

FAFSA 2024 – 2025 Reference Guide

The Financial Aid Team has created this document to inform you of all the steps and things you will need to do/know in order to complete the 2024-2025 FAFSA successfully.

FIRST MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A FSA ID

You must complete an application to obtain an FSA ID Go to the [Student Aid website](#) to do this if you have not done so already. With that ID you will be able to:

1. Complete the FAFSA
2. Sign Master Promissory Notes for student loans
3. Explore loan repayment plans
4. Use tools such as loan counseling and more

You will need to have your Social Security Number available. Your contributors will not be required to have a Social Security Number, but you may not receive federal student aid without one unless you are a resident of one of the freely associated states, which are:

- American Samoa
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Guam
- Republic of the Marshall Islands
- Republic of Palau

After creating your FSA ID, should you forget your username, you can use a verified email address or cell phone number to access your account. There will be detailed instructions regarding this as well as how to reset your password.

NEW CONCEPT - CONTRIBUTORS

Contributors are anyone required to provide consent and approval to have their federal tax information (FTI) transferred directly from the Internal Revenue Service to your FAFSA

You, the student, is considered a contributor

Other contributors may include:

1. Your spouse
2. Your biological or adoptive parent(s) or your parent's spouse (stepparent)

IMPORTANT NOTE:

People who you identify as contributors do not have an obligation to pay for your education.

Determining if someone other than you is a required contributor on the FAFSA:

Depends on:

1. Your dependency status
2. Your marital status
3. The way taxes are filed

WHAT YOU NEED TO ASSIGN A CONTRIBUTOR

– you need their:

1. Full name
2. Social Security Number (if they have one)
3. Date of birth
4. Email address (make sure it is a working mailing box)

WHAT THE CONTRIBUTORS NEED TO DO

1. Like you, each contributor must have their own FSA ID (there is a new function in place for people without a Social Security Number to obtain an FSA ID)
2. The contributors will receive an email (as a result of your entering them on your FAFSA), with a link they can use to access your FAFSA, asking that they provide the needed approval from the IRS
 1. All contributor approvals must be completed – otherwise, you will not be eligible for federal student aid

You should be talking with your contributors to prepare them for the email they will receive. You should also have them obtain an [FSA ID](#) if they have not already done so.

It is against the law for people to share FSA IDs or any login credentials!

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE ON HAND

The new FAFSA has eliminated most of the need to have documents on hand beyond what is described above (Social Security Numbers, Dates of Birth, and Email Addresses). However, should you be required to answer questions manually, it would be helpful to have:

1. Your tax return (parent(s) should have theirs)
2. Record of child support received
3. Current balances of cash (savings/checking accounts)

4. Net worth of any businesses and/or farms

IMPORTANT HINTS FOR WHEN COMPLETING THE FAFSA

1. Student State of Legal Residence – when completing this question, if you have always lived in the same state then the date would be your birth date MM/YYYY

- 14 Student State of Legal Residence

State

Date the student became a legal resident

MM / YYYY

2. Be careful when responding to PARENT PARTICIPATION IN THE FAFSA PROCESS
 1. **If your parents refuse to provide their consent and approval** to have their federal tax information transferred into your FAFSA form, **you won't be eligible for federal student aid.**
 1. We suggest contacting us about this situation. Parents are sometimes reluctant to complete the information due to concerns about their identity and personal information. The Department of Education and the Internal Revenue Service are both sworn by law to protect these things and possibly a parent's position on the matter can be changed after a conversation with us.
 2. If you have Unusual Circumstances, you can be determined, by the Department of Education, to be Provisionally Independent. If you do this, it will require you to work with us, providing information and supporting documentation that we need to make a final determination on your dependency status. Read [THIS](#) for further details as provided by the Department of Education.
 1. If you fall into an Unusual Circumstance, please know that it will delay the approval of your final awards. We are prepared to assist you in this regard.
 3. You can also indicate Special Circumstances on the FAFSA. Special circumstances refer to any changes in your (and/or contributor's) finances, enrollment plans, or living situation that may affect your cost of attendance or expected contribution. Like Usual Circumstances, it will require you to work with us, providing information and supporting documentation, that we need to make a final determination on your family's financial situation.
 1. If you fall into a Special Circumstance, please know that it will delay the approval of your final awards. We are prepared to assist you in this regard.

BERKELEY COLLEGE RESOURCES

1. We are offering FAFSA Workshops which can assist you and your family in understanding and completing the FAFSA. [Click to register for a workshop.](#)
2. If you have attempted the FAFSA, and you are having problems we can assist you by:
 - a. [Making an appointment with a Financial Aid Advisor.](#)
 - b. Calling the Berkeley College Financial Aid Help Desk at [833-613-1364](tel:833-613-1364)
3. Review our [FAFSA Simplification webpage](#). There you will find additional information and details about the new FAFSA. This includes both Berkeley College and Department of Education videos.

We hope this document will help you prepare for completing your [FAFSA](#).

Best regards,

Your Financial Aid Team