Acknowledgements

This guide was developed with support from:

• **Mark Kantrowitz**
  - Co-author of *Filing the FAFSA*
  - Author of *How to Appeal for More College Financial Aid*
  - Helped develop FAFSA on the Web in 1996

• **David Levy**
  - Co-author of *Filing the FAFSA*
  - Served as Director of Financial Aid at many of the nation’s leading colleges
This Guide is intended to compliment the Financial Aid Guide for California Foster Youth with screen shots of the actual online California Dream Act Application (CADAA) form and detailed step-by-step instructions for youth currently or formerly in the foster care system.

Please refer to the Financial Aid Guide for California Foster Youth for information on the different types of financial aid, what to do after filing the CADAA, and how to maintain financial aid eligibility.

While we have made every effort to be accurate in this guide, financial aid programs change. Be sure to get current information.

Visit: jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/
Intended Audience

• This guide is intended for undocumented foster youth in California who qualify for “Independent Student Status” on the CADAA (i.e., a student who was in foster care on or after their 13th birthday or in a court-ordered legal guardianship). If you do not qualify for “Independent Student Status,” you will need to complete the Parental Demographics section and provide financial information about you and your parent(s). Information about this process is not included in this guide.

• Additionally, this guide is intended for students completing the online CADAA which is only available in English. For students who wish to complete the CADAA in Spanish, they must complete a paper application. For assistance, refer to the “Spanish Guide to Complete the Paper CA Dream Act Application” found at: jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/

• If you are not a current or former foster youth but have experienced homelessness in California and do not live with your parent(s), you may also qualify for “Independent Student Status.” Please see the financial aid resources for homeless youth to learn more: jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide-for-ca-homeless-youth/
How to Apply for Financial Aid
Complete These Three Steps to Apply for Financial Aid

Step #1- Complete the California Dream Act Application (CADAA):
30 minutes – 1 hour

Step #2- If eligible, complete the Chafee Grant application
( It’s best to complete this right after you fill out your CADAA):
10 minutes

Step #3- Create a WebGrants 4 Students Account
(Do this after your CADAA is processed, which can take 24 hours)
10 minutes

View pages 7-76
View pages 77-79
View pages 80-85

View helpful resources on pages 86-91
Where to Apply for Financial Aid

IF YOU ARE A U.S. CITIZEN, A PERMANENT RESIDENT OR OTHER ELIGIBLE NON-CITIZEN*

Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Apply at: fafsa.gov

IF YOU ARE AN ELIGIBLE UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT

Complete the California Dream Act Application (CADAA)

Apply at: dream.csac.ca.gov

*What is an eligible non-citizen?
Examples include a U.S. permanent resident who has a green card (Permanent Resident Card), a conditional permanent resident with a conditional Green Card, or a "refugee." You can find the complete list on the FAFSA.
What is the CADAA?

• The California Dream Act Application (CADAA) allows undocumented and nonresident documented students who meet certain eligibility requirements to apply for state financial aid such as the Cal Grant and Chafee Grant.

• Students who complete the CADAA are not eligible for federal financial aid, like the Pell Grant.

• It also allows qualified students to pay in-state resident fees (instead of higher out-of-state fees) at California’s public colleges and universities.
Who is eligible to submit a CADAA?

Students who meet AB540 criteria, have Temporary Protected Status or hold a U Visa.

To qualify for AB 540 a student must satisfy **ALL** of the following criteria:

1. Three or more years of full-time attendance or attainment of equivalent credits earned in California from a high school, adult school or community college (credit or non-credit courses) or any combination of the three:  
   or

2. Three or more years of full-time high school coursework and attended a combination of elementary, middle and/or high school in California for a combined total of three or more years.

Satisfy one of the following:
A. Graduate from a California high school, or
B. Obtain a GED, HiSET or TASC in California, or
C. Attain an associate degree from a California Community College, or
D. Fulfilled the minimum transfer requirements to transfer from a California Community College to a University of California or California State University.

Will register or enroll in an accredited and qualifying California college or university

Does not hold a valid non-immigrant visa (F, J, H, L, A, B, C, D, E, etc.)
Does DACA status and having a social security number impact eligibility?

• Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status is not required to apply for the CADAA. Students who never applied to DACA or lost DACA status may still be eligible.

• If you received DACA status and were issued a social security number, you must still fill out the CADAA.

• If you have a social security card, but it says “VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH DHS AUTHORIZATION” you are not eligible to complete the FAFSA. You must meet the AB540 criteria on the prior slide to be eligible for the CADAA.

• Your parent’s citizenship status does not impact your eligibility to receive financial aid under the CADAA.
What about Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)?

- Foster youth who are undocumented immigrants may qualify to receive Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS). Undocumented children that are a dependent of the court through juvenile court and find that they cannot be reunified with one or both of their parents due to abuse, abandonment or neglect, and it is not in their best interest to return to their country of nationality, may be able to obtain SIJS and apply to become a lawful permanent resident (LPR), also known as obtaining your Green Card.

- Students with a pending application for SIJS are not eligible for federal financial aid and should submit the CADAA until they have received permanent resident status (i.e., a Green Card).

- If an undocumented student does not have an application for SIJS pending, the child welfare agency should be contacted for eligibility screening and to determine if that is the right option for the youth since it is recommended that an application be initiated before they turn 18.
CADAA Information is Private!

• CADAA information is not shared with the Federal government
• The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) protects the confidentiality of student records
• CSAC has never shared any information about a student’s immigration status, documented or undocumented
• CSAC also complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which protects the privacy of student education records
When to Apply

• Students planning to attend a four-year university should apply between October 1 and March 2 before the start of the school year, in particular to ensure eligibility for a Cal Grant and institutional aid.

• Community college students have until September 2 to apply for a Cal Grant.

• Other forms of aid such as the Chafee Grant have later application deadlines, but all students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible to qualify for maximum aid.

Some colleges may have earlier priority deadlines, so check with your campus.

Students can apply for financial aid before they submit college applications.
What to Bring to Apply for the CADAA

**Email Address:** Use an email address that you check often. Avoid high school email addresses that expire.

**Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN):** An undocumented immigrant would obtain an ITIN to file a federal income tax return. This is an optional field, and may not pertain to you if you didn’t make enough money to be required to file taxes.

**List of up to 10 colleges you plan to apply to:** You can update this later, if needed. At least one is required to complete the application.

**Financial Information:** You will be asked to indicate your assets as of the date you complete your CADAA, such as how much is currently in your checking or savings AND provide any tax or income information from the prior-prior year (i.e., provide 2021 tax or income info if completing the 2023-2024 CADAA). Be sure to gather any federal income tax returns, W-2’s and 1099 forms if you worked in the prior-prior year.

**Statewide Student Identifier (SSID):** a 10-digit number that is given to all students enrolled in a California elementary, middle or high school. This is optional but recommended.
CADAA Application Options

The online application is available in English only at:
dream.csac.ca.gov

Paper applications are available in English & Spanish:
Call 1-888-CA-GRANT (1-888-224-7268) or download a PDF version at
dream.csac.ed.gov

TIP
It’s best to complete the online application to reduce any chances of errors, however if you would like to complete the paper application in Spanish, get assistance with the “Spanish Guide to Complete the Paper CA Dream Act Application” found at: jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/
STEP 1: BEGIN A NEW CADAA AT DREAM.CSAC.CA.GOV

Reminder: The CADAA must be filled out EVERY year! This is a FREE application.

New to the CADAA Process:
Click “Start.”

Returning User:
Click “Login.” You can also login to make corrections or add a new college to your application.
Starting a new CADAA begins with registration to verify your eligibility for the CADAA.

- Click Continue.
The CADAA will confirm your eligibility by asking if you have a Social Security Number.

→ Choose “No” if you have a work-only Social Security Number through DACA.

Next, it will ask if you meet the AB540 criteria and list the various eligibility requirements. For more information about eligibility, see pages 9-11.
If you meet the eligibility requirements, you will be informed that you are eligible to file a CADAA and can click “Start Application.”
CREATE A USER ACCOUNT

Create a user account (PART I):

You will need to provide your name and date of birth, and create a User ID.

Your name and date of birth must match your high school or college records. If you use a different name on your college admissions applications than what was used in high school, you should contact your college/university.

Required fields are marked with a red asterisk (*)
CREATE A USER ACCOUNT

Create a user account (PART II):

**Student Address:** Do not provide a temporary mailing address. If you don’t have a permanent mailing address, ask your college’s financial aid administrator for help.

**Email Address:** You must provide an email address, as this is used for communication from CSAC and your college.

Double-check the email address to make sure there are no typos. Avoid using high school emails that can expire.

**TIP:** Emails from CSAC may go to your junk or spam folder, so be sure to check these folders and add csac.ca.gov as a “safe sender.”
You will receive an email message to confirm your email address.

Click on the link in the email message to activate your account.

You will be asked to create a password and can then login to the account.
You will be asked to provide answers to three security questions, which can be used to recover your account if you forget your password.
Write down these item somewhere safe so you don’t forget:

- Username
- Password
- Email Address & Password
- Challenge Questions & Answers
You’re Now Ready to Start Your Online CADAA

Login with your new Username and begin the CADAA
When you login, a one-time passcode will be sent to your email address. You will need to enter this passcode to login to your account.
Select the school year that you plan to attend college. If you select the wrong year, your financial aid will not be processed.

Most students will want to complete the CADAA for next fall, which is the academic year on the left.

If you are applying for an upcoming summer session, it is recommended that you complete applications for both years. Schools have the option of using either the prior or upcoming year’s financial aid for summer. Once you’ve picked a college, check with the financial aid office about summer financial aid.

The web site will ask you to confirm your selection.
Read the instructions and then click on the OK button.

1. Questions with an asterisk (*) require an answer.
2. If it is determined that you are a DEPENDENT student, your parent will be required to sign the application. Anytime you make a change to your application, your parent will be required to sign. Failure to provide a parent signature, will leave your application incomplete. Your college/university cannot award you financial aid if your application is incomplete.
3. Save your application periodically. Sessions expire every 30 minutes. To prevent loss of application and information SAVE your application often.
4. The red text throughout the CA Dream Act Application means further action is required from you.
5. Based on your answers to questions, this application may skip questions that are not required.
6. Do not use your web browser’s BACK or FORWARD buttons. Using the web browser back or forward button will cause data to be lost. To prevent loss of data you should use the NEXT and PREVIOUS buttons at the bottom of each page. Remember to save often.
7. Make sure you submit your application when complete. Saving your application is not the same as submitting your application. Only submitted applications can be processed for financial aid.
8. If you need to make changes or corrections after submitting your application, you must wait at least 24 hours.
9. Use the Auto Hint toggle button at the top of the screen to enable or disable help screens. These help screens contain additional information to assist you in answering each question.
10. You do not have to file taxes to complete the application. However, you can use your 2021 taxes to complete the 2023-2024 CA Dream Act Application.
11. Check your Confirmation Page after you submit your application for possible error resolution and to see Action(s) Needed and Next Steps.
SECTION 1 OF THE CADAA:

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS
• Complete the three sections listed as tabs at the top of the screen. The website will take you through each section.
• Click “Save Application” at the bottom of the page to save your responses. Click “Next” at the bottom of the page to go to the next section.
• For detailed instructions and information about each question, click the information icon.
• The answers to some questions will be prefilled with your registration information.
• Only provide your Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) if you have one. Otherwise, leave blank.
Student Address and Email

• **Mailing Address:** This should be a permanent mailing address where you can receive postal mail, such as a P.O. Box. If you don’t have a permanent mailing address, ask your college’s financial aid administrator for help.

• **Email Address:** Double-check the email address to make sure there are no typos. The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) and the colleges that you apply to for financial aid may send you important information via email. An email is not required, but recommended.

**TIP:** Emails from CSAC may go to your junk or spam folder, so be sure to check these folders and add csac.ca.gov as a “safe sender.”
**Student Residency**

You must be a California resident to qualify for the California student aid, such as the Cal Grant, Chafee Grant, Middle Class Scholarship and in-state tuition.

You will also need to meet minimum GPA standards, so make sure that your high school has submitted your verified GPA and that it has been matched to your CADAA. Create a WebGrants account to verify if your GPA has been matched to your CADAA.

Learn more about WebGrants on pages 80-85.

Visit [https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/calgrant-high-school-entitlement-award](https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/calgrant-high-school-entitlement-award) to see minimum GPA requirements.
**Student Phone and Identification Info**

**SSID:** Enter your 10-digit Statewide Student Identification Number (SSID), if applicable. Entering a SSID is not required but is recommended.

A SSID is given to all students enrolled in a California public high school. If you don’t know your SSID, contact your high school.

The SSID is not a Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).

Continued on next page.
Student Phone and Identification Information Continued:

Driver’s License:
A driver’s license is not required to complete the application but can help prevent identity theft.

Driving record and parking tickets do not affect eligibility for financial aid.
Student Marital Status

*Your* legal marital status is “single” if you are not married, even if you live with or have a boyfriend, girlfriend or significant other.

Married students are considered independent and will not have to fill out the Parent sections.
**Student Eligibility:** Undocumented and DACA students should choose “I am not a citizen or an eligible non-citizen” as their citizenship status.

Students with a Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or U visa should also select “I am not a citizen or an eligible noncitizen.”

Students with a T visa are eligible to file the FAFSA and should file the FAFSA instead.

If you are on a student visa or any other nonimmigrant visa (including A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K,L,M,N, O,P,R,S,TN,TD,V,TROV and NATO) you are not eligible to file the CADAA.
Student Education- PART I:
Will you have your first bachelor’s degree before you begin the 2023-2024 school year? Most students should answer “No.”

What will your grade level be when you begin the 2023-2024 school year? If you took college courses while in high school, and were dually enrolled, you are still considered a first-time college student and should select “Never attended college/1st yr.”

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE FOR MORE “STUDENT EDUCATION” QUESTIONS.
Select the option that best fits your initial educational goal.

- If you are planning to attend a four-year college, select “1st bachelor’s degree.”
- If you are planning on attending a community college, even if your ultimate educational goal is to obtain a bachelor’s degree, select one of the “associate degree” options.
- If you are unsure of your plans, select “1st bachelor’s degree.” Do NOT select “other/undecided.” However, if you decide to attend a community college, you should update your response to this question to avoid an error message and delays in your financial aid.
- Do not select “2nd bachelor’s degree” unless you already have a bachelor’s degree, as it may limit the grants that you receive.
What is the highest level of education your Parent completed?

- It is ok to select “Other/unknown”
- Parent does not refer to a legal guardian or foster parent.
- How you answer does not affect your eligibility for student aid.
SECTION 2 OF THE CADAA:

SCHOOL SELECTION
If you indicated that you are still in high school or have completed your high school diploma in the “Demographics” section, when you get to the “School” section, you will see this screen asking you to provide the name, city and state of that high school.

**Important:** Use the search function to find your high school. This will help to ensure that your GPA is correctly matched when it is submitted by your high school.

You will not be prompted to answer this question if you indicated that you received a GED certificate, HomeSchool or None of the above in the prior section.
• Search for and select up to 10 colleges that you may want to attend. Information from the CADAA will be sent to the schools you have selected.

• You can search for colleges by name or by using their Federal School Code.

• You can update or change school selections later if your plans change or you’re just not sure yet.

• You must select at least one college to continue with the CADAA.

• You do not need to have applied for admission yet to the colleges you list.
• Click on the name of the college to add.

• Be careful when selecting your colleges. Some college names are very similar and it’s easy to get them confused.

• Costs vary by college type. State colleges and universities are generally the most affordable; private vocational/trade schools can be costly. Ask for help if needed to make selections.

• Be sure to list each UC or CSU campus to which you are applying for admission separately in this section.
You are then asked to indicate your housing plans for each campus. Most four-year universities or colleges offer on-campus housing, but only a few California community colleges do.

Do NOT select “With Parent” as your housing plan if you plan to live with a foster parent, relative caregiver or legal guardian. Instead, select “Off-Campus.” This is crucial for maximizing your financial aid.

Note that the order in which you list the colleges does not make a difference in California.
You can list only 10 colleges at a time on your CADAA. After the CADAA has been processed and you have received your California Student Aid Report (Cal SAR), usually within 1-2 weeks, you can submit the CADAA to an additional 10 colleges, if necessary, by replacing the original set of 10 colleges with a new set of up to 10 colleges. Your original set of 10 colleges will still receive their copy of your CADAA information. Repeat this process as many times as necessary, each time waiting until you receive the Cal SAR. You can do this by visiting dream.csac.ca.gov or by calling 1-888-CA-GRANT (1-888-224-7268) or TTY 1-800-735-2929.

TIP

You can send your CADAA to additional schools after your CADAA has been processed.
SECTION 3 OF THE CADAA:

DEPENDENCY STATUS
Students who are determined to be independent do not need to provide information about parents.

For independent students, eligibility for financial aid is based on the student’s (and spouse’s, if applicable) income and assets only.

Students who will be 24 years old or older as of January 1 of the year for which they are applying for aid are automatically independent and will not be asked the questions in this section. (For example, if you plan to start school in August 2023, will you be 24 or older as of January 1, 2023.)
If you answer “Yes” to any of the dependency status questions, you are considered to be independent and parental information will not be required.

- Married students are considered independent and will not have to fill out the Parent sections.
- Your marital status is “single” if you are not married, even if you live with or have a boyfriend, girlfriend or significant other.
- Students who are or will be enrolled in graduate school are considered to be independent.
Does Student have Dependents?

- If you have children or dependents, you will be considered independent on the CADAA and will not have to fill out the Parent section.
Student Household Size:

This screen appears only if you indicate that you have children or are married.

Count yourself, your spouse, children who receive more than half of their support from you (even if they don’t live with you) and other dependents who live with you and receive more than half their support from you.

Do not count your siblings, other relatives, family of origin or foster family.

Number in College: Enter “1” for number in college unless you have a spouse or children who will also be attending college at least half-time.
If you are under 24, not married and do not have children, you will be asked additional questions. If you can answer “Yes” to any of these, you will be considered an independent student on the CADAA.

Current or former foster youth may qualify if they can answer “Yes” to any part of either of these two questions:

“At any time since you turned age 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care, or were you a dependent or ward of the court?

OR

“Does someone other than your parent or stepparent have legal guardianship of you, as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?”
If you answered yes on the prior page, you will not be asked additional questions about student homelessness status.
Not sure if you qualify as an independent student as a current or former foster youth? Here are a few more facts:

- Neither legal guardians nor foster parents are considered parents when completing the CADAA.
- You qualify even if you were in foster care, or were a dependent or ward of the court, for just one day after you turned 13.
- Dependent vs. Ward of the Court: The term “ward” is used to mean “dependent” of the court.
- You are a ward of the court (regardless of whether this status is determined by the county or state) if the court has assumed custody of you, even for just one day. Court-ordered documents exist that designate you as a ward of the court.
- If you were a dependent or ward of the court, but remained in the legal custody of your parents, you do not qualify for “Independent Status” as a foster youth on the CADAA.
- Youth in Family Maintenance will not qualify unless they were in out-of-home care for at least one day after the age of 13.
- Some foster youth are under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice Probation Department and are still eligible for independent status.

TIP: If you exited foster care before the age of 13 and were either reunified with your parents or adopted, you will most likely need to provide information about your parents’ income and assets. You can request an exemption from this requirement, however, for special circumstances such as an abusive family, parental incarceration or when parents’ whereabouts are unknown. Consult with the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend for more information.
The Chafee Grant provides college grants of up to $5,000 a year for up to 5 years for current and former foster youth who are under age 26 as of July 1 of the award year.

The student must have been in foster care or a ward of the court for at least one day between ages 16 and 18.

For more information, visit chafee.csac.ca.gov and see pages 77-79.
Chafee Grant Continued:

If you answer “yes” to the question on the prior page, these questions will appear.

Students are advised to answer these questions to be considered for additional financial aid.
SECTION 4 OF THE CADAA:

STUDENT FINANCIAL INFORMATION

These instructions are for students with “Independent Status.” Dependent students will need to also provide parent information.
Pay careful attention to which year’s income, tax and asset information you have to report in this section.

- Income and tax information comes from the “prior-prior” year. For example, the 2023-2024 CADAA is based on 2021 income and tax information.

You will be asked if you completed your IRS federal income tax return for the appropriate year. You must select one of three options:

- Already Completed
- Will file
- Not going to file
If you selected “Not going to file,” you will not be asked any further questions and can proceed to page 66.

You may be required to submit a Verification of Non-Filing Letter from the IRS to verify that you did not file a tax return. For more information about this form visit: www.jbay.org/resources/irs-vnf

If you are unsure whether you made enough money to file a federal income tax return, look at Table 1-1 of IRS Publication 17: www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p17.pdf

TIP: In 2021, if you were single and under age 65, you were not required to file a tax return if your gross income was less than $12,550. Gross income= total income paid to you before any deductions or taxes were taken out.
The remaining financial questions will ask about “your (and spouse’s)” information, regardless of if you are married.

You will be asked for your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and income tax from your 2021 federal income tax return.

Tip: The CADAA tells you on what line of your tax return you can find the requested information. Carefully follow these instructions.
Student Income from Work

You will be asked to report how much money you made from working. Include the information from your W-2 forms (box numbers 1 + 8) and 1099 forms.

If you did not work, enter zero. This question can’t be left blank.

Student Assets

You will also be asked to provide information about your current assets such as cash, savings and checking accounts, but not retirement plan accounts.
These questions concern amounts that may have been included in the income reported on your federal income tax return.

These amounts are subtracted from income to ensure that they do not count against your financial aid eligibility.

Some types of financial aid, such as Americorps, Federal Work-Study and the taxable portion of college grants and scholarships, may have been included in taxable income on your federal income tax return.

A Cooperative Education Program is a college program that allows a student to apply their classroom knowledge to a paid work experience in a field related to their academic or career goals.
These questions concern types of income that are not reported on your federal income tax return. This “untaxed income” will be added to your adjusted gross income (AGI) or income earned from work to yield total income.

Do not report any of the following Information as income earned from work or untaxed income.

- Extended Foster Care (AB 12) benefits — including Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP) payments or payment from a Transitional Housing Placement for Non-Minor Dependents (THP-NMD) program. Even if your SILP payment is sent directly to you, you DO NOT need to report this as income. This also includes the infant supplement.
- Welfare (CalWORKs) payments
- Untaxed Social Security benefits
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) — do not confuse with Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
Un taxing income that you should report may include:

• Contributions to retirement plans
• Child support *received* (not child support *paid*)
• Cash support received, such as if someone paid your bills.
This question asks whether the student received certain federal benefits during 2021 and 2022.

- Medi-Cal (Medicaid)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- CalFresh (Food Stamps or SNAP)
- Free or Reduced Price School Lunch
- CalWORKS (TANF)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

Checking any of these boxes will not affect your eligibility for these benefits. It also will not reduce your eligibility for state student financial aid.

See next page for information about "dislocated worker" status.
Dislocated worker: this includes anyone who experienced an involuntary loss of employment, such as anyone who:

- Is receiving unemployment benefits due to being laid off or losing a job and is unlikely to return to a previous occupation
- Has been laid off or received a lay-off notice from a job
- Was self-employed but is now unemployed due to economic conditions or natural disaster (e.g., COVID-19)
- Is the spouse of an active-duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces and
  - has experienced a loss of employment because of relocating due to a permanent change in duty station or
  - is unemployed or underemployed, and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment
- Is a displaced homemaker. A displaced homemaker is generally a person who previously provided unpaid services to the family (e.g., a stay-at-home mom or dad), is no longer supported by the spouse, is unemployed or underemployed, and is having trouble finding or upgrading employment.
What if your income has changed since 2021?

If your income has decreased since 2021, for example, you lost a job or had your hours significantly reduced, contact the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend. They can recalculate your financial aid award to reflect your current income.
SECTIONS 5 AND 6 OF THE CADAA:

PARENT INFORMATION
If you were determined to be “Independent” you will not be required to complete the Parent Demographics and Parent Financials sections.
SECTION 7 OF THE CADAA:
SIGN & SUBMIT

The final section of the CADAA!
Read the signing statement before signing the CADAA.

To sign the CADAA, check the box and click on the Submit button.

If there is any invalid data, you will be asked to correct the errors before saving or submitting the application. The sections containing the errors will be marked with a red exclamation point.

After you have corrected the errors, you can click on the Submit button again to sign the CADAA.

You will then be told that your application is being processed. This can take up to 24 hours. If you need to make any changes or corrections, you must wait until the CADAA is processed.
The Confirmation Page shows that your CADAA has been submitted. It provides your CA Dream ID number and the date the CADAA was submitted. Save or print a copy of the Confirmation Page. The Confirmation Page may identify actions you will need to take to ensure that your eligibility can be determined.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:
Males are no longer required to register with the Selective Service in order to qualify for state financial aid. However, this is a new law and this comment code may still appear on your Confirmation Page. Students can disregard this notice and no further action is required.
AFTER THE CADAA

Filling out the CADAA is just the first step.
After 24 hours (possibly sooner), you will be able to download your California Student Aid Report (Cal SAR).

Click on the print icon to download or print the Cal SAR.
This is an example of a California Student Aid Report (Cal SAR).

The Cal SAR summarizes the information you submitted on the CADAA. Review it to confirm that there aren’t any errors.

After your CADAA is processed, the Cal SAR will include your expected family contribution near the top right of the first page, after the word “EFC.” This example shows an EFC of $0. An EFC of $0 means the student will likely qualify for maximum aid.

Save or print a copy of the Cal SAR.
Submit a signed “Non-Resident Exemption” Request, also known as an “AB 540 Affidavit” in order to qualify for aid through the CADAA!

This form states that you meet all the requirements to qualify for a non-resident exemption under AB 540 and, if you are undocumented, that you are in the process of legalizing your immigration status (or will do so as soon as you are eligible).

A student should get the affidavit from the office of admission at the college the student plans to attend.

You should complete this form upon accepting an offer to attend a college in California and at least one semester or quarter before you are scheduled to start classes.
Summary of the CADAA Process

START HERE: Review college and state deadlines.

File the CADAA every year between October 1st and March 2nd. CA community college students have until September 2nd, if needed.

Gather documents needed to complete the CADAA

Create a User ID and Password for the CADAA

Fill out and sign the CADAA electronically

Print or save a copy of the confirmation page

Receive, review and correct the California Student Aid Report (Cal SAR)

Delete old colleges and add new colleges if applying to more than 10 CA Colleges.

Appeal for more financial aid if you have been affected by special circumstances, such as a decrease in income or loss of job.

Check email and college portal weekly.

Submit required documentation if CADAA selected for verification.

Review financial aid award letter or notification from each college.

Sign and submit the AB 540 Affidavit to the college the student will attend.
APPLY FOR THE CHAFEE GRANT

This is a separate application from the CADAA
Chafee Grant Overview & Eligibility:

May receive up to $5,000 depending on financial need for up to 5 years (whether or not consecutive) until the age of 26

Can be used at public or private qualified colleges, universities or career and technical schools (CTE) in California or out of state

Must be a current or former foster youth who was a dependent or ward of the court at least one day between the ages of 16-18

Must be enrolled at least half-time in college, have financial need and have not reached your 26th birthday as of July 1 of the award year
Chafee Grant Application Tips

• A separate application is required for first time applicants only in addition to the CADAA. While the CADAA must be filled out every year, the Chafee must only be filled out once.

• Go to chafee.csac.ca.gov and click “Start Chafee Application.”

• Apply as soon as possible- ideally right after completing your CADAA!

• Planned School of Attendance refers to one college the student plans to attend. If you don’t know yet, you can select one and update it later in WebGrants. Also, if your school isn’t listed, you can contact CSAC at 1-888-CAGRANT (1-888-224-7268), option 3.

• Students can update their Chafee grant applications and monitor award status on WebGrants for Students at: mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov
CREATE A WEBGRANTS ACCOUNT

Create this to view the status of your CADAA, Cal Grant and Chafee Grant
Students will need to wait to create a WebGrants account until their CADAA is processed. It can take 24 hours for the CADAA to process and link to WebGrants.

Colleges will receive CADAA information within 7-10 days. Colleges may request documentation to verify the information you provided on the Dream Act Application.
TIP: Make sure your contact information is up to date so CSAC can reach you.

CSAC communicates with students through their email address.

Here is the screen where you can edit contact information.
Check Your Award Status

Below are possible award status cards within WebGrants. If your Award Status is pending, click on your “To Do” list to determine next steps. If your Award Status is “Not Awarded”, click on Reason to learn more and consult with the financial aid office or CSAC if you believe there is an error.
WebGrants To Do’s

1. Check your award status and amount for the Cal Grant and Chafee Grant

2. Verify if there are any “pending” items or forms that still need to be completed

3. Confirm that your school of attendance is accurate. This is referring to the college you plan to attend, not your high school.

4. Verify that your GPA has been received. If not, contact your high school counselor or the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC).

5. Enter your high school graduation date. This will become available on the 1st day of the month of your planned graduation.

6. If you applied for Chafee Grant, check that your “Department of Social Services Record” is complete to verify your foster youth status. Note: This is only verified monthly so it may take up to 6 weeks before this is verified. If it is not matched, visit chafee.csac.ca.gov to submit a verification form manually.
Remember:

• Continue to check your email and college student portal weekly. The college will communicate with you if they need more information. Even after college starts, continue to check it often.

• Respond promptly to any information request to provide verification in order to receive your financial aid, such as a verification of foster youth status or an IRS Verification of Nonfiling Letter (if you didn’t file taxes). Learn more at: www.jbay.org/resources/irs-vnf.

• Update all of your accounts if your address, email or phone number changes (e.g. WebGrants, college portal, FAFSA/CADAA, etc.)

• Apply for campus support programs, such as EOP, EOPS, NextUp, Guardian Scholars or Disability Student Services, to help you succeed once in college. Learn more about these programs here: cacollegepathways.org/campus-support/.

• Check out the Financial Aid Guide for California Foster Youth to learn how to maintain your financial aid: jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/. Once you receive financial aid, there are requirements you need to meet to keep receiving it.

• Apply for private scholarships. There is a lot of free money out there if you take the time to apply! Learn more by visiting: jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/.

• Reapply for CADAA every year!
HELPFUL RESOURCES
Sources of Free Help with the CADAA

- Live Help built into CADAA (Turn on “Auto Hint”)
- California Student Aid Commission (CSAC)
  - 1-888-CA-GRANT (1-888-224-7268)
  - If hearing impaired: 1-800-735-2929 (TTY) or 1-800-735-2922 (Voice)
  - StudentSupport@csac.ca.gov
- IRS Get a Tax Return Transcript – 1-800-908-9946
Resources for Undocumented Students at CA Public Colleges and Universities

- **Dreamer Resource Centers**: Most public colleges in California have a Dreamer Resource Center or Dream Success Center or similar for their undocumented students that offers a range of support and resources.

- **Resources for students attending Cal State University (CSU) campuses**: [https://www.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/resources-for-undocumented-students](https://www.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/resources-for-undocumented-students)

- **Resources for students attending University of California (UC) campuses**: [https://undoc.universityofcalifornia.edu/](https://undoc.universityofcalifornia.edu/)

- **Resources for students attending a California Community College (CCC) campus, including contacts for UndocuLiaisons found at every campus**: [https://www.cccco.edu/Students/Support-Services/Special-population/Undocumented-Students](https://www.cccco.edu/Students/Support-Services/Special-population/Undocumented-Students)

- **Immigrants Rising**: Resources for undocumented youth to pursue a higher education and career found here: [https://immigrantsrising.org/](https://immigrantsrising.org/)
California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant Program

• Encourages CADAA students who meet Cal Grant B eligibility to perform at least 150 hours of community or volunteer service
• 1,667 eligible students will receive up to $4,500 per academic year
• Renewable for up to 8 semesters or 12 quarters
• Recipients must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), such as earning at least a 2.0 GPA
• Students must apply annually
• For more information, visit www.csac.ca.gov/dsig
Scholarships for Undocumented Students

• Search for scholarships on free scholarship matching websites, such as Fastweb.com and the College Board’s Big Future website
• Students should apply for all scholarships for which they may be eligible
• For lists of scholarships, visit:
  • www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/
  • immigrantsrising.org
  • goldendoorscholars.org