



Frequently Asked Questions: Completing the FAFSA

PowerPoint presentation, session recording and important links are posted on the [Minnesota Office of Higher Education's Ready, Set, FAFSA page](#).

Is work study tax free?

Both federal and state work-study are taxable income. In many cases, the earnings are such, that minimal taxes are taken out. One benefit of the work-study earnings is that work-study earnings are excluded when completing the FAFSA application and do not get counted when determining financial aid eligibility.

What is the difference between getting a job and work study?

With work study, what you earn goes directly towards your tuition. You are able to choose from specific jobs on your college campus. For a job, the money you earn goes directly to you to be spent on whatever you decide. And includes local businesses like restaurants, stores, etc.

Should a US citizen to apply to both the FAFSA and Minnesota Dream Act?

No. US citizens should only apply for the FAFSA. They will not qualify for the MN Dream Act.

When does the Minnesota Dream Act application come out?

The MN Dream Act application should be updated this month (October).

What is FAFSA?

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

If you have 2 kids in college, do you have to fill out the FAFSA form for each child?

Yes. Each child must complete the FAFSA each year they plan to attend college. Parent information is also required for each child each year.

My child graduates in 2023 from high school. When is the best time to apply for all this?

Your child will want to complete the 2023-2024 FAFSA and that can be completed at www.studentaid.gov The application opened October 1.



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Should I wait to apply for FA until I am accepted to my specific college?

You do not need to wait to be accepted to a college. You can complete the FAFSA right away, and can send it to up to 10 schools. Please note that you will not receive an award letter from any school until you have been admitted.

Can students apply to FAFSA on their own vs using parent's income? What would that require for them to be reviewed as an individual adult?

When a student starts to complete the FAFSA there is a section where student identify if they are a dependent or independent student. That criteria is outlined at the following website and we'll be discussing that in a future session: <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out/dependency>

What are examples of need on FAFSA? Does FAFSA have a deadline/1st come 1st serve?

The 2023-2024 FAFSA application just opened on 10/1/2022 and student's can complete the 2023-2024 FAFSA until 06/30/2024. The application isn't 1st come, 1st serve as Federal and State funds historically, do not run out. However, many colleges use the FAFSA process to determine their institutional financial aid and those funds often have a due date and if a student applies too late they can miss out on resources. Need is defined as the difference between a college's Cost of Attendance and the Family's Expected Family Contribution. In addition, if a student is eligible for the Federal Pell Grant, they are often referred to as "High Need"

What happens when a child comes from 2 households (parents divorced) and one of the households isn't going to help financially or give their financial information?

When completing the FAFSA, a student will need to determine which parent is the custodial parent. Meaning which parent did the student live with more in the previous year. When completing the FAFSA it will be the custodial parent's information that is entered into the FAFSA.

When applying for financial aid, at 18 and live with one parent, is the other parent financial information needed?

If your parents are divorced/not living together, you will choose one parent's (and their spouse's, if applicable) information to use on your FAFSA. Usually, this parent will be the one you live with/that provides the most financial support to you.



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If I don't have parents in the US and I don't have citizenship, can I apply?

To apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid a student must be either a Citizen or an eligible non-citizen. <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/fsa-handbook/2021-2022/vol1/ch2-us-citizenship-eligible-noncitizens#:~:text=A%20student%20must%20be%20one%20of%20the%20following,A%20U.S.%20permanent%20resident%20or%20other%20eligible%20noncitizen>

If you determine that you don't meet the criteria of a citizen or eligible non-citizen, I'd recommend you look at the MN Dream Act Program. Which can be an excellent option for MN Residents who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the FAFSA. <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=2056>

Do schools look at grants to determine if they accept you?

No. It would be unusual for a college or university to use a student's eligibility for Federal or State grants as a determining factor on whether or not to accept a student.

When you file your FAFSA, does it automatically check or seek all these grants or do you have to apply specifically for these grants.

Completing the FAFSA will help your school determine if you are eligible for a number of federal grants and the MN State Grant, but others, such as the MN Indian Scholarship, require a separate application. Please be sure to check out the links in the chat to discover the specific requirements for each program.

When am I able to start applying for scholarships? Can I apply a year before I graduate high school?

There might be some scholarships that you can apply to now. Most students apply for scholarships in their 12th grade year. It's good to get a start on researching them now - so you know their requirements and deadlines.

Are there any requirements to sign up for a scholarship?

Yes, each scholarship will have their specific eligibility requirements.

For the scholarships, how does the selection process work? Do I apply to more than one scholarship at a time?





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Each scholarship has its own eligibility requirements - some are based on financial need, some are based on academic merit or a personal statement. Yes, definitely apply to as many scholarships as you are eligible for! It's free money that you don't have to pay back.

What are the income eligibility requirements for the MN grants?

The MN Future Together Grants have specific income requirements which are outlined on the following website: <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/sPages/FTG.cfm> Other MN State Grant programs don't have set income requirements, the eligibility is determined by a student's expected family contribution (EFC), which looks at income, family size, and several other variables.

On subsidized loans, you don't pay the interest right?

You are responsible for paying interest; however, not while in college -if you are attending at least part time. The federal government will pay the interest that accrues during that time.

So there is interest, but you wouldn't have to pay interest on the loan until you come out of college?

Correct. You will be in what's called a "grace period" after college for 6 months, where you will not have to pay interest on your loans. After that, interest will start to accrue.

Are their family income thresholds to qualify for these loans?

Federal subsidized loans are reserved for students who demonstrate "need" based on their FAFSA results. The remaining loans are available to all students, regardless of their "need" but will require a credit check/cosigner.

What benefit is there to doing parent plus loans vs student subsidized or unsubsidized loans?

Parent PLUS loans are meant to be supplemental, so most students choose to exhaust their subsidized and unsubsidized loans before they ask their parents to apply for the PLUS loans. This is because the PLUS loan has high origination fees and interest rates, and it is the parents' responsibility to repay; the student does not pay it back.

Can undocumented students get loans?

Undocumented students who complete and are eligible for the MN Dream Act are eligible for the MN SELF Loan program. They are unfortunately, not eligible for Federal Loan Programs. MN Dream Act - <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=2056>