

# FAFSA

A form completed by all applicants for federal student aid. The FAFSA is also available on the Web, at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). In many states, completion of the FAFSA is also sufficient to establish eligibility for state-sponsored aid programs. There is no charge for completing the FAFSA, and you can file it anytime after January 1 of the year for which you are seeking aid.

## Features of FAFSA

- The FAFSA is the most significant document relating to financial aid for college.
- It's the first step to getting financial assistance for college.
- In many states, completion of the FAFSA is also sufficient to establish eligibility for state-sponsored aid programs.
- You can file it anytime after January 1 of the year, but the sooner, the better because some aid is first-come, first-serve.
- Some types of financial aid that require a FAFSA:
  - Grants, e.g. Federal Pell Grant
  - Scholarships, e.g. WV PROMISE
  - Work-study for need-based employment
  - Loans for both students and parents

## Deadlines

- Submit FAFSA prior to March 1<sup>st</sup> to receive full consideration for all aid programs.
- FAFSA is received after March 1<sup>st</sup> will receive consideration for Federal Direct Loans and Federal Pell Grants.
- If you don't submit the form by your school's deadline, you may not receive all the aid you are eligible for. So, **check deadlines of colleges.**
- **Submit your tax returns before filing FAFSA.**

## Who is eligible to receive Federal Student Aid?

To receive federal student aid, you must meet certain requirements. You must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- Have a valid Social Security Number (unless you're from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau).
- Register with Selective Service if you are male and 18 to 25 years of age (go to [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov) for more information).
- Have a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) Certificate or pass an exam approved by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment 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)

Also:

- You must not owe a refund on a federal grant or be in default on a federal student loan.
- You must demonstrate financial need (except for unsubsidized Stafford Loans).

### **What is a PIN?**

- PIN is a 4-digit numeric code or a 6-digit alpha code
- Obtain before you begin process of online submission.
- Things you can do with your PIN Number:
  - Electronically sign to speed up the process
  - Check the status of your FAFSA
  - Make corrections to FAFSA
  - Fill out an online renewal FAFSA next year

### **How to Apply for PIN**

- To obtain a PIN, eligible students AND parents can visit [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)
- Click “Apply for PIN” near the top of the page. Allow four hours for instructions to be sent via e-mail.
- This PIN number is used to electronically sign federal student aid forms and access your information.
- To change, cancel or retrieve a duplicate PIN, you can visit [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)

### **Step 1: Assemble documentation**

You’ll need the following documentation to complete the 2008-09 FAFSA:

- Your Social Security Number
- Your driver's license (if any)
- Your 2007 W-2 Forms and other records of money earned
- Your (and your spouse’s, if you are married) 2007 Federal Income Tax Return. IRS 1040, 1040A, 1040 EZ
- Your Parents’ 2007 Federal Income Tax return (if you are a dependent student)
- Your 2007 untaxed income records (Social Security, welfare, etc.)
- Your current bank statements
- Your current business and investment mortgage information, business and farm records, stock, bond and other investment records
- Your alien registration or permanent resident card (if you are not a U.S. citizen)

## **Step 2: Complete the FAFSA**

- Complete FAFSA on the Web at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) or by using the paper FAFSA
- If you completed the FAFSA last year, you may receive a Renewal FAFSA link via e-mail, which should arrive in early January
- Once finished, print the FAFSA summary as well as the "Submission Confirmation" page (or write down your confirmation number and date).
- If completing the paper version, make a copy of the FAFSA for your records before mailing.

## **What is a Student Aid Report (SAR)?**

- A Student Aid Report (SAR) is a document you will receive after your FAFSA is processed,
- Your SAR will list all of the answers you provided on your FAFSA; you should review these answers carefully to make sure they are correct.
- If you need to make any changes, you can do so on the SAR and mail it back to the address provided, or you can go to [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) and select "Make Corrections to a Processed FAFSA" from the FAFSA Follow-up section.
- Your SAR will also contain your EFC (Expected Family Contribution), which measures your family's financial strength, and is used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid.
- Your school will use this number to decide how much financial aid you are eligible to receive based on your school's cost of attendance.
- If you did not provide electronic signatures or paper signature pages with your FAFSA, you must sign the SAR and mail it back to the address provided for final processing.

## **What is my Expected Family Contribution (EFC)?**

- The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) measures your family's financial strength, and is used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid during one school year.