

# Completing the California Dream Act Application (CADAA): A Visual Guide For Youth with Experience in Foster Care or Homelessness



JOHN BURTON  
Advocates  
*for* Youth

This Guide is intended to complement the *Financial Aid Guide for California Foster and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth* with screen shots of the online California Dream Act Application (CADAA) and detailed step-by-step instructions for youth who have experienced foster care or homelessness.

Please refer to the full Guide for information on the different types of financial aid, what to do after completing the CADAA, and how to maintain financial aid.

While this guide strives to be as accurate as possible, information may change, and errors may occur. Errors can be reported to [info@jbay.org](mailto:info@jbay.org).

**[jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide](http://jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide)**

# Financial Aid Guide for California Foster & Unaccompanied Homeless Youth



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# Who Should Use This Guide

This guide is intended for youth who have experienced foster care or homelessness in California who qualify for “Independent Student Status” on the CADAA. Students who do not qualify for “Independent Student Status,” will need to provide financial information about their parent(s). Information about providing parental information is not included in this guide.

Students who do not qualify as homeless but who cannot obtain parental information can request an exemption for unusual circumstances such as an abusive family, parental incarceration or when parents’ whereabouts are unknown (see section 4(c)). Note that circumstances such as parents not providing financial support or being unwilling to provide information on the CADAA do not alone qualify as unusual circumstances.

If a student is a U.S. Citizen or eligible noncitizen,\* they should fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) instead of the CADAA to qualify for both state and federal aid. A Visual Guide to the FAFSA is available at [jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide](https://jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide).

\*See <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements/non-us-citizens> for details

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1.

# What to Know Before You Apply

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# What is the CADAA?

- The CADAA allows undocumented, mixed-status, 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 Federal 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.



- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid**
- **Available to U.S. Citizens, permanent residents or other eligible non-citizens\***
- **Apply at FAFSA.gov (mobile friendly)**
- **Available in English or Spanish online**
- **Used for Federal and State aid**

\*This most commonly includes someone who is a U.S. Permanent Resident (i.e. someone with a "green card" or Resident Alien Card) or a refugee. For the full list of eligible non-citizens, see [studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements/non-us-citizens](https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements/non-us-citizens).



- **Eligibility: qualified undocumented students, mixed-status families, Temporary Protected Status or U Visa\***
- **Apply at [dream.csac.ca.gov](https://dream.csac.ca.gov)**
- **Available in English only online (paper Spanish application)**
- **Qualifies students as CA residents and for state aid**

\*See

<https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/california-nonresident-tuition-exemption> for details

# Who is eligible to submit a CADAA?

- **Undocumented Students Who Meet AB 540 Criteria:** Assembly Bill (AB) 540 is a bill that passed in California. It specifies which undocumented students are eligible for state financial aid and in-state tuition fees. Not all undocumented students are eligible. See subsequent page for the full list of eligibility criteria.
- **Students with a U Visa:** A "U Visa" is a type of nonimmigrant visa for victims of certain crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are helpful to law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of such criminal activity.

[www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/victims-of-criminal-activity-u-nonimmigrant-status](http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/victims-of-criminal-activity-u-nonimmigrant-status)

- **Students with Temporary Protected Status (TPS):** Students hold a temporary immigration status because they are unable to return to their home country safely due to conditions or circumstances like war, environmental disasters, or epidemics.

[www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status](http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status)

# Who is eligible to submit a CADAA?

**Mixed-Status Families:** Refers to students who have legal immigration status and qualify for FAFSA, but have contributors (parents, legal guardians, or spouse) who are undocumented and do not have legal status.

These students are eligible to submit a FAFSA but may choose to submit a CADAA. Note that submitting a CADAA means that the student will receive state aid only and not federal aid.

Additional information regarding CADAA eligibility is available at  
<https://firstgenempower.org/advising-undocu-students>

# AB 540 Eligibility

**The CADAA asks questions to determine if an undocumented student meets AB 540 criteria, which allows the student to receive in-state tuition and state financial aid.**

**To qualify for AB 540, a student must satisfy ALL of the criteria shown.**

Do you meet the AB540 criteria list below?

1. Satisfaction of either of the following:
  - A. High school attendance in California for three or more years, **OR**
  - B. Attainment of credits earned in California from a California high school equivalent to three or more years of full-time high school coursework and a total of three or more years of attendance in California elementary schools, California secondary schools, or a combination of those schools. **OR**
  - C. Attainment of credits earned at a California adult school, **OR**
  - D. Credits earned at a California Community College, **OR**
  - E. A combination of the schools listed above
2. Graduated or will graduate from a California high school, **OR**  
Attainment of General Education Development (GED), High School Equivalency Test (HiSET), Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC), **OR**  
Attainment of an associate degree from a California Community College, **OR**  
Fulfillment of minimum transfer requirements from a California Community College to a University of California or California State University, **AND**
3. Will register or enroll in an accredited and qualifying California college or university, **AND**
4. If applicable, complete(d) an affidavit to legalize immigration status as soon as you are eligible, **AND**
5. Do not hold a valid non-immigrant visa (F, J, H, L, A, B, C, D, E, etc.)\*

\*Note: If you have Temporary Protected Status or hold a U Visa select "Yes"

# Does DACA status or having a Social Security Number impact eligibility?

- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status is not required to apply for the CADAA.
- If you received DACA status and 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 AB 540 criteria on the prior slide to be eligible for the CADAA.
- Your parents’ citizenship status does not impact your eligibility to receive financial aid under the CADAA or FAFSA.

# What about Special Immigration Juvenile Status (SIJS)?

- **Foster youth who are undocumented immigrants may qualify to receive Special Immigration Juvenile Status (SIJS).** Undocumented children who are a dependent of the juvenile court who cannot be reunified with one or both of their parents due to abuse, abandonment or neglect, and for whom 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, 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/Alien Registration).**
- If an undocumented student in foster care does not have an application for SIJS pending, the child welfare agency should be contacted for eligibility screening.

# 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
- More info can be found here:  
[https://www.csac.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-11/eom\\_2024\\_04.pdf](https://www.csac.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2024-11/eom_2024_04.pdf)

# Deadlines



**To qualify for state and institutional aid:**

**4-Year Universities:**

**March 2, 2026\***

**CA Community Colleges:**

**September 2, 2026**

Private or out of state colleges may have different deadlines. If you've missed these deadlines, you can still apply. While most state aid will no longer be available, some grants, such as the Federal Pell Grant, will still be available.

*\*Priority deadlines can change. Be sure to check for the latest information.*

# What a student needs to apply



An email address AND a list of at least one and up to 20 colleges



Information about current assets, such as cash, and checking/savings accounts



Tax return or income information from the “prior-prior” year (2024). If you filed a tax return, also have your Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) (optional)



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.



School transcript information needed to demonstrate that school attendance satisfies AB 540 criteria (see next page for more information).

# AB 540: School Transcripts

- Students will need to provide information on the CADAA about their school attendance history to determine AB 540 eligibility. **This information includes credits or hours attained at each school and the dates the student attended each school.**
- Depending on how they are meeting AB 540 eligibility, the student may have to provide information about elementary, middle, and high schools, adult schools, and/or community colleges they attended.
- Students should report all relevant school history, even if they attended a school for a short time and received partial credits.
- Students should work with their school counselor to obtain transcripts and review the transcripts to ensure they have the information (credits/hours/dates) needed to complete the AB 540 affidavit on the CADAA.

2.

# Verifying Eligibility

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# VERIFYING ELIGIBILITY

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

**New Users:**  
Select first-time account registration

**Returning User:**  
Click "Login." You can also log in to make corrections or add a new college to your application.

HOME INFORMATION & RESOURCES

## California Dream Act Application

YOUR SAFETY AND PRIVACY IS CSAC'S PRIORITY

We understand that you may be concerned about sharing personal information and applying for government aid. Please know that any information you provide on a CA Dream Act Application (CADAA) is only used to determine eligibility for state financial aid. Your information is never shared with the federal government or used for immigration enforcement. [Read more about how CSAC protects undocumented student data.](#)

**STUDENT ACCOUNT**

NEW USERS: Click Register for first-time account creation

- This is the first time you will be submitting a CA Dream Act Application

**Register**

RETURNING USERS: Use your existing username and password

- You have previously submitted a CA Dream Act Application
- Retrieve Username or Password

**Login**

**PARENT SIGNATURE**

- Reserved for parent(s) ONLY
- Sign your child's CA Dream Act Application if you did not sign when the application was submitted.

**Sign**

# VERIFYING ELIGIBILITY

Starting a new CADAA account begins with Registration to verify your eligibility for the CADAA.

Click Continue.

California Dream Act Application

Registration

**STOP!** If you have previously submitted a CA Dream Act Application (CADAA) or you have already registered as a CADAA user, do not create a new account. Instead, click [here](#) to Retrieve your User ID and/or Password.

Welcome

Completion of the California Dream Act Application is required to determine state financial aid for eligible California AB 540 students. Your application will be processed by the California Student Aid Commission.

The following questions will determine whether this is the best financial aid application for you or whether you should fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Continue

# VERIFYING ELIGIBILITY

The CADAA will confirm your eligibility by asking if you have a Social Security Number (SSN).

If you respond “No” you meet the first eligibility criteria.

If you respond “yes,” you will be asked if you received your SSN through DACA.

If you respond “Yes” you meet the first eligibility criteria.

Registration
<p>Do you have a social security number?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>

California Dream Act Application
<p>Registration</p> <p>Did you obtain your social security number after the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) granted you Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status and you received your social security number through an Employment Authorization Card and your card states it is for work purposes only?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p> <p>Deferred Action refers to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). More information on DACA can be found on USCIS website: <a href="https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/consideration-of-deferred-action-for-childhood-arrivals-daca">https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/consideration-of-deferred-action-for-childhood-arrivals-daca</a></p> <p>and clicking the "Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Process" link.</p> <p>Note: If you have Temporary Protected Status or hold a U Visa select "Yes"</p>

# VERIFYING ELIGIBILITY

If you answer that you have a social security number and that it was not received through DACA, you will be asked if you are a US citizen or eligible non-citizen.

If you respond “No” the application will tell you that it is unable to determine your eligibility and you should consult a counselor.



The image shows a screenshot of the California Dream Act Application Registration form. The title "California Dream Act Application" is at the top, followed by a "Registration" button. Below the title, a question asks if the user is a US Citizen (US National) or eligible non-citizen, with "Yes" and "No" radio buttons. A box contains text about eligible non-citizens and a list of documentation requirements.

Are you a US Citizen (US National) or eligible non-citizen? (see below to check status)

Yes  No

Generally, you are considered an “eligible noncitizen” for financial aid purposes if you:

1. Permanent US resident with a permanent resident card (I-551)
2. Conditional permanent resident with a conditional green card (I-551c)
3. Holder of an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from the Department of Homeland Security with the following designations:
  - Refugee
  - Asylum Granted
  - Cuban-Haitian Entrant, Status Pending
  - Victim of human trafficking, T-visa holder (T-2, T-3, or T-4, etc.)

# VERIFYING ELIGIBILITY

If you answer that you are a US Citizen, you will be asked if you meet one of the criteria below:

- Your parent or spouse does not have a SSN
- Your parent or spouse has a SSN but is a noncitizen (i.e., has DACA, asylum, etc.).
- You are a FAFSA-eligible noncitizen.

If you respond “Yes” you meet the first eligibility criteria.

Responding “no” to this question means you are not eligible and should complete the FAFSA

Select "Yes" if one or more of the following apply to you or select "No" if none of these apply.

Yes  No

- You have a Social Security Number (SSN), and your parent or spouse does not have a SSN.
- You have a SSN, and your parent or spouse has a SSN but is a noncitizen (i.e., has DACA, asylum, etc.).
- You are a [FAFSA-eligible noncitizen](#).

We will not share the answers to these questions with any federal agencies or your college(s). Your answers will only be used to help us to determine your eligibility to complete the California Dream Act Application (CADAA).

#### Points to consider:

- As a FAFSA-eligible student, you may choose to complete the CADAA due to privacy concerns or problems with completing the FAFSA.
- You understand that submitting the CADAA means you will not be considered for nor receive federal financial aid.
- By completing the CADAA, you will only be considered for state and institutional financial aid.
- You always have the option to complete the FAFSA later, even if you have completed the CADAA.
- Completing the FAFSA allows students to be considered for state, institutional, and federal financial aid programs.

# VERIFYING ELIGIBILITY

You will then be asked if you meet the AB 540 criteria.

You must be able to answer "Yes" to continue.

Do you meet the AB540 criteria list below?

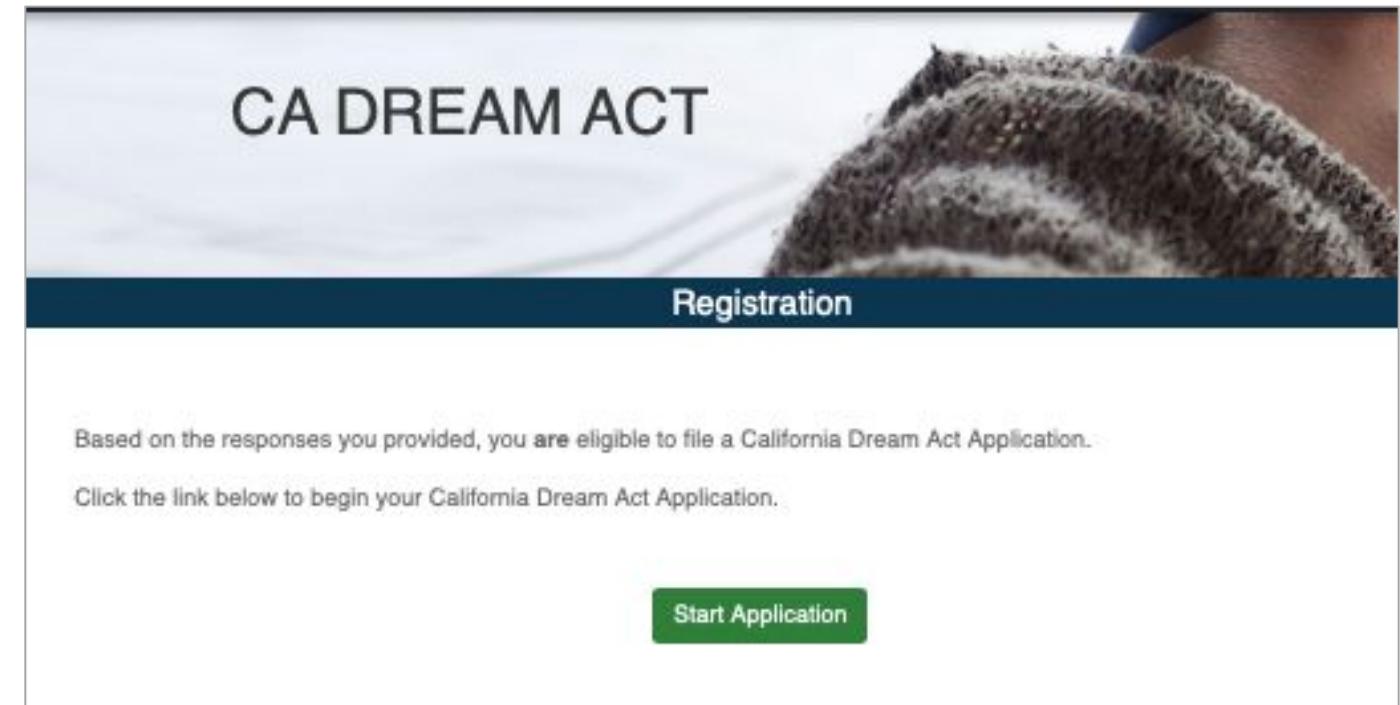
Yes  No

1. Satisfaction of either of the following:
  - A. High school attendance in California for three or more years, **OR**
  - B. Attainment of credits earned in California from a California high school equivalent to three or more years of full-time high school coursework and a total of three or more years of attendance in California elementary schools, California secondary schools, or a combination of those schools. **OR**
  - C. Attainment of credits earned at a California adult school, **OR**
  - D. Credits earned at a California Community College, **OR**
  - E. A combination of the schools listed above
2. Graduated or will graduate from a California high school, **OR**  
Attainment of General Education Development (GED), High School Equivalency Test (HiSET), Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC), **OR**  
Attainment of an associate degree from a California Community College, **OR**  
Fulfillment of minimum transfer requirements from a California Community College to a University of California or California State University, **AND**
3. Will register or enroll in an accredited and qualifying California college or university, **AND**
4. If applicable, complete(d) an affidavit to legalize immigration status as soon as you are eligible, **AND**
5. Do not hold a valid non-immigrant visa (F, J, H, L, A, B, C, D, E, etc.)\*

\*Note: If you have Temporary Protected Status or hold a U Visa select "Yes"

# VERIFYING ELIGIBILITY

If you meet the eligibility requirements, you will be informed that you are eligible to file a CADAA and can click "Start Application."



3.

# Creating an Account

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# CREATE A USER ACCOUNT

You will need to provide your name and date of birth, and create a User ID, which must be 8 characters.

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 (\*).

 If “Auto Hint” is turned on in the upper right corner, an explanation of what to include for each field will be shown. If this is off, you can click the  next to the field for information.



## Let's Get Started

Please complete the following form in order to continue. The minimum required fields are indicated with a red asterisk, although we recommend completing the entire form in order to expedite your application processing time.

TURN AUTO HINT

### STUDENT INFORMATION

\* Social Security Number

 SSN is required

 Do not enter Social Security Numbers beginning with the number "9". Instead, start over and re-read the pre-filtering questions to ensure you are placed on the correct path.

\* First Name 

 First name is required

Middle Name 

\* Last Name 

 Last name is required

\* Date of Birth 

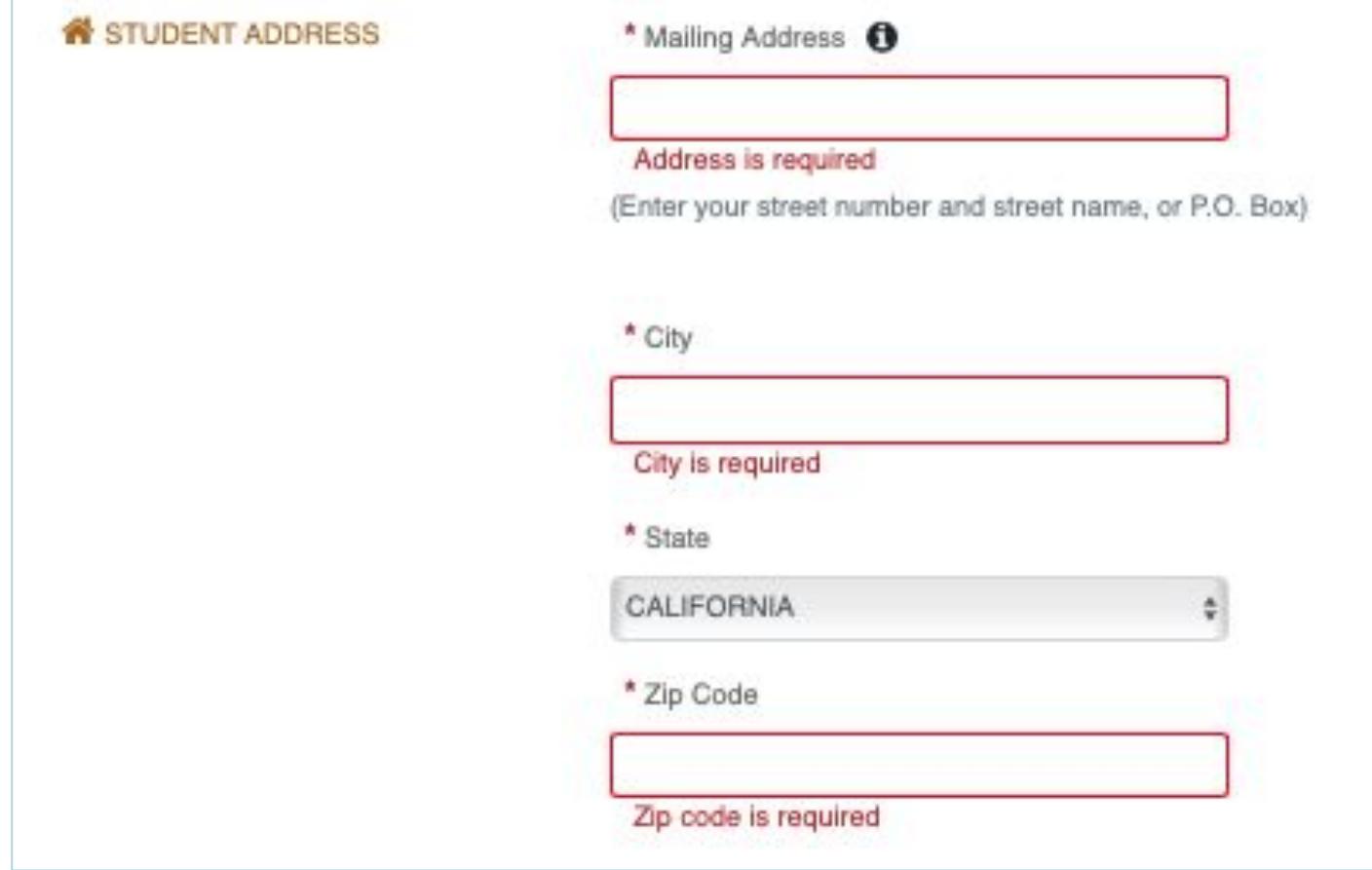
MM/DD/YYYY

 Date of birth is required

# CREATE A USER ACCOUNT (continued)

**Student Address:** Do not provide a temporary mailing address.

If you do not have a permanent mailing address, you can use an address where you can reliably receive mail, like the address of a friend, relative, or social service agency that has given you permission to use their address.



The image shows a user interface for entering a student address. At the top left is a house icon followed by the text 'STUDENT ADDRESS'. To the right is a section labeled 'Mailing Address' with an information icon (a small 'i'). Below this is a red-bordered input field with the placeholder 'Address is required' and the sub-instruction '(Enter your street number and street name, or P.O. Box)'. The next section is labeled 'City' with a red-bordered input field containing the placeholder 'City is required'. The following section is labeled 'State' with a dropdown menu showing 'CALIFORNIA'. The final section is labeled 'Zip Code' with a red-bordered input field containing the placeholder 'Zip code is required'.

**STUDENT ADDRESS**

\* Mailing Address 

Address is required  
(Enter your street number and street name, or P.O. Box)

\* City

City is required

\* State

CALIFORNIA

\* Zip Code

Zip code is required

# CREATE A USER ACCOUNT (continued)

**Phone Number:** Providing a phone number is not required, but is recommended

**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.

 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 CONTACT

Phone Number i

\* Email Address i

Email is required

\* Confirm Email Address i

Confirm Email is required

I'm not a robot 

Register Clear

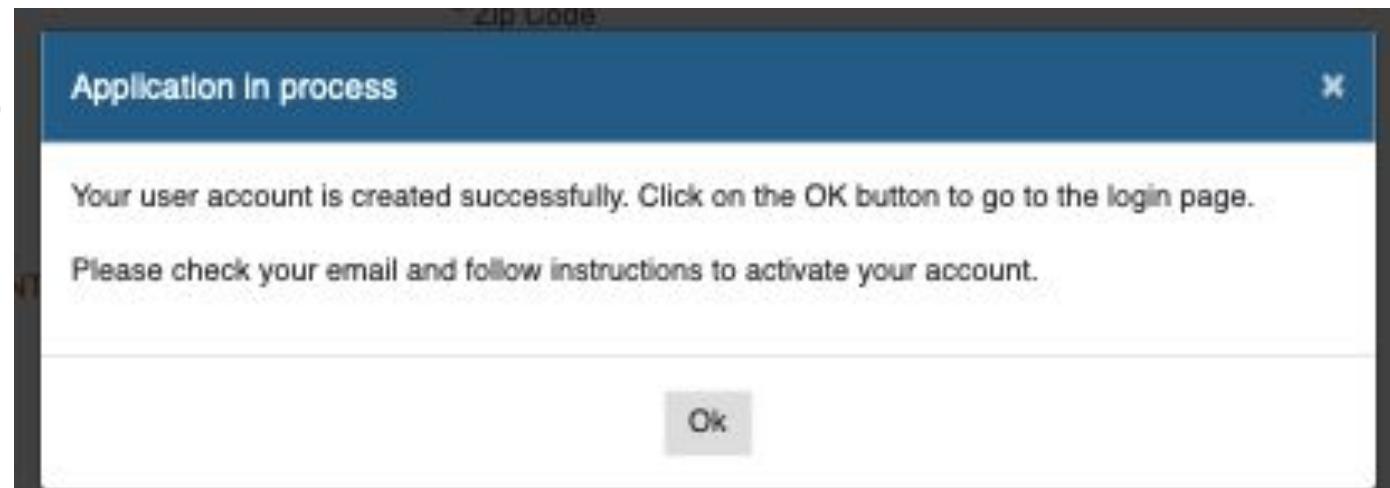
# CREATE A USER ACCOUNT (continued)

1. You will see a pop up indicating that your account has been created.

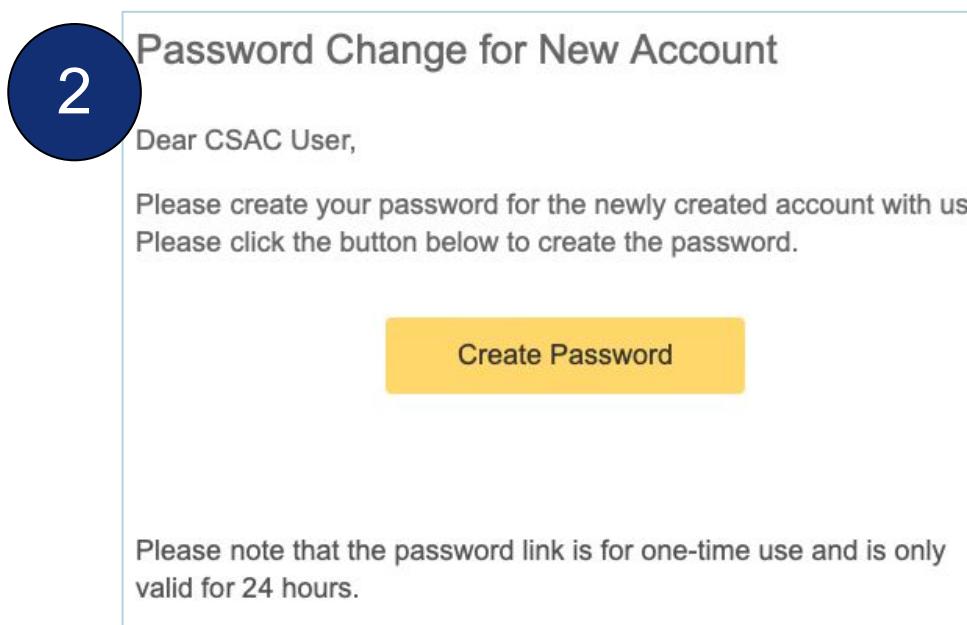
2. You will receive an email message to confirm your email address. Click on the link in the email message to activate your account. You must activate your account within 24 hours.

3. You will be asked to create a password and can then log in to the account.

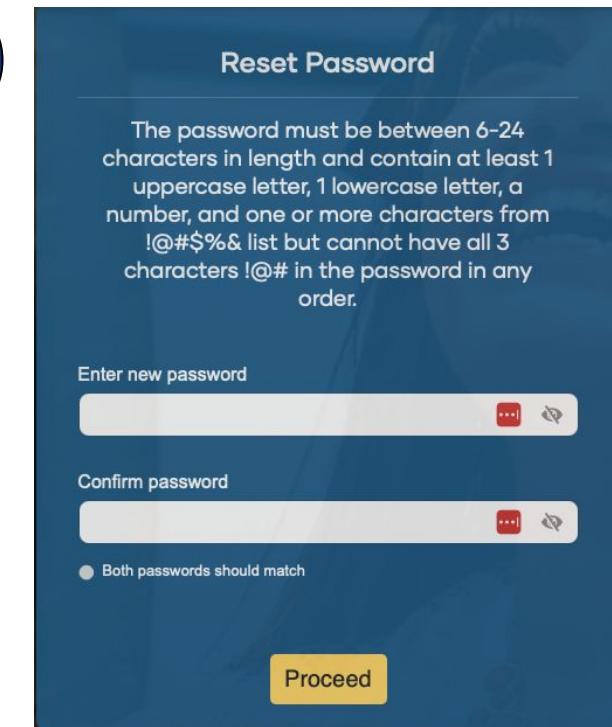
1



2



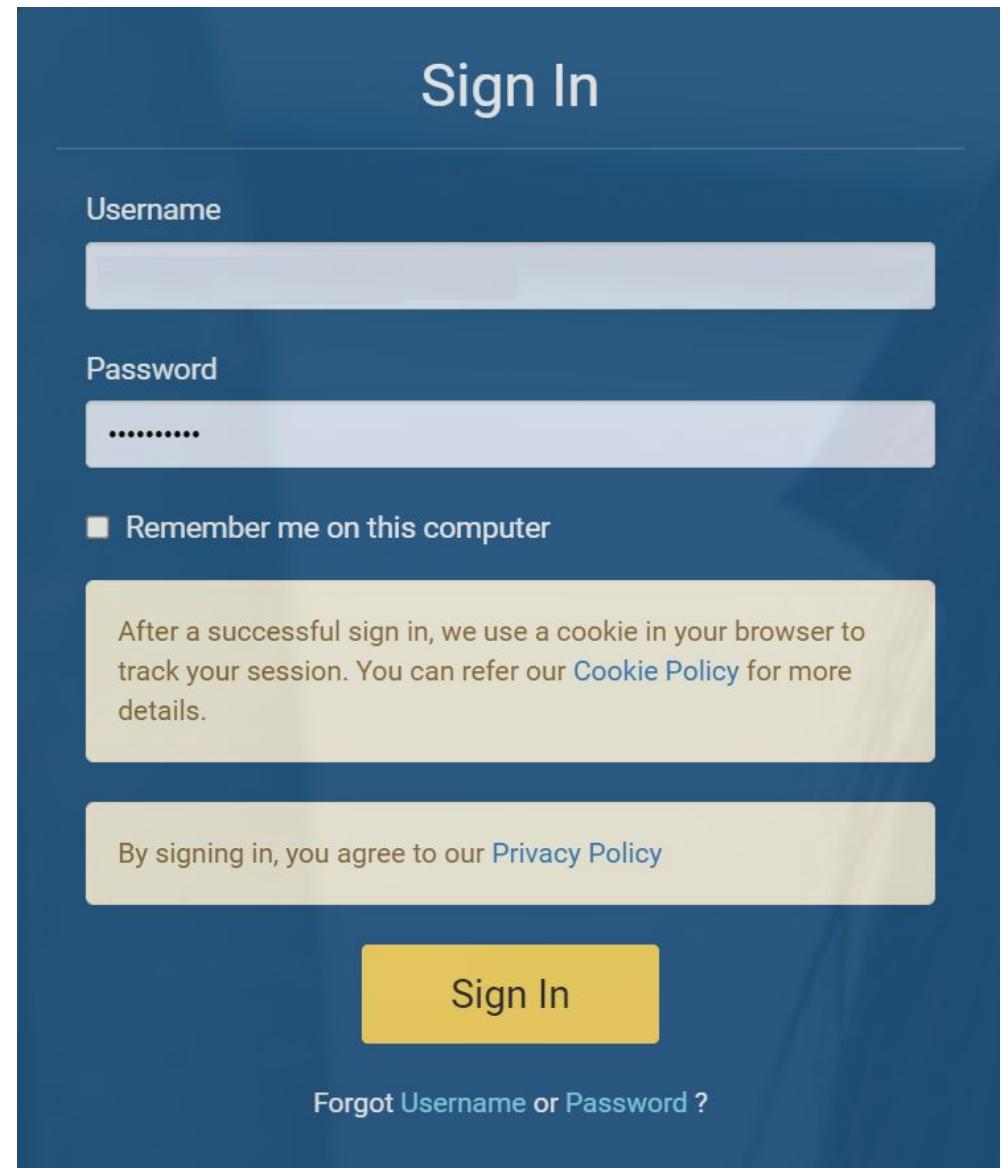
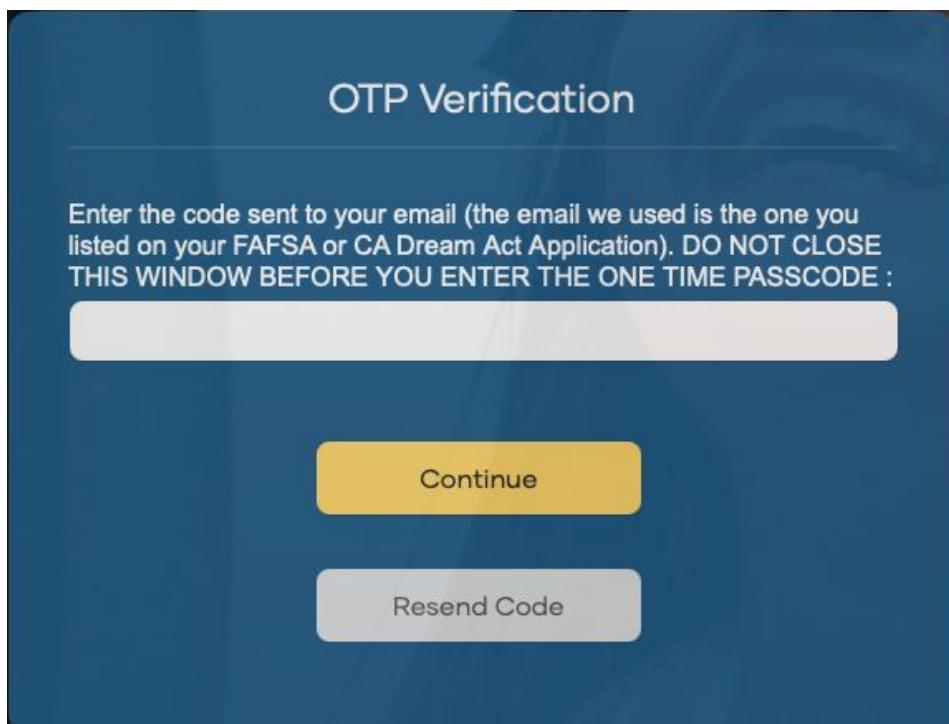
3



# LOG IN

Go to **DREAM.CSAC.CA.GOV** and log in with your username and password to begin your application.

A code will be sent to the email address that you provided.



# LOG IN (continued)

You will then be asked to provide answers to three security questions, which can be used to recover your account if you forget your password.

## Security Questions

Answer the following challenge questions

### Challenge Question Set 1

Select one challenge question

What was the first name of your best friend in high school? 

Answers for challenge questions

Type your answers for the challenge questions 

### Challenge Question Set 2

Select one challenge question

What is the name of the street you grew up on? 

Answers for challenge questions

Type your answers for the challenge questions

### Challenge Question Set 3

Select one challenge question

What is the name of your first Pet? 

Answers for challenge questions

Type your answers for the challenge questions



**Write down these items  
somewhere safe or save these  
items with your mobile device so  
you don't forget:**

- Username
- Password
- Email Address & Password
- Challenge Questions & Answers

# SELECT SCHOOL YEAR

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 application may ask you to confirm your selection.

Welcome SARAH SMITH!

Completion of the California Dream Act Application is required to determine state financial aid for eligible California AB 540 students. Your application will be processed by the California Student Aid Commission.

Which academic year application would you like to retrieve?

If you filed a CA Dream Act Application for 2025 - 2026 and want to Renew click on the academic year 2026 - 2027 button.

You may choose to retrieve your CA Dream Act Application by the academic school year to either view or to make corrections.

**2026 - 2027 School Year**  
(July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027)

**2025 - 2026 School Year**  
(July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026)

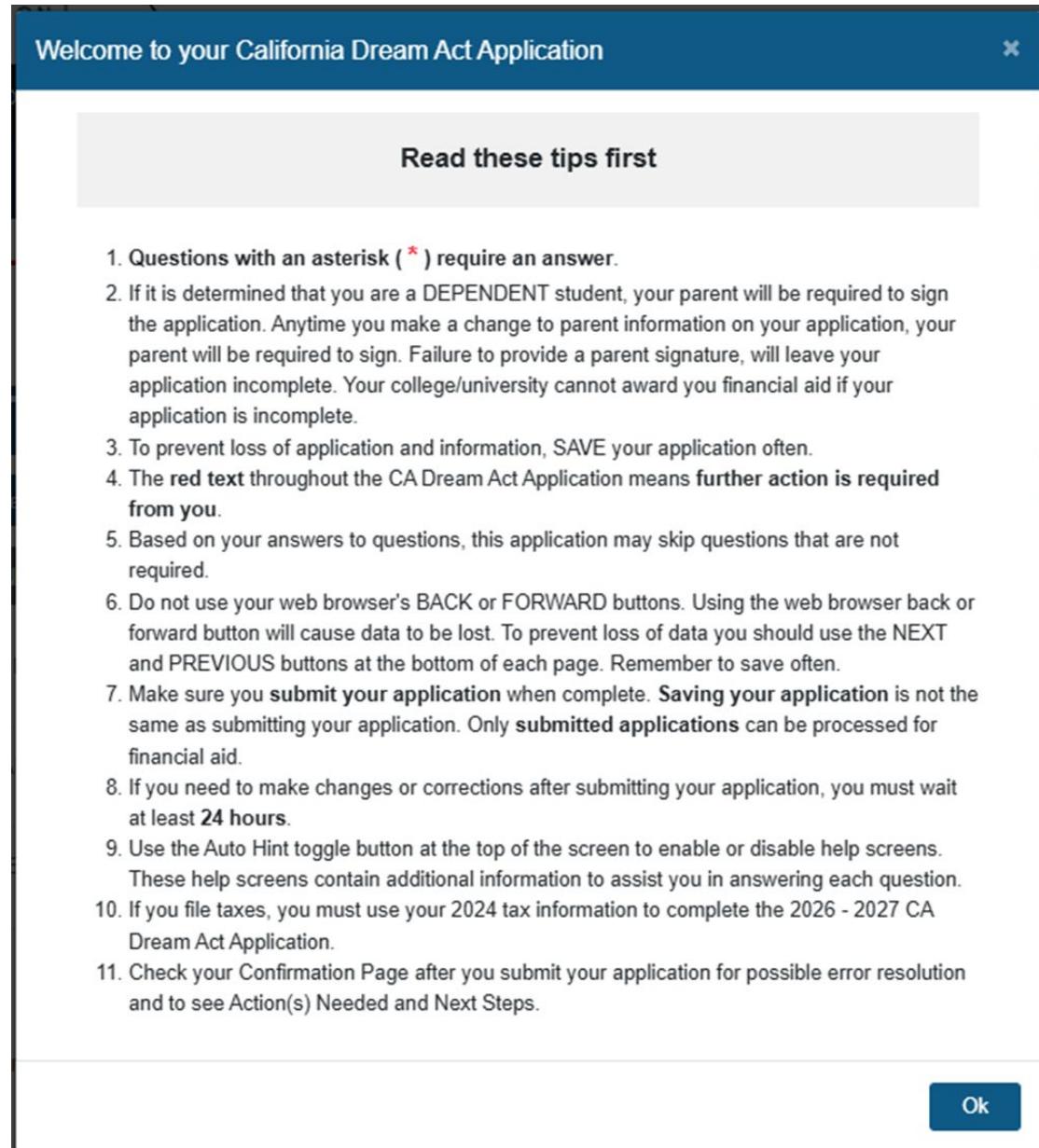
**Confirm Year Selection**

Are you sure you want to continue with 2026 - 2027 School Year?

**Ok** **Cancel**

# REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS

Read the instructions and then click on the OK button.



4.

# Personal Identifiers

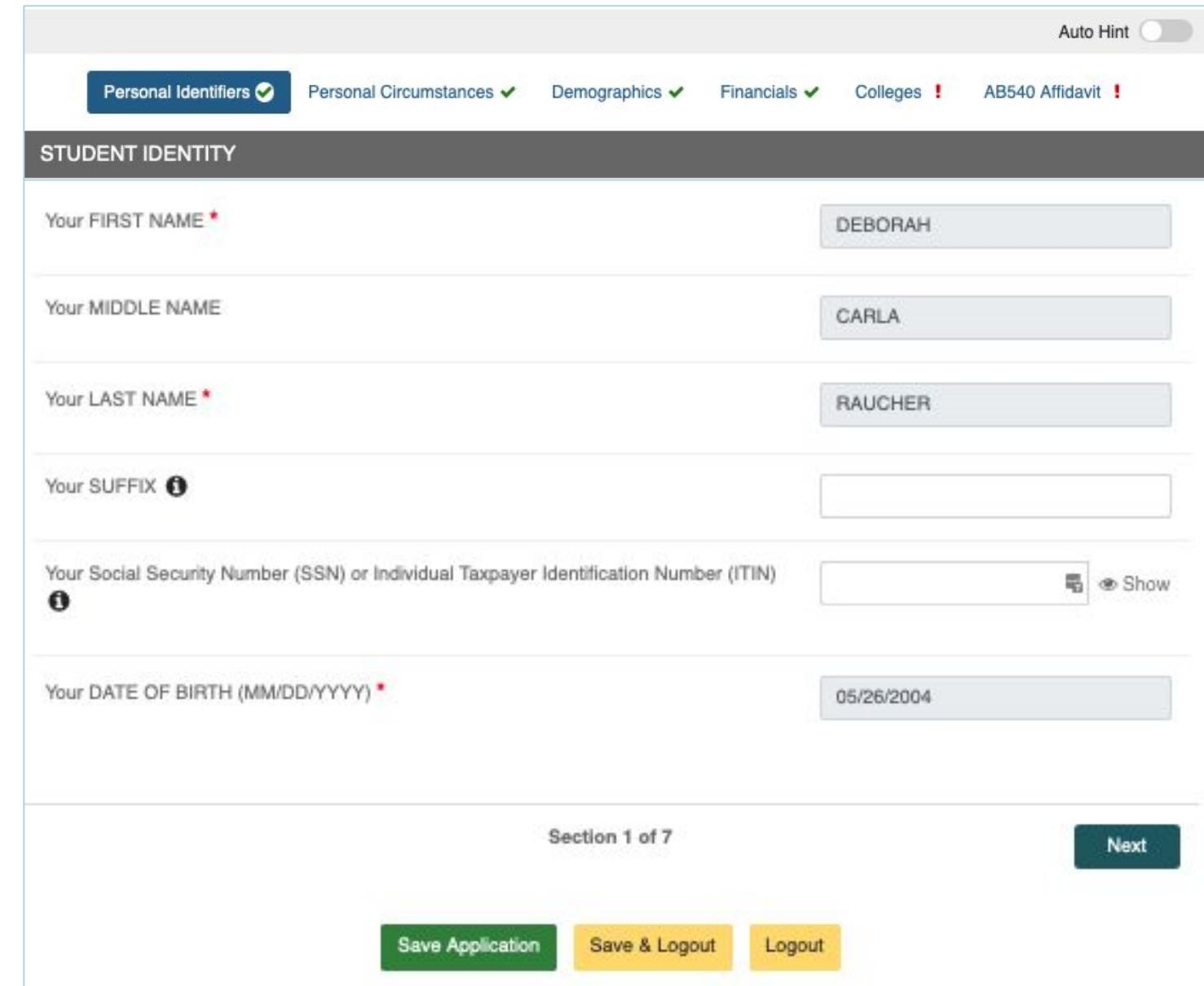
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# VERIFY IDENTITY INFORMATION

Your CADAA will auto-populate your name and date of birth. If you have a valid Social Security Number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) you can enter it.

Entering your valid SSN or ITIN can help CSAC and campuses match your information to your GPA record.

**Leaving this question blank will not impact your eligibility for state aid.**



The screenshot shows the 'Personal Identifiers' tab selected in a CADAA application. The 'STUDENT IDENTITY' section contains fields for First Name (DEBORAH), Middle Name (CARLA), Last Name (RAUCHER), and Suffix. It also includes a field for Social Security Number or ITIN with a 'Show' link, and a date of birth field (05/26/2004). The bottom of the screen shows navigation buttons for 'Save Application', 'Save & Logout', and 'Logout'.

Personal Identifiers ✓ Personal Circumstances ✓ Demographics ✓ Financials ✓ Colleges ! AB540 Affidavit !

Auto Hint

STUDENT IDENTITY

Your FIRST NAME \*

DEBORAH

Your MIDDLE NAME

CARLA

Your LAST NAME \*

RAUCHER

Your SUFFIX ⓘ

Your Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) ⓘ

05/26/2004

Your DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY) \*

Section 1 of 7

Next

Save Application

Save & Logout

Logout

# CITIZENSHIP

You will be asked about your citizenship status. If you indicate that you are a citizen or eligible non-citizen, you will be redirected to the FAFSA. If you indicate you are "Neither Citizen nor Eligible Non-citizen" you will continue with the CADAA.

Indicate whether you have a valid U Visa. If you answer yes, you are eligible for the CADAA.

*A "U Visa" is a type of nonimmigrant visa for victims of certain crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are helpful to law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of such criminal activity. If you have a U Visa, contact your campus which can provide guidance on how you can establish residency for in-state tuition purposes.*

## STUDENT IDENTITY

As of today, what is your CITIZENSHIP STATUS? \* 

-- SELECT -- 

As of today, do you have a valid U Visa? \* 

-- SELECT -- 

# CONTACT INFORMATION

Your contact information will auto-populate on the next screen.

You have the option of indicating if you would like to receive notifications via text message.

STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Your PHONE NUMBER \* i

(858) 922-7174

Would you like to Opt-in to receive text messages from CSAC on important financial aid reminders and updates? You may Opt-out at any time. \* i

Yes  No

Your EMAIL ADDRESS \* i

MAEGANJBAY@GMAIL.COM

Re-enter Email Address

MAEGANJBAY@GMAIL.COM

Your MAILING ADDRESS \* i  
(Enter your street number and street name, or P.O. Box)

235 MONTGOMERY ST

CITY \* i

SAN FRANCISCO

STATE \* i

CALIFORNIA

ZIP CODE \* i

94104

# GENDER

The student is asked about their gender identity.

Selecting “prefer not to answer” does not impact eligibility for aid. The answers are not shared with the colleges and are for research purposes only.

## RACE/ETHNICITY/GENDER/LANGUAGE

The answer to this question is optional and will not affect your eligibility for financial aid, or be shared with schools. It will be strictly used for CSAC research purposes only.

What is your gender, or gender that you identify with? \* 

- Male
- Female
- Nonbinary
- Prefer not to answer

# RACE/ETHNICITY

The student is asked their race/ethnicity and can select all that apply.

Selecting “prefer not to answer” does not impact eligibility for aid. The answers are not shared with the colleges and are for research purposes only.

## RACE/ETHNICITY/GENDER/LANGUAGE

The answer to this question is optional and will not affect your eligibility for financial aid, or be shared with schools. It will be strictly used for CSAC research purposes only.

What is your race/ethnicity? Select all that apply. \* 

- Asian
- Black or African descent
- Filipino
- Hispanic/Latino descent
- Pacific Islander
- White
- Prefer not to answer

# PRIMARY LANGUAGE

The student is asked what the primary language spoken in their home is.

Selecting “prefer not to answer” does not impact eligibility for aid. The answers are not shared with the colleges and are for research purposes only.

If the student selects “other” they can manually input the language. Students can select one option only.

The answer to this question is optional and will not affect your eligibility for financial aid, or be shared with schools. It will be strictly used for CSAC research purposes only.

What is the primary language spoken in your home? \* 

- Arabic
- Armenian
- Cantonese, Mandarin
- English
- Farsi
- Filipino (Tagalog)
- Hindi
- Hmong
- Japanese
- Korean
- Punjabi
- Russian
- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Prefer not to answer
- Other

# STATE OF RESIDENCE

Enter the state where you reside and the date you began living in that state (month and year only – MM/YYYY).

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

To qualify for California residency, you must have been living continuously in California for at least 366 days immediately prior to a determination date (set by your institution, i.e. college) and have the intent and capacity to continue to live in California indefinitely.

STATE OF RESIDENCE	
In what state do you live? *	<input type="text"/> 
-- SELECT --	
Date you began living in *	<input type="text"/> 
MM/YYYY	

5.

# Student Personal Circumstances

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# MARITAL STATUS

- You are asked your marital status. Your status is “single” if you are not legally married, even if you live with or have a boyfriend, girlfriend, partner, or significant other.
- If you are married, your spouse must provide income information. The screens for this process are not included in this guide.

**STUDENT MARITAL STATUS**

Your MARITAL STATUS as of today \* 

-- SELECT -- 

# STUDENT COLLEGE OR CAREER PLANS

Indicate what your grade level will be when the 2026–2027 school year begins.



Students who took “dual enrollment” courses in high school should select “First Year (freshman)”



For returning students, this is based on units completed, not the number of years enrolled. For example, if degree completion requires 60 units, a student entering their second year who had completed less than 30 units, would select “First Year (freshman).”

You should answer NO regarding whether you will have your first bachelor’s degree unless you have already COMPLETED a bachelor’s degree program.

STUDENT COLLEGE OR CAREER PLANS	
At the start of the 2026-27 academic year, what will your grade level be in college? *	 <input type="button" value="-- SELECT --"/>
Will you have earned your first bachelor's degree by the start of the 2026-27 school year?	 <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

# PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The “Student Personal Circumstances” section is used to determine if a student is independent. Students who qualify as independent do not need to provide information about their parents and eligibility for financial aid is based on the student’s income only (and spouse if applicable).

Students should select all that apply.

**STUDENT PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

The following questions will help determine your dependency status, for financial aid purposes. The financial aid administrator at your school may require you to provide proof that you meet any of these conditions.

Select all that apply **or** select None of the Above.\* 

You are currently serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces for purposes other than training. 

You are a veteran of the U.S. armed forces. 

You have children or other people (excluding your spouse, if you have one) who live with you and receive more than half of their support from you now and between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027. 

At any time since you turned 13, you were an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent). 

At any time since you turned 13, you were a ward of the court. 

At any time since you turned 13, you were in foster care. 

You are, or were, a legally emancipated minor, as determined by a court in your state of residence. 

You are, or were, in a legal guardianship with someone other than your parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in your state of residence. 

None of the Above. 

**5a.**

# Current & Former Foster Youth

---

# Current and Former Foster Youth

To qualify as a **ward of the court** or in **foster care**, a student must have been a dependent of the court and lived in an out-of-home placement at any point on or after their 13th birthday. No guidance is available regarding the difference between being in foster care and being a ward of the court, and so students can check either or both. While this includes foster youth who are under the jurisdiction of the probation system, someone who is incarcerated is not considered a ward of the court for CADAA purposes.

To qualify under the legal guardianship criteria, you must have a guardianship in place currently or when you turned 18. Both kinship guardianships and non-related legal guardianships qualify.

At any time since you turned 13, you were an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent). [i](#)

At any time since you turned 13, you were a ward of the court. [i](#)

At any time since you turned 13, you were in foster care. [i](#)

You are, or were, a legally emancipated minor, as determined by a court in your state of residence. [i](#)

You are, or were, in a legal guardianship with someone other than your parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in your state of residence. [i](#)

# How is Foster Youth Status Verified?

Each college determines if it will require verification of foster care status. Financial aid offices can automatically verify foster care status through a data match with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS); however, this doesn't always happen, and a letter or other acceptable documentation (see next page for options) may be required.

Once verified, status does not need to be redetermined in subsequent years.

# Who Can Provide Verification?

## College financial aid administrators (FAA) must accept any of the following:

- Court order or official State documentation that the student received Federal or State support in foster care;
- Verification of eligibility for a Chafee Grant;
- A phone call, written statement, from:
  - A State, county, or Tribal agency administering a program under part B or E of title IV of the *Social Security Act*;
  - A State Medicaid agency;
  - A public or private foster care placing agency or foster care facility or placement;
  - An attorney or Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA);
  - A financial aid administrator who documented the student's circumstance in the same or a prior award year.

## To Get a Foster Youth Verification Letter:

- ✓ **Current foster youth:** Contact your social worker or Independent Living Program (ILP) representative
- ✓ **Former foster youth:** May also contact the Office of the California Foster Care Ombudsman: 877-846-1602 or [fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/verification-request-form](http://fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/verification-request-form)

**5b.**

# Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

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# Unaccompanied Homeless Students

Students are then asked about their homelessness status.

## STUDENT HOMELESSNESS

At any time on or after July 1, 2025, were you unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or  
(2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless? \* 

Yes  No

If a student indicated they were in foster care, this question will be skipped:

APP\_STDT\_STUDENT\_HOMELESSNESS

 Not Required

Based on the answers you have selected, you are not required to answer any questions in this section.

# Definition of Homeless Youth on the CADAA

A Student Must be Unaccompanied  
AND either Homeless OR  
Self-Supporting & at risk of being  
homeless

**Unaccompanied**

Not in the physical  
custody of a parent  
or guardian.



**Homeless**

Lacking fixed, regular, and adequate  
housing. (Learn more on the next  
page)

**OR**

**Self-supporting AND at risk  
of being homeless**

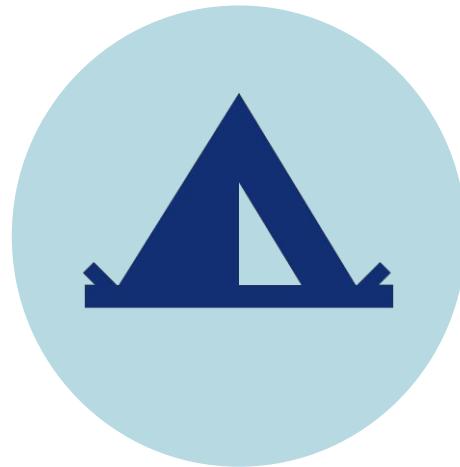
A student is paying for their living  
expenses (including housing) AND  
when a student's housing may cease  
to be fixed, regular, and adequate.

**Note:** A student living in any of these situations and fleeing an abusive parent may be considered homeless even if the parent would provide support and a place to live.

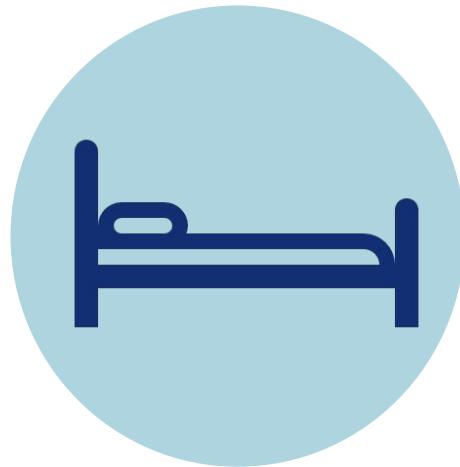
# **“Lacking fixed, regular and adequate housing” includes students who:**



Are staying with other people temporarily due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (i.e., couch-surfing)



Are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations



Are living in emergency shelters



Are living in their car, sleeping outside, or staying someplace not normally meant for human habitation

# Homeless Determinations

If you select “yes,” you will then be asked who will provide a homeless youth determination.

FAAs must accept documentation, including a documented phone call, from these entities unless there is “documented conflicting information.”

If you don’t have verification from one of the listed entities, select “none of these apply.”

**STUDENT HOMELESSNESS**

At any time on or after July 1, 2025, were you unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless? \* 

Yes  No

Did any of the following entities determine you were homeless or at risk of being homeless? \* 

Select all that apply or select None of the Above.

Director or designee of an emergency or transitional shelter, street outreach program, homeless youth drop-in center, or other program serving those experiencing homelessness

High school or school district homeless liaison or designee

Director or designee of a project supported by a federal TRIO or GEAR UP program grant

Financial aid administrator (FAA)

None of the above 

Select all that apply or select None of the Above.

[Previous](#) [Section 4 of 5](#) [Next](#)

# Homeless Determinations

None of the above 

## Help & Hints

If you select "None of the above" please contact the financial aid administrator at your college. This person can determine if you are "homeless" and, therefore, not required to provide parent information

- If "None of these apply," you can complete the CADAA but must contact the financial aid office for a determination.
- FAAs MUST make a determination based on a written statement, or documented interview, with a student.
- Financial aid administrator's determination of homelessness must be made without regard to the reasons why the student is unaccompanied and/or homeless.

**5c.**

# Unusual Circumstances

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## Student Unusual Circumstances

If a student has already indicated that they have independent student status because they are a current/former foster youth and/or experiencing homelessness, they will NOT be asked the question about unusual circumstances.

### STUDENT UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES



Not Required

Based on the answers you have selected, you are not required to answer any questions in this section.

## Student Unusual Circumstances

Students may complete the CADAA as a “provisionally” independent student if they believe they may qualify for independent status due to unusual situations such as parental abandonment, abuse, neglect, legally granted asylum, or student or parental incarceration or institutionalization (see next page).

Provisional independent provisions may be helpful for youth who are neither homeless nor former foster youth, but who nonetheless have extenuating circumstances that preclude being able to obtain parental information.

If a student has “unusual circumstances”, they will be “Provisionally Independent.” The student can sign and submit their CADAA without providing parental income information but will need to contact their school to see what supporting documentation they need to submit. A financial aid administrator at the school will review and make a determination regarding a dependency override. Colleges have discretion to use professional judgement when evaluating whether to consider unusual circumstances.

Do unusual circumstances prevent you from contacting your parent(s) or would contacting  
your parent(s) pose a risk to you?



Yes  No

**Note:** If your circumstances resulted in not having a safe and stable place to live, you may be considered a homeless youth, and you should review the answer to the previous question about being unaccompanied and homeless.

# Student Unusual Circumstances

"Unusual circumstances" are situations that prevent you from providing **parental information** (when required) on the California Dream Act Application (CADAA). The answer to this question can assist the college(s) you select to help you finalize your CADAA application and will often require submission of supporting documentation of your circumstances directly to your college's financial aid office.

You may be experiencing unusual circumstances if:

- You left home due to an abusive or threatening environment.
- You are abandoned by or estranged from your parents.
- You are separated from your parents, or your parents are displaced in a foreign country.
- You are a victim of human trafficking.
- Your parents are incarcerated, and contact with your parents would pose a risk to you; or
- You are otherwise unable to contact or locate your parents.

6.

# Student Demographics

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## Parent Education Status

You will be asked if one or both of your parents attended or completed college. This information is used to identify first-generation college students and is for statistical purposes only.

Selecting “don’t know” does not impact eligibility for aid.

Did either of your parents attend or complete college? 

-- SELECT --

[Previous](#) [Section 1 of 3](#) [Next](#)

# High School Information

You are asked about what your high school completion status will be when you start the 2026–27 school year. Options are a high school diploma, state recognized high school equivalent (e.g., GED, homeschooled, or none of the above).

You can also provide your Statewide Student Identification Number (SSID). This is not required; however, it will help CSAC to match your application to your GPA record to qualify for a CalGrant. The 10-digit number is shown on high school transcripts, or you can ask your school counselor for help.

**HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION**

What will your high school completion status be at the beginning of the 2026-27 school year? \* 

-- SELECT --

Your Statewide Student Identification Number (SSID) 

Which of the following did, or will, you receive? \* 

-- SELECT --

## High School Information

If you select “state recognized high school equivalent,” you will be asked the type of credential (GED, HiSET, TASC or other) and the issuing state.

Which of the following did, or will, you receive? *		<input type="button" value="-- SELECT --"/>
Issuing state *		<input type="button" value="-- SELECT --"/>

# High School Selection

If you select that you will have a high school diploma, you will be shown fields that allow you to search for your high school by name, state and city.

*Note: The purpose of this question is so that high schools can track how many students file the FAFSA and CADAA. High schools do not receive your financial or other information.*

From what high school did, or will, you graduate?

Enter at least 3 letters of your school name and Select High School State, City and then click the Search button. To make edits to the high school listed, you must re-enter using the search function below.

What is the name of your high school?

High School State

-- SELECT --

State is required

High School City

CITY NAME

Search

High School Name  School not in list

Select/Enter High School Name

# High School Selection

When you click the “Search” button, all schools that meet the criteria will appear and you select the correct option from the list.

What is the name of your high school?  
BER

High School State  
CALIFORNIA

High School City  City not in list  
BERKELEY

Search

High School Name  School not in list  
BERKELEY HIGH SCHOOL

School Name	City
BERKELEY ADULT SCHOOL	BERKELEY
BERKELEY HIGH SCHOOL	BERKELEY
BERKELEY ACAD FOR YOUTH DEVEL	BERKELEY
BERKELEY TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY	BERKELEY

# Student Family Size

Provide the number of people in your family. This includes yourself, spouse and dependent children, if they live with you and you currently provide more than half of their support and will continue to do so between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027. This should also include other family members who live with you for whom you will provide more than half of their support between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027.

Then, provide the number of people included in your family number who will be in college (including yourself). Most students will answer "1" unless they have a spouse also in college. You should not include anyone other than yourself and your spouse or child (do not include siblings or other members of your household who are attending college).

STUDENT FAMILY SIZE	
How many people are in your family? (click on the information icon for instructions)*	<input type="text"/>
How many people in your family, including yourself, will be in college between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027? (click on the information icon for instructions)*	<input type="text"/>

7.

# Student Financials

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# Federal Benefits Received

- You will be asked if you received certain public benefits at any time in 2024 or 2025.
- Click the  icon to learn more about each benefit.
- Receiving these benefits does not reduce the amount of aid you qualify for.

**FEDERAL BENEFITS RECEIVED**

At any time during 2024 or 2025, **did you or anyone in your family** receive benefits from any of the following programs?  
Select all that apply **or** select None of the Above.  
(click on the information icon for instructions) 

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal Housing Assistance 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Free or reduced-price school lunch 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medicaid (Medi-Cal) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refundable Credit for Coverage Under a Qualified 36B Health Plan 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/CalFresh) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF/CalWORKs) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above 	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Tax Filing Status

Indicate if you filed a tax return for 2024 (or plan to file one) and if you earned income in a foreign country in 2024, or you were employed by an international organization that did not require you to file a tax return. If you indicate that you filed a 2024 tax return, you will be asked your filing status (single, married, etc.).

## STUDENT TAX FILING STATUS

Did you, or will you, file a 2024 IRS Form 1040 or 1040-NR?

(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

Yes  No

Did you (1) earn income in a foreign country in 2024, (2) work for an international organization in 2024 that did not require you to report income on any tax return, or (3) file a 2024 tax return with Puerto Rico or another U.S. territory?

(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

Yes  No

What is (or will be) your filing status on your 2024 tax return?

(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

-- SELECT --



# Student 2024 Tax Return Information: Tax Filers

If you indicated that you filed a tax return, you will be asked to provide information from your tax return shown here and on the following page. The help buttons provide the line on your 2024 federal income tax return where the information can be found.

STUDENT 2024 TAX RETURN INFORMATION	
What was your income earned from work in 2024? (click on the information icon for instructions)*	\$ <input type="text"/> .00
Taxable earnings from need-based employment programs, such as need-based employment portions of fellowships and assistantships. (click on the information icon for instructions)*	\$ <input type="text"/> .00
Your tax-exempt interest income (click on the information icon for instructions)*	\$ <input type="text"/> .00
Your untaxed portions of IRA distributions (click on the information icon for instructions)*	\$ <input type="text"/> .00
Your IRA Rollover into another IRA or qualified plan (click on the information icon for instructions)*	\$ <input type="text"/> .00
Your untaxed portions of pensions (click on the information icon for instructions)*	\$ <input type="text"/> .00
Your pension rollover into an IRA or other qualified plan (click on the information icon for instructions)*	\$ <input type="text"/> .00
Your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) (click on the information icon for instructions)*	\$ <input type="text"/> .00
Your Income Tax Paid (click on the information icon for instructions)*	\$ <input type="text"/> .00

# Student 2024 Tax Return Information: Tax Filers (continued)

## STUDENT 2024 TAX RETURN INFORMATION

For tax year 2024, did you receive the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)?  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

Your IRA deductions and payments to self-employed SEP, SIMPLE, and qualified plans  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

\$  .00

Your Education Credits (American Opportunity and Lifetime Learning credits)  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

\$  .00

Did you file a Schedule A, B, D, E, F, or H with your 2024 IRS Form 1040?  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

Your Net Profit or Loss from IRS Form 1040 Schedule C  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

\$  .00

Your amount of college grants, scholarships, or AmeriCorps benefits reported as income to the IRS  
(Optional)  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

\$  .00

Your amount of Foreign Earned Income Exclusion  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

\$  .00

If you received college grants, scholarships, or AmeriCorps benefits in 2024 and included them on your 2024 tax return, it is important that they be reported on the CADAA. The amount reported will be **DEDUCTED** from your total income and could result in eligibility for more aid.

# Student 2024 Tax Return Information: Non-Tax Filers

If you did not file a tax return, you will be asked the questions below. Earned income is typically defined as a combination of any income from employment and contract work. (e.g., Uber, DoorDash, etc.)

If you participated in a need-based employment program enter the amount of your earnings that was from this program. A need-based employment program is employment awarded by a school or other institution to a student based on financial need to meet educational expenses. Common examples include federal work study, fellowships, assistantships, or a learning-aligned employment program.

STUDENT 2024 TAX RETURN INFORMATION	
What was your income earned from work in 2024? (click on the information icon for instructions)*	<input type="text"/> \$ .00
Taxable earnings from need-based employment programs, such as need-based employment portions of fellowships and assistantships. (click on the information icon for instructions)*	<input type="text"/> \$ .00

# Student 2024 Tax Return Information: Non-Tax Filers

If you indicated that you did not file a tax return, you will then see the notice below. This section skips additional tax-related questions that are only applicable if you filed a tax return.

## STUDENT 2024 TAX RETURN INFORMATION



Not Required

Based on the answers you have selected, you are not required to answer any questions in this section.

# Student 2024 Tax Return Information

You will see the next set of questions if you filed taxes or not.

When asked about current student assets, student financial aid, such as grants or scholarships received for the current term, does NOT need to be reported.

Only those assets indicated here must be reported.

## STUDENT 2024 TAX RETURN INFORMATION

Enter the total amount of child support that you received in the last calendar year.  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

\$  .00

Your current total of Cash, Savings, and Checking Accounts [Don't include student financial aid received, retirement accounts, or investments]  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

\$  .00

Current Net Worth of Investments, Including Real Estate [Don't include the home you live in. Net worth is the value of the investments minus any debts owed against them]  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

\$  .00

Current Net Worth of Businesses and Investment Farms [Enter the net worth of your businesses and for-profit agricultural operations. Net worth is the value of the businesses or farms minus any debts owed against them]  
(click on the information icon for instructions)\* 

\$  .00



**If your income or circumstances have changed, submit the CADAA form and then contact your financial aid office to request an adjustment to the income that is used to calculate your eligibility.**

Examples of special circumstances may include the following:

- significant changes to your financial situation, such as loss of employment or pay cuts
- tuition expenses at an elementary or secondary school
- high amounts of medical or dental expenses not covered by insurance
- a family member who recently became unemployed or furloughed
- Impacted by a federally declared natural disaster such as wildfires, hurricanes, floods or tornados
- volatile income that varies from one year to the next, especially if self-employed
- other changes in income or assets that may affect your eligibility for federal student aid

Your school may ask you to document your special circumstances so that they can consider making an adjustment to your CADAA information.

8.

# College Selection

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# California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG) Program

You will be asked if you are interested in being considered for the California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG) Program. This program provides grants upon completion of community or volunteer service. Selecting “yes” does not obligate you to participate. More information is available at [www.csac.ca.gov/dsig](http://www.csac.ca.gov/dsig).

Are you interested in being considered for the California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant (DSIG) Program? 

Yes

No

Don't Know

# Student School Choices

You will then indicate which college(s) you want your application sent to. You can search for a school by entering the college name or school code. The search function will look for the terms in any part of the college name.

College Selection. You can select up to 20 colleges  
(click on the information icon for instructions)  \*

Search By College Name  
(click on the information icon for instructions) 

Search

Search By School Code  
(click on the information icon for instructions) 

Add

# Student School Choices

After selecting "Search," select the correct school from the search results. You can select to send your CADAA information to a maximum of 20 schools. A minimum of one school is required to proceed.

Schools may have similar names so take care to select the correct school.

Search By College Name  
(click on the information icon for instructions) 

SAN FRANCISCO	<input type="button" value="Search"/>
---------------	---------------------------------------

Search By School Code  
(click on the information icon for instructions) 

<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add"/>
----------------------	------------------------------------

Search results (Please select at least one option)

College Name	City	USDE Code
CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO	SAN FRANCISCO	00450200
SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE	SAN FRANCISCO	00394800
SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY MUSIC	SAN FRANCISCO	00127800
SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIV	SAN FRANCISCO	00115400
UNIV OF CA - SAN FRANCISCO	SAN FRANCISCO	00131900
UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO	SAN FRANCISCO	00132500
UNITEK COLLEGE S. SAN FRANCISCO	SO. SAN FRANCISCO	04195402
FASHION INST - SAN FRANCISCO	SAN FRANCISCO	01111202

## Student School Choices

The colleges you select will display below the search tool. If you make a mistake, you can delete a college from the list using the  icon. Each UC and CSU college must be listed separately.

Selected Colleges		
College Name	USDE Code	
SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIV	00115400	
CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO	00450200	
UC BERKELEY	00131200	

9.

# AB 540 Affidavit

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# AB 540 Affidavit

You will be asked a series of questions to determine if you meet the criteria for being exempt from paying non-resident tuition.

The following questions part of this "AB 540 Affidavit" subsection must be completed for campuses to determine if you are AB 540 eligible and thus, be exempt from paying non-resident tuition. To learn more about the AB 540 criteria, visit <https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/california-nonresident-tuition-exemption>. It is recommended, although not required, that you have your transcripts and school attendance records available to accurately complete the following set of questions about your eligibility for the Non-Resident Tuition Exemption (AB 540). Please note that your college is responsible for verifying your AB 540 eligibility, which may require submission of transcripts or other documentation to determine your eligibility. Check with the college's Admissions Office after you submit your CA Dream Act Application and before the term starts.

I have graduated or will graduate (before the first term of enrollment at the college/university) with a California high school diploma or the equivalent (i.e., California-issued GED, HiSET, TASC, or CHSPE). 

- Yes
- No

I completed or will complete (before the first term of enrollment at the college/university) an associate degree from a California Community College. 

- Yes
- No

I completed or will complete (before the first term of enrollment at the college/university) the minimum requirements at a California Community College for transfer to a California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC). 

- Yes
- No

# AB 540 Affidavit (continued)

I have 3 years of attendance at a California high school. 

Yes

No

I have 3 or more years of high school coursework and 3 years of attendance in California elementary schools, California secondary schools, or a combination of California elementary schools and secondary schools. 

Yes

No

I attended or attained credits from a California high school, California adult school, and/or California Community College equivalent to 3 years or more. 

Yes

No

# AB 540 Affidavit (continued)

You then must provide information about all the schools you attended that are necessary to satisfy the requirements from the questions asked on the previous page, including number of credits or hours and unit type. **It is essential that you have your academic transcripts/school records available to help you answer the questions.**

Information must be entered manually (there is no search function) and so make sure to enter school names accurately.

After providing the requested information, click "Add" to save the school information. You can continue to add as many schools as necessary.

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Add Schools located in California only  
(click on the information icon for instructions) 

Enter School name \* 

Enter City \*

Select State \*

Enter Start Date \* 

Enter End Date \* 

Select the Unit Type \* 

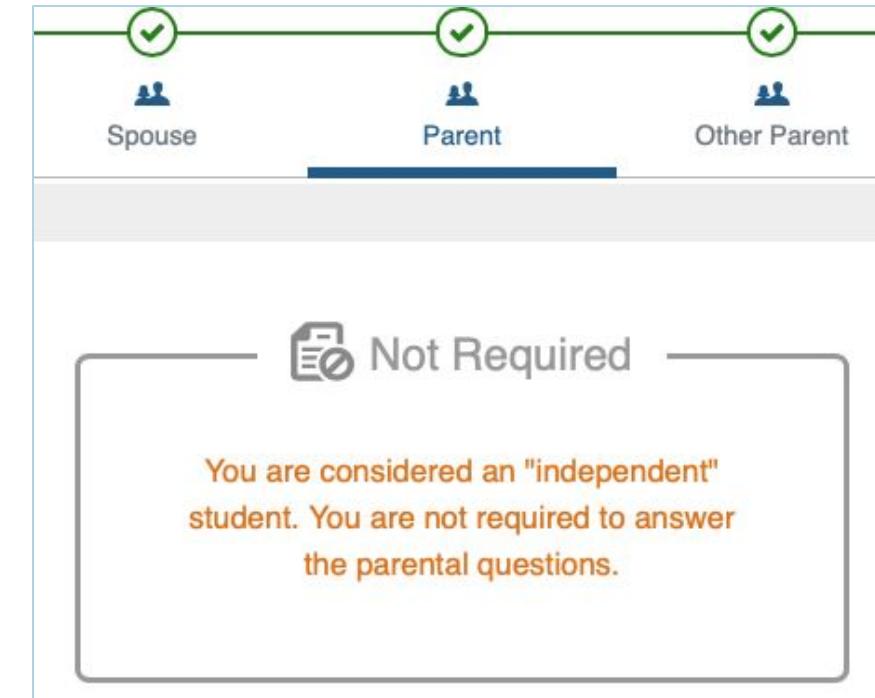
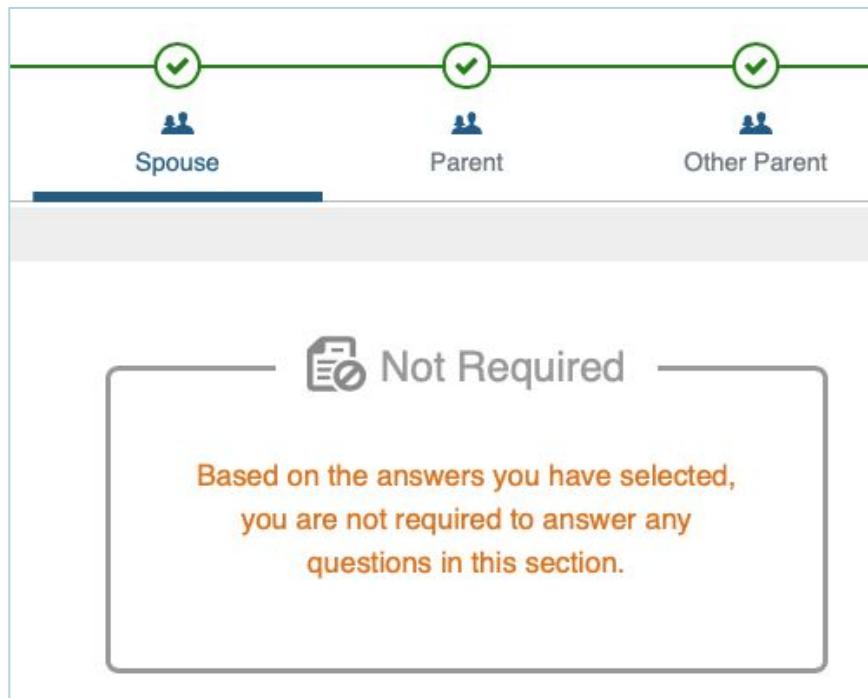
**Add**

# 10. Review & Signature

---

# Spouse & Parent Information

If you are an independent, unmarried student, you will see a notification that you can skip sections for spouse and parent information.



## Sign & Submit

The final page consists of your signature and submission. If there is any invalid or missing data, you will need to correct the errors before you can submit the application. Any incomplete sections will be marked with a red exclamation point. !

A horizontal progress bar with five segments, each representing a section of the application. The segments are: Student (with a graduation cap icon), Spouse (with a couple icon), Parent (with a couple icon), Other Parent (with a couple icon), and Sign & Submit (with a pen icon). The 'Student' and 'Sign & Submit' segments have red circles with a white exclamation mark inside them, indicating errors. The other three segments have green circles with a white checkmark inside them, indicating they are complete. Below the progress bar, there is a 'Personal Identifiers' button with a green checkmark, and a row of five status indicators: 'Personal Circumstances' (green checkmark), 'Demographics' (green checkmark), 'Financials' (green checkmark), 'Colleges' (red exclamation mark), and 'AB540 Affidavit' (red exclamation mark). An 'Auto Hint' toggle switch is also present.

! Student Spouse Parent Other Parent ! Sign & Submit

Personal Identifiers ✓ Personal Circumstances ✓ Demographics ✓ Financials ✓ Colleges ! AB540 Affidavit !

Auto Hint

You must agree to the statements shown in red on the final screen. Once these boxes are checked, your name will appear in the signature box and you can click "Submit" to submit your application.

## READ BEFORE PROCEEDING

By signing this application electronically or by signing a signature page and mailing it to us, YOU, as the STUDENT, certify that:

- You will use state student financial aid only to pay the cost of attending an institution of higher education and for no other purpose;
- You are not in default on any student loan or have made satisfactory arrangements to repay it;
- You do not owe money back on any student grant or have made satisfactory arrangements to repay it;
- You will notify your college if you default on any student loan; and
- You will not receive a Cal Grant from more than one college for the same period of time.

You agree, if asked, to provide information that will verify the accuracy of your completed form. This information may include U.S. or state income tax forms that you filed or are required to file. Also, you certify that you understand that the State of California has the authority to verify information reported on this application with the Internal Revenue Service. If you purposely give false or misleading information, you may be subject to significant financial penalties, sent to prison, or both.

I hereby declare that, if I am without a current or valid immigration status, my signature below serves as my affidavit that I have filed an application to legalize my immigration status OR will file an application as soon as I am eligible to do so.

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury that the information I have provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this information will be used to determine my eligibility for the California Nonresident Tuition Exemption. I further understand that if any of the information is found to be false, I will be liable for payment of all nonresident tuition charges from which I was exempted and may be subject to disciplinary action by the College or University.

By clicking Submit below, I am affirming that the information I listed on this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that it is illegal to report false or misleading information. I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Student Signature

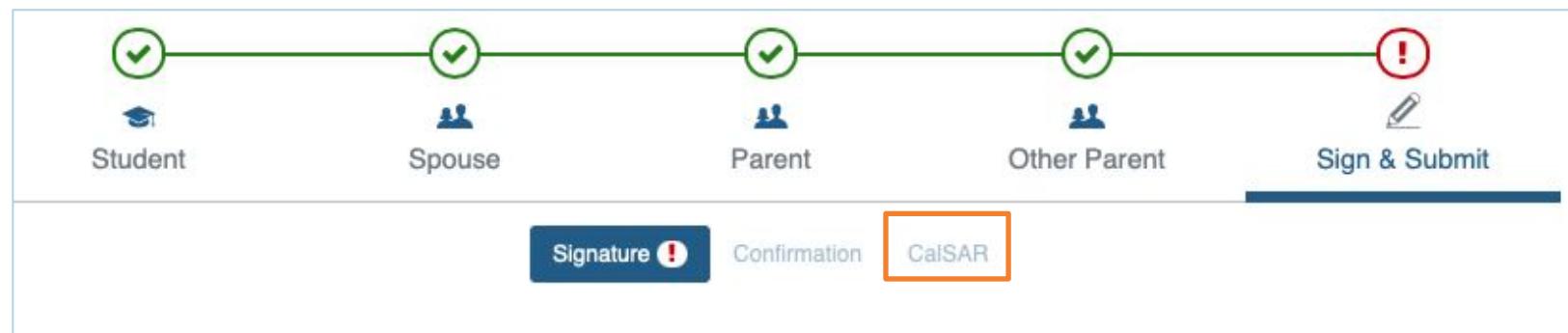
# Sign & Submit

Name Dream ID#	GARCIA CORTEZ, ARACELI 000123456	Transaction Date Transaction Number	03/01/2024 1
Estimated Expected Family Contribution			
<b>Section I-Action Needed</b>			
Resolve the following issue(s); if these issue(s) remain unresolved, you may be unable to receive financial aid consideration.		Comment Codes	
There are issues with your CA Dream Act Application that need to be resolved before your eligibility can be determined. Be sure to read all the comment codes listed on this page, review your application and make any necessary corrections to your CA Dream Act Application.		001	047
Your parent DID NOT sign your CA Dream Act Application after you submitted it. At least one parent must sign to complete the CA Dream Act Application. Your parent can sign right now by clicking the green Parent Signature button at the top of this page. If your parent will sign at a later time, he/she can do so electronically at <a href="http://www.caldreamact.org">www.caldreamact.org</a> by clicking the Provide Signature icon. For your parent to access your application and provide his/her signature, your parent will also need to provide your CA Dream Act ID# or DACA SSN, his/her name and date of birth reported on the application. Each time you submit corrections, your parent will have to re-sign the application.		108	
The amount you reported for your parents' income tax is equal to or greater than the amount you reported for their adjusted gross income. Review questions 89 and 90 and make the necessary corrections.		111	
<b>Section II-No Resolution Needed</b>			
You reported that you will either have a bachelor's degree by July 1, 2023 or will be working on a degree beyond a bachelor's degree. Graduate students are eligible for some types of financial aid, but not for the state Cal Grant. If you are a graduate student, check with your college Financial Aid Office. If you are still pursuing your first undergraduate degree, please go back and check your answer on questions 29 and 30.		Comment Codes	
		070	
<b>Section</b>			
III-Next Steps		Comment Codes	
Your college is responsible for verifying your AB 540 eligibility. Check with the college's Admissions Office before the term starts.		405	
<a href="#">Logout</a>			

- Once you have submitted your application, you will see a Confirmation Page that shows that your CADAA has been submitted. You will also receive an email confirmation that your CADAA was 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 Dream Act eligibility can be determined. Pay close attention to any items that require follow-up.**

## Sign & Submit

- Within 24 hours from when you submit your application, a California Student Aid Report (Cal SAR) will be available. 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 Student Aid Index (SAI). The SAI is used to determine eligibility for student aid. It is not how much aid you are eligible to receive.
- Save or print a copy of the Cal SAR.



11.

## After the CADAA

---

# Apply for a Chafee Grant, if Eligible

- Eligibility: Current or former foster youth who were dependents or wards of the court at least one day between 16–18
- Up to \$4,500 for up to 5 years until age 26.
- Can be used at public or private colleges, universities or career and technical schools in California or out of state.
- Must be enrolled at least half-time.





# CALIFORNIA CHAFEE EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHER PROGRAM

## for Foster Youth

# Chafee Grant Application Tips

- A separate application is required for first-time applicants in addition to the FAFSA/CADAA ([chafee.csac.ca.gov](http://chafee.csac.ca.gov)).
- **You only need to fill out the Chafee application once.**
- Apply as soon as possible.
- Planned School of Attendance refers to one college the student plans to attend. If the school isn't listed, contact CSAC. If the school changes, the student must inform CSAC to receive the award.
- Depending on the availability of funding, students may be wait-listed.

# WebGrants 4 Students

[Login](#)

[Create an Account](#)

[Helpful Videos](#)

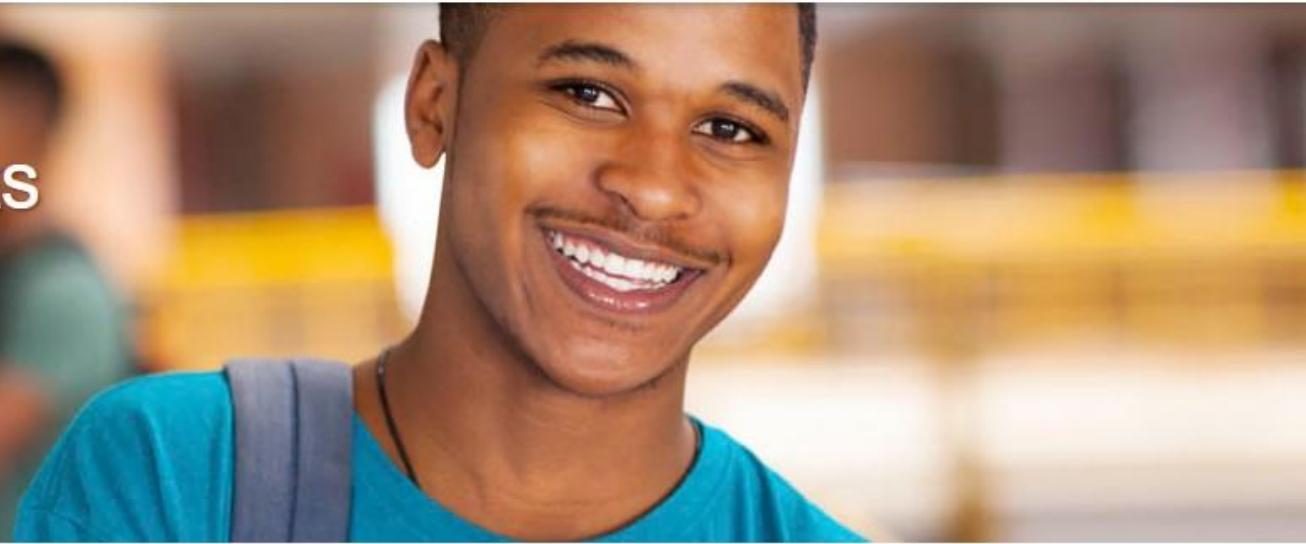
[\\*Account Recovery](#)

[\\*Create an Account](#)

**Create a Webgrants 4 Students Account at:**

[mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov](http://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov)

- Wait until your CADAA is processed. It can take 1-2 weeks for the CADAA to process and link to WebGrants.
- If there are issues, contact the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC):
  - (888) 224-7268 or 1-800-735-2929 (TTY)
  - [studentsupport@csac.ca.gov](mailto:studentsupport@csac.ca.gov)





# WebGrants To Do's for Students



Check award status for Cal Grant, Middle Class Scholarship and Chafee Grant.



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



Confirm that school of attendance is accurate.



Verify that your GPA has been received. If not, contact high school/college counselor or CSAC.



Enter high school graduation date (available on the 1st day of the month of graduation month).



If you applied for a Chafee Grant, check that “Department of Social Services Record” is verified.

# WebGrants 4 Students: Check Your Chafee Grant Application Status

WebGrants allows you to check the status of your Chafee Grant application. If your status shows incomplete, select “show details” to see what is missing (see next page).



# WebGrants 4 Students: Check Your Chafee Grant Application Status

In the example shown here two of the three items are not completed

- FAFSA or CADAA **NOT** submitted
- Chafee application submitted
- Verification of foster youth status **NOT** completed\*

Chafee Grant Application Status (2026-2027)		
<b>FAFSA</b>		
Status	Incomplete !	Received
	<a href="#">Complete your FAFSA</a>	
<b>Chafee Application</b>		
Status	Complete ✓	Received
		11/03/2020
<b>Department of Social Services Record</b>		
Status	Incomplete !	County
	<a href="#">Complete your Foster Care Eligibility Certification Form</a>	LOS ANGELES

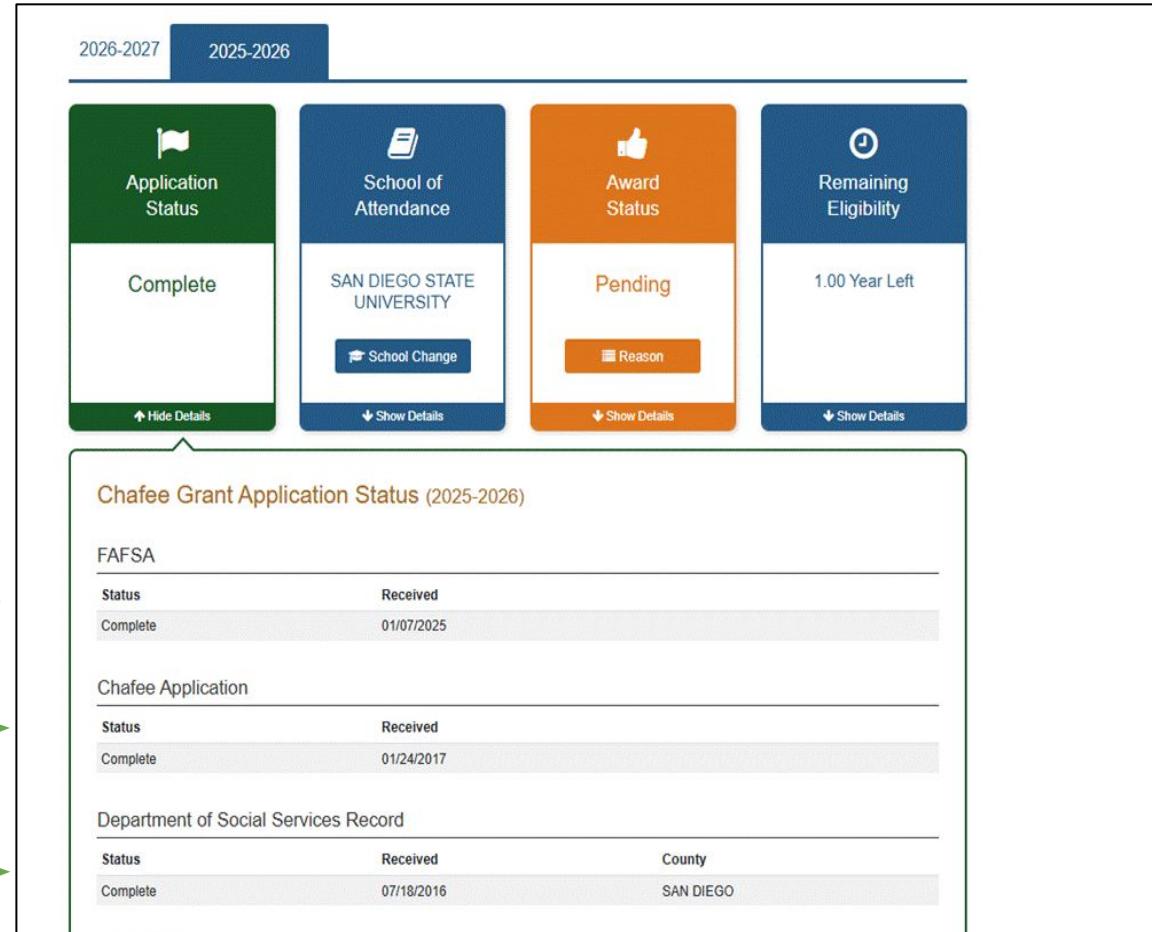
*\*There is an automated match with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to verify foster youth status, however this match only happens monthly and may not appear immediately. If the match is not successful, you must manually submit the Certification Form.*

# WebGrants 4 Students: Check Your Chafee Application Status

## COMPLETED Chafee Application:

The application will show as **green** when all three steps are complete:

- FAFSA or CADAA submitted
- Chafee application submitted
- Verification of foster youth status completed



The screenshot shows the Chafee Grant Application Status interface for the 2025-2026 academic year. The interface is divided into several sections:

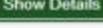
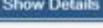
- Header:** Shows tabs for 2026-2027 and 2025-2026, with 2025-2026 selected.
- Summary Cards:** Four cards provide an overview:
  - Application Status:** Green card showing "Complete".
  - School of Attendance:** Blue card showing "SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY" with a "School Change" button.
  - Award Status:** Orange card showing "Pending" with a "Reason" button.
  - Remaining Eligibility:** Blue card showing "1.00 Year Left".
- Chafee Grant Application Status (2025-2026):** A section titled "Chafee Grant Application Status (2025-2026)" containing:
  - FAFSA:** Status: Received, Date: 01/07/2025.
  - Chafee Application:** Status: Received, Date: 01/24/2017.
  - Department of Social Services Record:** Status: Received, Date: 07/18/2016, County: SAN DIEGO.

# WebGrants 4 Students: Check Your Award Status

An application can be complete, but the award status can be “pending.” “Pending” means that an action step needs to be taken by the college or by the student before a payment can be reported. In this example, the college still needs to verify student eligibility.

CHAFEE FOR FOSTER YOUTH ONLY 

2025-2026 2026-2027

 Application Status	 School of Attendance	 Award Status	 Remaining Eligibility
Complete	AMERICAN RIVER COLLEGE 	Pending 	5.00 Years Left 
			



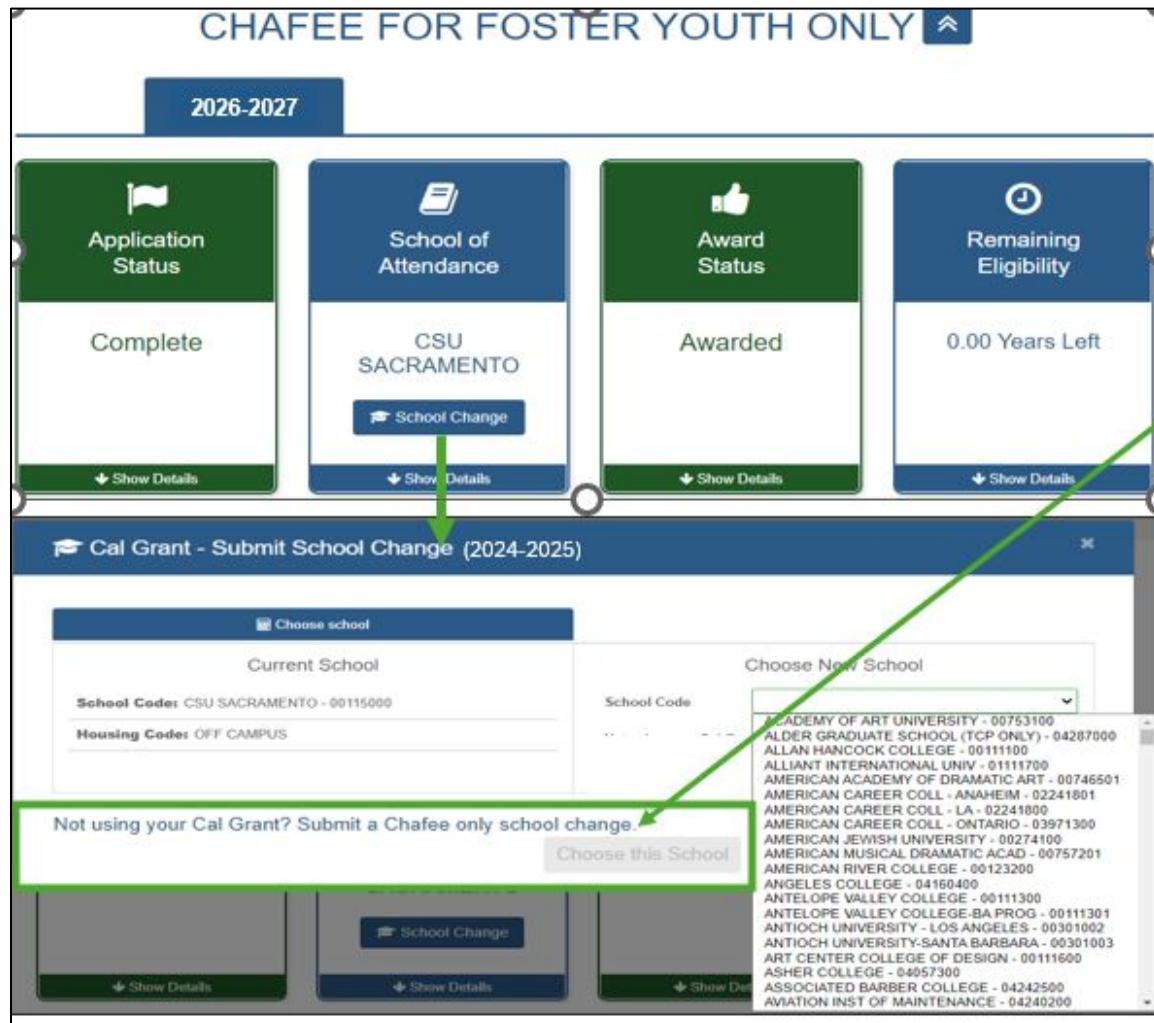
CHAFEE FOR FOSTER YOUTH ONLY 

 STATUS REASON

Pending	Pending School Verification
	

# WebGrants 4 Students: Update School of Attendance



- In order to receive state financial aid, including the Chafee Grant, you must update your planned “School of Attendance”
- For the Chafee Grant only, if the school you plan to attend does not populate (most likely in scenarios with out-of-state schools), please email: [chafee@csac.ca.gov](mailto:chafee@csac.ca.gov). CSAC will need:
  - Proof of enrollment
  - Name and address of school
  - Financial Aid contact info: Name, email, phone

# Claim Your CalKIDS Award



California Kids Investment and  
Development Savings Program

- CalKIDS is a scholarship that may be available from the State of California.
- If you attended a California public K-12 school, you may have up to \$1,500 in free money to use at an eligible college, university, technical or vocational institution.
- Once funds are requested, they are sent to your institution and treated like a scholarship. They can pay for qualified higher education expenses like tuition and fees, books and supplies and computer equipment. You can use these funds up to the age of 26.
- In addition, there are 15 locally operated programs similar to CalKIDS. To see if you qualify go to [norcalpromisecoalition.org/child-savings-accounts](http://norcalpromisecoalition.org/child-savings-accounts).

# Claim Your CalKIDS Scholarship



To claim your account at **calkids.org**, you'll need the following info:

1. California county where you attended school.
2. Your date of birth.
3. Statewide Student Identifier (SSID). You can find your SSID on your high school transcript or ask your counselor for help.

# Webgrants 4 Students: CalKIDS Update!

All students who have a WG4S account and a matched CalKIDS account in their name will see a new section for CalKIDS on the WG4S portal. An account status saying “Claimed” means the CalKIDS Scholarship has been claimed.

Data is updated monthly and the account may say “unclaimed” if it has yet to update to “claimed” status.



The screenshot shows a section titled "CALIFORNIA KIDS INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SAVINGS (CALKIDS)". It contains a message: "California has created a CalKIDS Account to help you with your college or career training expenses. Claiming it only takes a few minutes with your SSID." Below this are three buttons: "Account Status" (green, showing "Claimed"), "Your CalKIDS Account" (blue, with "Login" button), and "Contact CalKIDS" (blue, with "Click Here" button). At the bottom, it says "Information as of 10/07/2025. Please log into your CalKIDS Account to see your latest information. Your SSID is [REDACTED]".



# Webgrants 4 Students: CalKIDS Update!

An account status saying “Unclaimed” means the CalKIDS Scholarship has not yet been claimed.

A link will appear and this will direct you to claiming your CalKIDS Scholarship, which only takes a few minutes.



# Congrats! You Did It!

## 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 requests, such as a verification of foster youth or homeless youth status or additional income verification.
- Update all your accounts if your address, email or phone number changes (e.g. WebGrants, college portal, CADAA, etc.)
- Apply for other scholarships and campus support programs such as NextUp, Guardian Scholars, EOP, EOPS, or Disability Student Services.
- Maintain your grades and don't drop too many classes. Once you receive financial aid, there are academic requirements you need to meet to keep receiving it. Check online for your college's "Satisfactory Academic Progress" policies.
- Re-apply for aid by submitting the CADAA every year!

# 12. Resources

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# 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](mailto:StudentSupport@csac.ca.gov)
  - [CADAA Video Trainings & Resources](#)
- IRS Get a Tax Return Transcript: 1-800-908-9946

# JBAY Financial Aid Resources

Financial Aid Guide (English & Spanish)

FAFSA/CADAA Visual Guides

High School Counselor Toolkits

FAFSA/CADAA Overview Webinar Recording

Financial Aid Guide  
for California Foster &  
Unaccompanied  
Homeless Youth

NOVEMBER 2024



JBAY  
JOHN BURTON  
Advocates  
for Youth

CALIFORNIA  
COLLEGE  
PATHWAYS

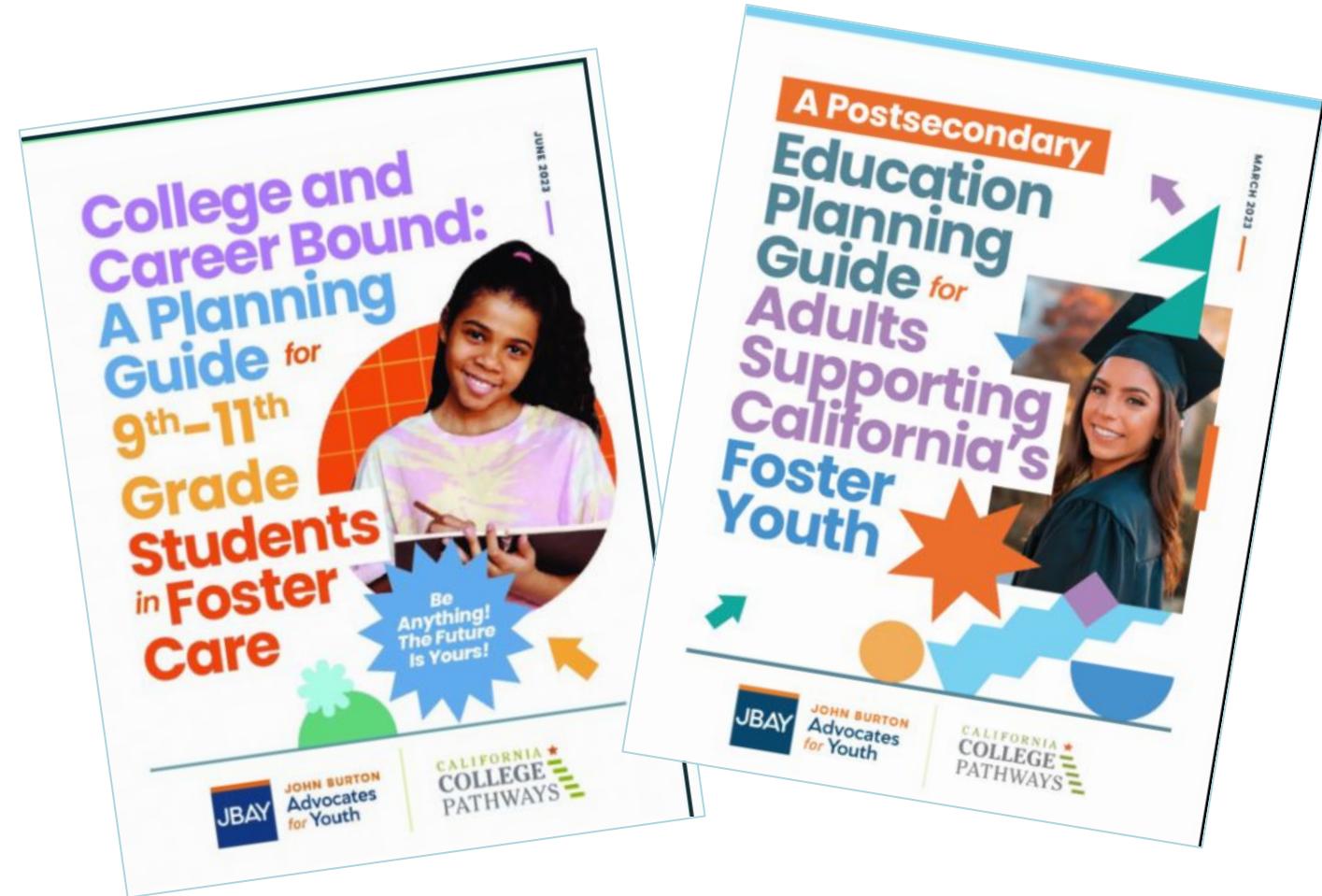
[jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide](http://jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide)

# JBAY's Step-by-Step Postsecondary Education Planning Guides for Foster Youth

[jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-guide/](http://jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-guide/)

- Available in English and Spanish for adult supporters of youth in grades 6-12 and for youth in grades 9-12.
- Includes downloadable checklists & student spotlight videos!

Visit [cacollegepathways.org](http://cacollegepathways.org) for comprehensive college planning information for current and former foster youth.



# Resources for Homeless Youth

- School House Connection  
[www.schoolhouseconnection.org/CADAA/](http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/CADAA/)
  - ✓ Sample Verification Letters
  - ✓ Screening tools
  - ✓ Flowcharts
  - ✓ And more!
- National Center for Homeless Education  
[nche.ed.gov/higher-education/](http://nche.ed.gov/higher-education/)

# Other Resources

- ICanGoToCollege.com  
[ICanGoToCollege.com](http://ICanGoToCollege.com)
- National College Attainment Network  
[www.ncan.org/page/better-CADAA](http://www.ncan.org/page/better-CADAA)
- Financial Aid for Justice-Involved Youth  
[ylc.org/resource/financial-aidfor-jj-youth](http://ylc.org/resource/financial-aidfor-jj-youth)
- Immigrants Rising  
[immigrantsrising.org](http://immigrantsrising.org)

# Resources for Undocumented Students

**CSAC Resources:** [www.csac.ca.gov/undocumented-dreamer-students](http://www.csac.ca.gov/undocumented-dreamer-students)

**Immigrants Rising:** [immigrantsrising.org](http://immigrantsrising.org)

**Golden Door Scholars:** [www.goldendoorscholars.org](http://www.goldendoorscholars.org)

**MALDEF:** [www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/](http://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/)

# Resources for Undocumented Students

**Cal State University (CSU) resources:**

[calstate.edu/attend/student-services/resources-for-undocumented-students](https://calstate.edu/attend/student-services/resources-for-undocumented-students)

**University of California (UC) resources:** [undoc.universityofcalifornia.edu](https://undoc.universityofcalifornia.edu)

**California Community College (CCC) resources:**

[ccccc.edu/Students/Support-Services/Special-population/Undocumented-Students](https://ccccc.edu/Students/Support-Services/Special-population/Undocumented-Students)

**John Burton Advocates for Youth**

**(415) 348-0011 | [info@jbay.org](mailto:info@jbay.org) |  
jbay.org**

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**JOHN BURTON  
Advocates  
*for* Youth**