

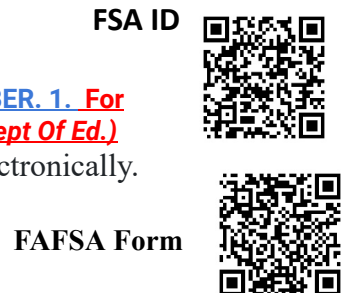


THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID OR FAFSA is a form the federal government uses to determine the types and amount of financial aid you might qualify for. It is the key to unlocking awards from the federal government, states, and colleges. **This application is used to award:**

- **SCHOLARSHIPS**- A Scholarship is awarded based on specified criteria. It can include a combination of academic achievement, character, extracurricular activities, leadership, and/or other criteria
- **WORK STUDY** – Employment opportunities are part-time jobs-usually on the college campus.
- **GRANTS**- A grant is money that does not have to be repaid.
- **LOANS**- A loan must be repaid. Some loans can be deferred until after graduation.

STEPS TO COMPLETING THE FAFSA FORM

1. The 2025-26 FAFSA will be available to all students and contributors on or before **DECEMBER 1**. For limited groups of students in a series of beta tests it will be available on **October 1**. (US Dept Of Ed.)
2. Students must create an **FSA ID (Federal Student Aid ID)** to sign into the FAFSA electronically. Applications filed electronically are processed within 3-5 days.
<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch>
3. **Access the FAFSA** by going to <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/afsa>
4. **Students invite contributors** to complete their portion of the FAFSA form by entering the contributor’s name, date of birth, Social Security number, and email address on the application.
A Contributor is anyone asked to provide information on the FAFSA including the student, biological or adopted parents and stepparents. In the case of divorced parents, only the income and assets of the parent who provides the greater portion of the student’s financial support will be included on the FAFSA form. If that primary parent is remarried, the income of that parent’s spouse (stepparent) will also be included.
5. **Contributors must create a StudentAid.gov account or FSA ID (username and password) if they don’t already have one and even if they do not have a social security number.**
6. **Contributors must provide personal and financial information** in their own sections of the FAFSA form, but they are not financially responsible for the student’s education cost. However, if a required contributor refuses to provide their information, it will result in an incomplete FAFSA form and the student will become ineligible for federal student aid.
7. **Complete the 2025-2026 FAFSA using 2023 tax information** if you plan to attend school in the Fall 2025. If you graduate mid-year and plan to attend college in January 2025 complete the 2024-2025 FAFSA using 2022 taxes.
8. **All students and contributors must provide consent to:**
 - o have their federal tax information transferred directly into the FAFSA® via direct data exchange with the IRS,
 - o have their federal tax information used to determine the student’s eligibility for federal student aid, and
 - o allow the U.S. Department of Education to share their federal tax information with postsecondary institutions and state higher education agencies for use in awarding and administering financial aid.
 - ❖ 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.
 - ❖ If a student or required contributor doesn’t provide consent to have their federal tax information transferred into the FAFSA®form, the student will not be eligible for federal student aid—even if they manually enter tax information into the FAFSA form.



Find out from the Financial Aid Office at colleges/universities you want to attend if there are any other financial aid forms that you need to complete like the CSS Profile (College Scholarship Service Profile) and the deadlines to submit them as they may vary by college.



Residency Determination Service: To receive the benefits of in-state tuition and state financial aid, a residency determination is required.

<https://ncresidency.cfnc.org/residencyInfo/>



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS) – The FSS summarizes your FAFSA info. To view the FSS online, log on to fafsa.ed.gov with your FSA ID. Review it carefully to make sure it is correct and complete. If you are selected for verification, there will be an asterisk next to your Student Aid Index (SAI) on your (FSS). If you fail to provide the requested information you may not receive financial aid.

Financial Aid Award: *Need: Cost of Attendance (COA) – Student Aid Index (SAI) = Financial Need (FN)*



Typically, award letters will begin to arrive in March or April after you've received an accepted decision. Applicants admitted through Early Action often begin receiving award letters mid-winter to early spring. Award letters include cost of attendance and what financial aid is offered. Just because you are eligible for a certain type of aid does not mean that you must accept it. Accept all the free money and work-study before any loans. If you must tap into loan dollars, borrow only as much as you truly need.

QR Code: Award Comparison Worksheet: https://www.nasfaa.org/award_notification_comparison_worksheet

Appeal for More Financial Aid. If your current financial circumstance is not reflected in the 2023 tax information on the FAFSA, make an appeal to the Financial Aid Office. After you have applied for admission, contact them to find out what the appeal process is, if they offer emergency financial aid grants, and if they have any other resources or funds for which you can apply.

SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL AID WEBSITES

www.scholarshipplus.com/wake/ - WCPSS online scholarship guide. Students & parents can access info about hundreds of scholarships including Wake County high schools.

[Your High School's Counseling and Student Services Department](#) - Scholarship bulletin and web site.

www.cfnc.org – College Foundation - Access to scholarships and college info. Helps you plan and apply to colleges. You can create your FSA ID here.

www.gomerry.com – Scholarships, FAFSA, College cost comparisons, Student Loan Info

www.unigo.com – College stats, college reviews, and more to help you pay for college

www.studentaid.gov – Information about financial aid from the federal government.

www.finaid.org - Student Aid Index estimator and links to free scholarship search programs.

www.collegeboard.com - Free on-line scholarship search service. Gives Student Aid Index estimator.

<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/> - CSS financial aid profile. (Duke, Davidson, Elon, Wake Forest, Chapel Hill).

<https://fastweb.com> – FastWeb – Scholarship database service.



View and download publications from the Office of Federal Student Aid:

<https://studentaid.gov/resources>

Spanish Publications:

<https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/search?q=spanish%20documents&tab=all&page=1>



Federal Student Aid Information Center (US Dept. of Education)

Hours: Monday-Friday 8 AM – Midnight (ET); Saturday-Sunday 11 AM – 6 PM

Phone: 800-433-3243 / Email and Live Chat available

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TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT - EMAIL OR USE THE QR CODE -