UNDERSTANDING PRIORITY DEADLINES FOR FAFSA & CADAA COMPLETION



Can students apply for the FAFSA after March 2nd?

Yes, but they may be eligible for less financial aid. Students can fill out the FAFSA between October 1st of the year before they start college and the last day of classes of the academic year that they are applying for. This means that they can apply even after they have started their college classes, and can still qualify for some types of *federal aid*, like the Pell Grant. Students who miss the March 2nd priority deadline should still apply as soon as possible.

Why should students apply by March 2nd?*

Many states have specific deadlines to qualify for state-administered aid. In California, students planning on attending a 4-year college or university in California must complete the FAFSA or CADAA by March 2nd in order to qualify for the Cal Grant, which can help pay for tuition and non-tuition costs. Most students attending a 4-year university in California must apply within one year of high school graduation, but foster youth can apply up to age 26. For students planning on attending college out-of-state, they should contact the financial aid office of the college they plan to attend.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) approved a temporary 30-day extension of FAFSA and CADAA applications for the 2022-2023 academic school year for California students to be considered for the Cal Grant and CADAA financial aid programs. Applications completed by* ***April 1, 2022* *will be considered on-time for priority consideration. Learn more HERE.*

When should students planning on attending a community college apply?

For students planning on attending a California community college, they must complete the FAFSA or CADAA by September 2nd of the year they are planning on attending college to qualify for an entitlement Cal Grant. Previously, only foster youth could apply until September 2nd and still qualify for an entitlement Cal Grant, but this has now been expanded to all community college students. However, it is recommended that these students still apply by March 2nd or as soon as possible. If students wait until September 2nd to apply, it will take time for their financial aid award to be packaged and disbursed so they may not have the funding available on their first day of classes. Applying by March 2nd helps to ensure that students have their financial aid in a timely manner. In addition, other sources of aid, such as federal work-study, are limited and may no longer be available for those who apply later.

When should students apply for the Chafee Grant?

It is best practice to encourage students who are eligible for the Chafee Grant to apply immediately after submitting their FAFSA or CADAA. It is recommended that they apply by March 2nd since there is limited funding and applications are sorted by application date. Awards are offered based on a priority selection criteria. Learn more about that HERE. Some students who are eligible for the Chafee Grant may be placed on a wait list. Students only need to apply once, even if they are placed on a wait list.

Tip: Encourage all students to apply by the March 2nd deadline, if possible. The March 2nd deadline is critical for those planning on attending a 4-year college or university in California. If a student missed the March 2nd deadline, have them apply as soon as possible. Learn more about financial aid for foster youth HERE.

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