cannot submit application until at least one college is listed
 - Can use a fee payment code
- Custodial and noncustodial parents cannot see one another's application
- If no contact with noncustodial parent, contact each financial aid office



General Information Requested on Profile

- Colleges where student is applying
- Parent & student 2019 income
 - Will refer to tax return lines
- Parent & student projected income
 - 2020 & 2021
- Parent and student assets (current)
- Household member information
- Number of children in college



More Questions = Better Estimate of Ability to Pay

Parent Income

- Untaxed Social Security Benefits, Earned Income Credit, Additional Child Tax Credit, Foreign Income Exclusion



Parent Assets

- Value and debt of primary home
- All business and farm information
- Parent assets held in siblings' names
- Retirement value (asked for, though not often used)



Parent expenses

- Medical/dental
- Private elementary/secondary school tuition
- Education loan payments



More Questions = Better Estimate of Ability to Pay

Family data

- Ages of siblings
- Colleges that siblings attend



Student data

- Private scholarships
- Employee tuition benefits



Explanation of special circumstances

- After certain questions and at the end of the application
- Can check a certain category but must provide details
- Note change in income, exceptional expenses, etc.
- Send details to college if happens after completing the Profile



• Supplemental Questions

- Added by each college/university (requesting school will be noted)
- Sometimes not required but strongly recommended to answer





- \$25 for the application and initial school report
- \$16 for each additional school report
- Fees are paid by the family
- Payment options: Credit card or debit card
- Noncustodial parent's Profile: \$25 one-time

Fee Waivers

- Automatically granted if family meets one of the following:
 - Family is low income (parental income of approximately \$45,000 or less)
 - Student is an orphan or ward of the court and under 24
 - Student received an SAT fee waiver (must use student's College Board account)
 - Student resides in FEMA-designated disaster area
- Not available for international students
- Available to students applying for college freshman year whose parents live in U.S.
- Use for unlimited # of schools
- Noncustodial parents: fee waiver if meet same income guidelines above

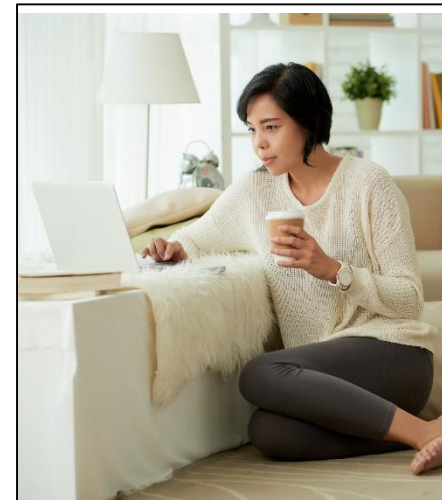
Fee Payment Codes



- Purchased by colleges/universities/organizations for use by students
- Each code pays for one college submission
- No limit on use of fee payment codes

Submitting the Profile

- Will be given a chance to review the application
 - Prompts given to review inconsistencies or possible errors
 - Able to print answers if desired
- Will need to check box to certify that application is accurate
- Will be asked to pay – fee waivers show here
- Once submitted, cannot make online edits or delete schools

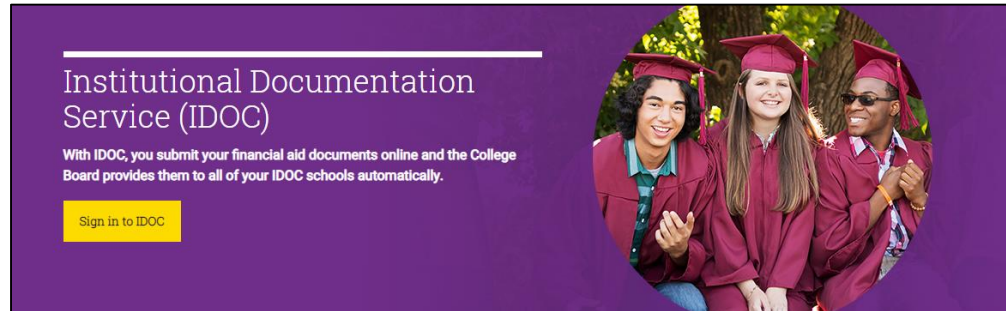


Dashboard

- Can access anytime
- Tab on top right of application
- Includes:
 - Application status
 - Each college’s submission date, deadline, and additional documents required
 - Next steps required by each school
 - Payment receipt
 - Option to save or print application
 - Opportunity to add a college or program
 - Link to IDOC
 - Space to add noncustodial parent’s email address (can be sent multiple times)
 - The student’s CBFinAid ID

What is IDOC?

- College Board's Institutional Documentation Service
- Collects family documents (such as tax returns) on institution's behalf
- IDOC student dashboard tells student of required documents
- Institution-specific forms are under the *Get Forms* link on the IDOC dashboard
- Documents must be in JPEG, TIFF, or PDF format
- Sign any documents on signature lines
- IDOC Customer Service: (866) 897-9881
- idoc.collegeboard.com

A purple banner for the Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC). On the left, the text reads "Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC)" followed by a sub-headline "With IDOC, you submit your financial aid documents online and the College Board provides them to all of your IDOC schools automatically." Below this is a yellow button that says "Sign in to IDOC". On the right side of the banner is a circular photograph of three smiling graduates in maroon caps and gowns.

Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC)

With IDOC, you submit your financial aid documents online and the College Board provides them to all of your IDOC schools automatically.

Sign in to IDOC

IDOC Overview

Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC) Overview

Play All

- About the Institutional Documentation Service
- Log in to IDOC
- Determine What Documents Are Required
- Upload Documents
- Check the Status of Submitted Documents
- How to Find and Complete Institution-Specific Forms
- Tips for a Successful IDOC Submission
- Helpful Resources

☰ Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC) Overview

slides.collegeboard.org/idoc-student-dashboard

Profile Customer Support Center

Reach by selecting *Contact Us* throughout the application

The screenshot shows the 'CSS PROFILE CUSTOMER SUPPORT' page. At the top, there is a search bar and a 'WELCOME' message. Below the header, there are three navigation tabs: 'FAQ', 'CONTACT US (U.S. AND CANADA)', and 'CONTACT US (INTERNATIONAL)'. The 'CONTACT US (U.S. AND CANADA)' tab is selected. Under this tab, the text 'U.S. and Canada: 844-202-0524' is displayed, with an orange arrow pointing to it from the label 'Phone number'. Below this, the 'Support Hours' are listed: 'Phone: 9am-6pm ET Monday-Friday' and 'Chat: 9am-6pm ET Monday-Friday'. At the bottom, there is a blue button labeled 'CHAT AVAILABLE', with an orange arrow pointing to it from the label 'Chat'. On the left side of the page, the text 'FAQs' has an orange arrow pointing to the 'FAQ' tab.

Email: finaidservices@collegeboard.org

High School Counselor Support

Finaid.collegeboard.org/hscounselors

HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Phone: 800-626-9795

Support Hours:

Phone: 9am-6pm ET Monday-Friday

Chat: 9am-6pm ET Monday-Friday

Chat Unavailable

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is the CSS Profile™?

- The CSS Profile is a common financial aid application. It is used by almost 400 colleges, universities, professional schools, and scholarship programs to award non-federal institutional funds. The application is available October 1 each year.

Why do colleges and universities use the CSS Profile?

- The CSS Profile helps the financial aid officer determine who needs institutional aid and how much. The application also allows families to give a more comprehensive view into their family circumstances. The application can also be completed by international, or undocumented students as well as students living in the U.S.

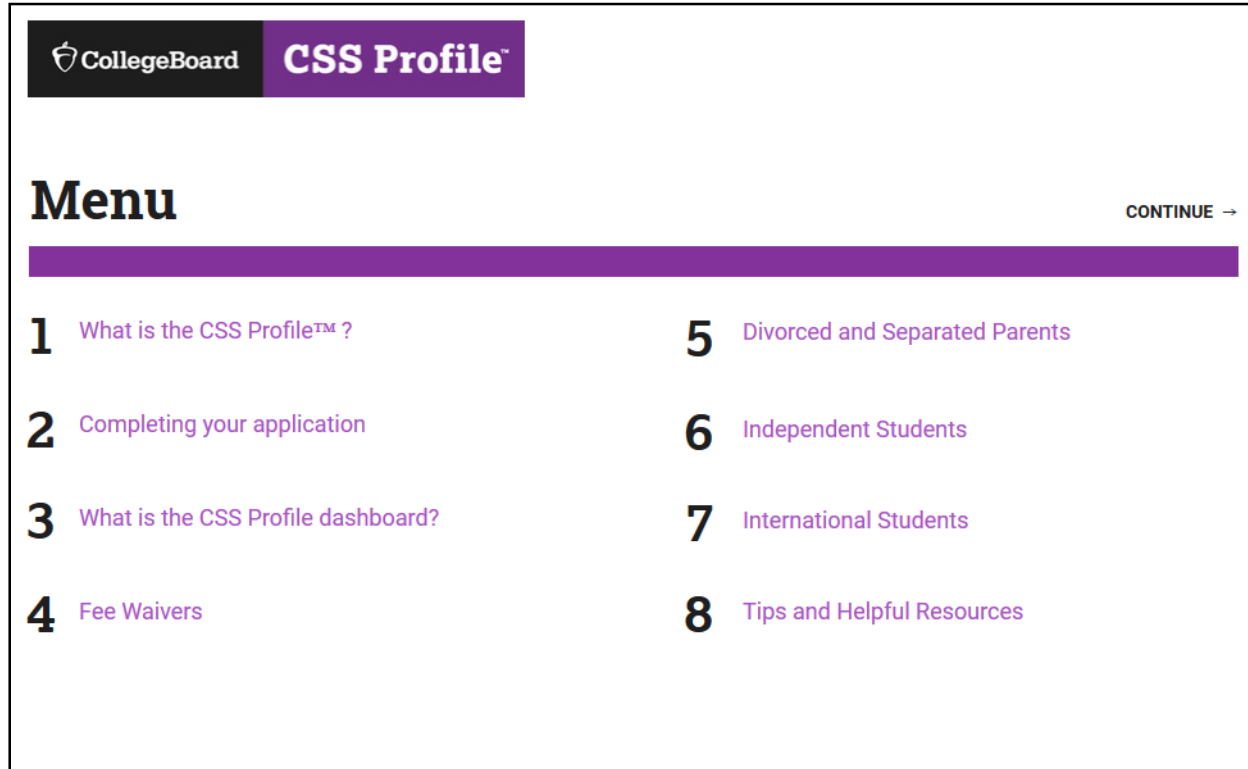
How do students know if they have to complete the CSS Profile?

- The best way for a student to determine if the CSS Profile is required is to visit each college's website. A consolidated list of participating institutions is also available on the CSS Profile website.

- [CSS Profile Tutorial](#)
- [Participating Institutions](#)
- [Scholarship Search](#)
- [Higher Ed Trends](#)
- [College Board Counselor Resources](#)
- [CSS Profile Application](#)
- [CSS Profile Waiver Request for the Noncustodial Parent](#)

CSS Profile Overview



learn.collegeboard.org/css-profile-overview/



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the CSS Profile website. On the left is the CollegeBoard logo, and on the right is the text 'CSS Profile'. Below this is a 'Menu' section with a purple horizontal bar. To the right of the menu items is a 'CONTINUE →' link. The menu items are numbered 1 through 8 and are arranged in two columns.

Menu		CONTINUE →
1	What is the CSS Profile™ ?	
2	Completing your application	
3	What is the CSS Profile dashboard?	
4	Fee Waivers	
5	Divorced and Separated Parents	
6	Independent Students	
7	International Students	
8	Tips and Helpful Resources	

CSS Profile Student Guide



2021-22 CSS Profile Student Guide

This guide provides the basic information you need to complete your CSS Profile application at cssprofile.org starting Oct. 1, 2020.

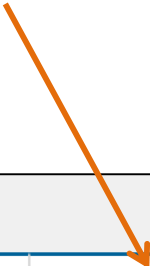
WHAT is the CSS Profile?

The **CSS Profile** is an online application that collects information used by nearly 400 colleges and scholarship programs to award non-federal aid. (For **federal** aid you must complete the **FAFSA**, available Oct. 1 at fafsa.ed.gov.) Some colleges may require the CSS Profile from both biological/adoptive parents in cases of divorce or separation.





The Process

1. **Sign-in** – Use your College Board username and password or sign up for a new account. If you created an account for the SAT or to view your PSAT or AP scores, you should use the same user name and password for your CSS Profile application.


Link on cssprofile.org





Resources

 Creating a CSS Profile Account for Parent Use PDF Document 69.59 KB	 CSS Profile Waiver Request for the Noncustodial Parent PDF Document 186.65 KB	 CSS Profile Fee Waivers PDF Document 100.52 KB	 CSS Profile Student Guide PDF Document 111.02 KB
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Things To Do

- Sign up for MEFA emails 
- Register for upcoming MEFA Institute webinars and complete lessons to earn PDPs: mefa.org/mefa-institute
- Share MEFA resources with families
- Visit mefa.org/counselors



Creating a financially balanced college list

Working with your child to put together a college list? Make sure you take finances into consideration. We have a four-step list that can help you find the schools that fit within your budget and offer the financial aid you need. Get the guidance in our recent post.

[Read the list](#)

Mobile tools to help with college planning


As you help your child finish out high school successfully and plan for college, know there are websites and mobile apps that offer valuable assistance. We highlighted a few in our recent posts:

- **Google's College Search Feature** reviews a tool available in mobile that provides key information on U.S. college and universities
- **Mobile Apps to Ease College Prep** reviews three mobile apps and one mobile-friendly website that can help students with academics, test prep, and college planning

Journey to College videos

When planning for college admissions, it's helpful to hear from others who have just completed the process. Our Journey to College video series highlights a group of last year's high school seniors as they navigate searching for schools, completing applications, and finding scholarships. Our recent blog explains more.

[See the blog](#)



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[@MEFAtweets](https://twitter.com/MEFAtweets)



linkedin.com/company/mefa



youtube.com/MEFAcounselor

Thank You

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Questions?

(800) 449-MEFA (6332)

collegeplanning@mefa.org

How was the webinar? We'd love to hear your feedback.
Leave us a Google review at Google.com

