

Completing the FAFSA: 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 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and detailed step-by-step instructions for youth who have been in the foster care system or experienced homelessness.

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

While this guide strives to be as accurate as possible, if you find an error, please let JBAY know at info@jbay.org and a revision will be issued as needed.

jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide

Financial Aid Guide for California Foster & Unaccompanied Homeless Youth



JBAY
JOHN BURTON
Advocates
for Youth

CALIFORNIA ★
COLLEGE PATHWAYS

Who Should Use This Guide

This guide is intended for youth who have experienced foster care or been homeless as an unaccompanied youth in California who qualify for “Independent Student Status” on the FAFSA. 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 meet the criteria as a foster youth or unaccompanied homeless youth, 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 FAFSA do not alone qualify as unusual circumstances.

If a student is undocumented, including DACA recipients, they should fill out the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) at dream.csac.ca.gov instead of the FAFSA even if the student was granted a temporary Social Security Number as a DACA recipient. A Visual Guide of the CADAA is available at jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide.

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1.

How to Apply for Financial Aid

FAFSA Eligibility

- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available to U.S. Citizens, permanent residents or other eligible non-citizens* and is used to apply for both Federal and State aid.
- Qualified undocumented students or those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or a U Visa should apply instead using the California Dream Act Application (CADAA).** A visual guide for completing the CADAA is available at jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide.

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

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

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.*

Creating a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID is Required



NEW: The process for obtaining an FSA ID has changed, and it is now issued immediately.

- The FSA ID is a username and password combination you use to log in to U.S. Department of Education (ED) online systems.
- You will be asked to provide an email address. Providing a mobile phone number is recommended to easily reset your password.
- You will be asked to provide your social security number, if applicable. Enter your legal name exactly as it appears on Social Security Card.
- Students can use an existing FSA ID but will need to verify the phone number and/or email address on file.



Students should create a system to safely store their username and password and not use high school email accounts that may expire.

How to Create an FSA ID

Go to
studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch

Select “Get Started”

Create an Account

Whether you're a student, parent, or borrower, you'll need to create your own account to apply for, receive, and manage your federal student aid.

[Get Started](#)

Already have an account? [Log In](#)

What You Can Do With Your Account

You must have an account to do the following:

- Fill out the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)* form online
- Complete other online forms (such as the *Master Promissory Note*) required to receive aid
- Review the federal student aid you've received

What You'll Need

- Your Social Security number (if applicable)
- Your own email address

FSA ID: Step 1

Enter your legal name and Social Security Number (SSN) exactly as they appear on your Social Security Card.



If you don't know your SSN, a parent or guardian, social worker or current or former employer may have the number. If you still can't find it, you will need to request a replacement card at www.ssa.gov/myaccount/replacement-card.html. You will need the physical card for employment, including work-study.

While the form provides an option for those who don't have a social security number, this is just for parents/spouses who are foreign citizens or undocumented or for students who are citizens of the Freely Associated States (e.g. Republic of Palau).* Students without a social security number should apply using the CADAA at dream.csac.ca.gov.

If an account already exists with the SSN entered, an alert will pop up.

*See

<https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2024-04-30/update-access-2024-25-fafsa-form-individuals-without-social-security-number-updated-august-2-2024> and <https://studentaid.gov/help/from-freely-associated-states>.

Step 1 of 7

Personal Information

I understand that I'll be required to certify that the information I provide to create an account is true and correct and that I'm the individual I claim to be.

If I'm not the person I claim to be, I understand that I'm not authorized to proceed and that I should exit this form now. If I provide false or misleading information, I understand that I might be subject to a fine, prison time, or both.

First Name

 ?

Middle Initial

 ?

Last Name

 ?

Date of Birth

Month	Day	Year
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
?		

Social Security Number

 ?

I don't have a Social Security number.

Cancel

Continue

FSA ID: Step 2

Create a Username and Password that can be easily remembered but not easy for someone else to figure out (e.g., do not use your name, date of birth, or the word “password”). Your username must be between 8 and 30 characters.

Double check the email address for typos. You will need to verify the email address after you complete the process.



Do not use a high school email address, since those often expire. Create or use an email address that you can use throughout college such as a Gmail or Yahoo address.

Create an Account (FSA ID)

Step 2 of 7

Account Information

Because financial aid agreements are legally binding, you can't create an account for someone else, even another family member. Parents and students must create their own accounts.

Username ?

Email Address ?

Confirm Email Address ?

Password Show Password ?

Uppercase

Lowercase

Number

8+ characters

Confirm Password Show Password ?

Previous Continue

FSA ID: Step 3

Entering a mailing address and mobile phone number are optional.

Providing a phone number is recommended in case you are locked out and need to recover your username or password. This also allows you to use text for two-step verification.

Entering an alternate number is also optional.

Step 3 of 7

Contact Information

Mailing Address

Address ?

City ?

State ?

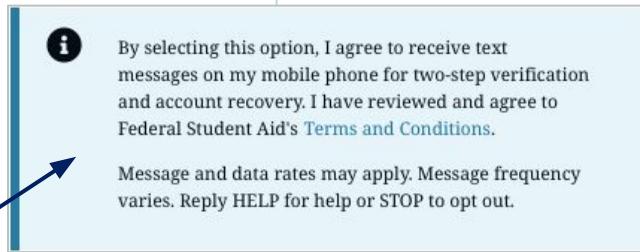
ZIP Code ?

Mobile Phone Account Access

We strongly recommend setting up your mobile phone for account access. This option helps you gain access to your account if you are locked out and allows your mobile phone to be used for two-step verification.

Mobile Phone ?

Confirm Mobile Phone

Yes, I agree to use my mobile phone for account access.   By selecting this option, I agree to receive text messages on my mobile phone for two-step verification and account recovery. I have reviewed and agree to Federal Student Aid's [Terms and Conditions](#). Message and data rates may apply. Message frequency varies. Reply HELP for help or STOP to opt out.

Alternate Phone Number (Optional)

 [Add Alternate Phone Number](#)

[Previous](#) [Continue](#)

FSA ID: Step 4

Indicate how you would like to receive future communications and your preferred language (English or Spanish). If you select Spanish, the FAFSA will display in Spanish.

Step 4 of 7

Communication Preferences

Required Communications

There are certain types of communications the U.S. Department of Education and our servicers are required to provide to you in writing. This includes communications such as student loan disclosures and student loan interest statements. You can choose whether you would like to receive these by email or postal mail.

Email **Recommended**



By selecting this option, you agree to receive required communications by email and confirm you have reviewed and agree to FSA's Terms and Conditions.

Postal mail

Optional Communications

We want you to feel confident about the financial aid and federal student loan process. To help with this, we sometimes send information about available grants, student loan forgiveness programs, income-based repayment options, and more. You can choose whether you would like to receive these by email and/or text message.

Email
 Text message

Language Preference

The language preference determines what language displays after you've logged in, as well as what language is used for forms and communications.

Language Preference

English

Previous

Continue

FSA ID: Step 5

Choose “Challenge Questions” and answers that can easily be remembered in case you forget your FSA ID username or password.

You must provide answers for all four questions.

Step 5 of 7

Challenge Questions

Challenge questions and answers are used to retrieve your username or password if you forget them or if you need to unlock your account.

Note: Answers are not case-sensitive.

Challenge Question 1

Question

Select

Answer

Challenge Question 2

Question

Select

Answer

Challenge Question 3

Question

Select

Answer

Challenge Question 4

Question

Select

Answer

FSA ID: Step 6

Confirm and verify that all the information provided is correct. If you discover an error, you can use the edit buttons to make changes.

Check the box at the bottom of the page agreeing to the terms and conditions to continue.

I agree to FSA's [terms and conditions](#).

[Previous](#) [Continue](#)

Step 6 of 7

Confirm and Verify

Verify the information you provided for your account below. If there is an error, select "Edit" to correct the information.

Personal Information	Edit
NAME	Sally Smith
DATE OF BIRTH	01/30/1995
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	*****-7456

Account Information	Edit
USERNAME	ssmith1195
EMAIL ADDRESS	info@jbay.org
PASSWORD	*****

Contact Information	Edit
PERMANENT ADDRESS	1 Harmony Drive Los Angeles, CA 90032
MOBILE PHONE NUMBER	(949) 285-2345

FSA ID: Step 7

When you click the “Verify” button, a screen will pop up where you can input the code sent to your email or phone. **The code must be entered within 30 minutes.**

You also have the option to use an authenticator app. If you select this option, instructions will appear.

Click Continue once complete.

Create an Account (FSA ID)

Step 7 of 7

Enable Two-Step Verification

Protect Your Account with Two-Step Verification

Whenever you sign in, we'll send a secure code to make sure it's really you. To keep your account protected, make sure your phone number and email are verified. We also suggest setting up verification using a secure authenticator app.

SMS Verification
9996666666 Not Verified Verify

Email Verification
debbie@jbay.org Not Verified Verify

Use an Authenticator App (Most Secure Option)

Use an authenticator app that you've downloaded from a mobile app store to view in-app secure codes—visible only to you—that can confirm your identity when you log in.

[Learn More](#)

[Set Up an Authenticator App](#)

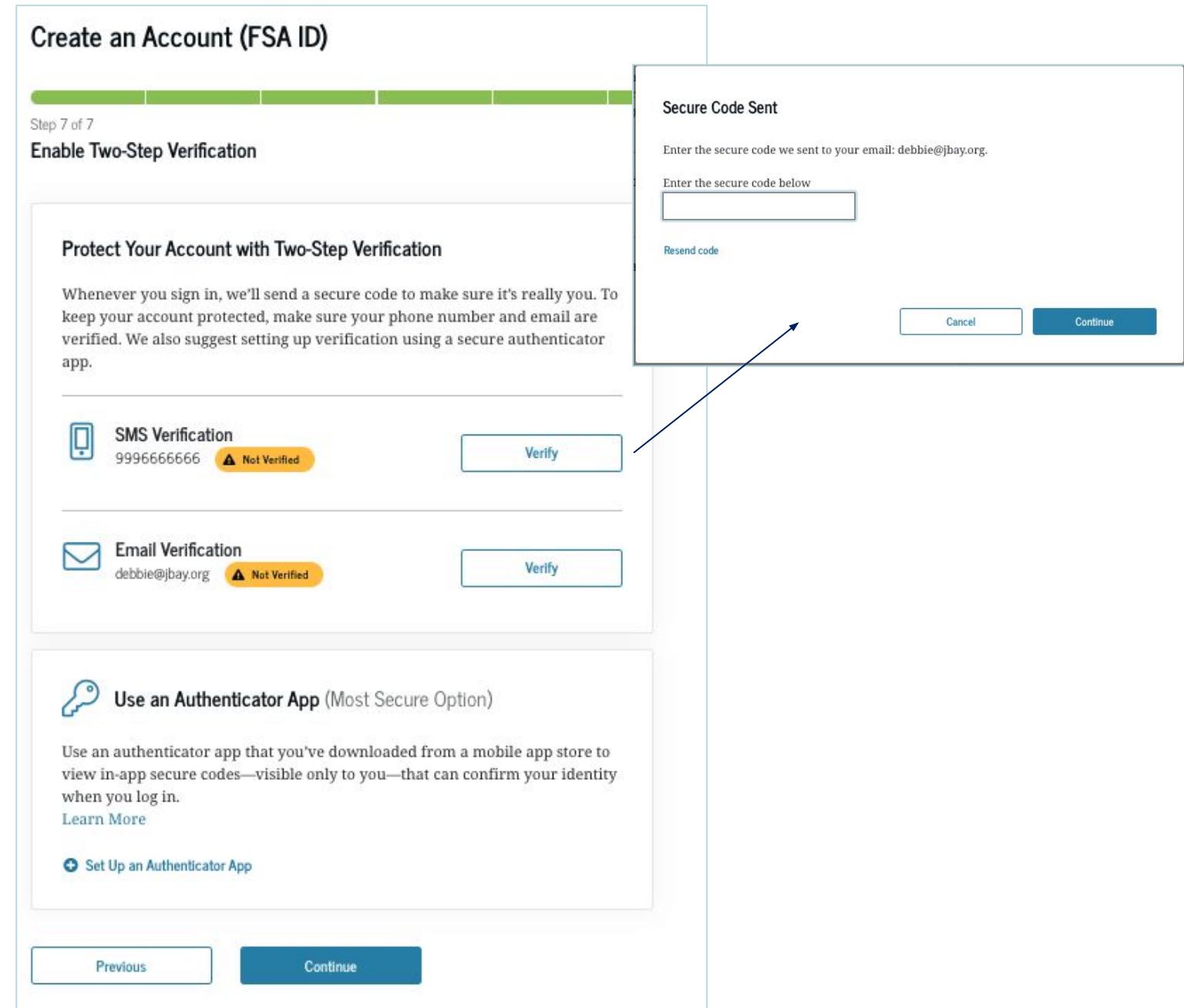
Secure Code Sent

Enter the secure code we sent to your email: debbie@jbay.org.

Enter the secure code below

Resend code

Cancel Continue



FSA ID: Step 7 (continued)

You will then be provided a unique backup code. You should copy this code and save it someplace safe as an alternative method of accessing your FSA ID and password if necessary.

If you get multiple backup codes, the most recent backup code will be the only one that is valid.

Follow any final instructions to complete the process.

Create an Account (FSA ID)

Step 7 of 7

Enable Two-Step Verification: Backup Code



We recommend storing your backup code in a safe place.

Your backup code is a special code that lets you access your account in the event that you cannot use any other two-step verification method.

Your Backup Code Is:

XXX0001234

I have stored this backup code somewhere safe.

Previous

Continue



**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
- Backup Code

2.

Starting the FAFSA

What a student needs to apply



List of at least one and up to 20 colleges



FSA ID log-in information



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

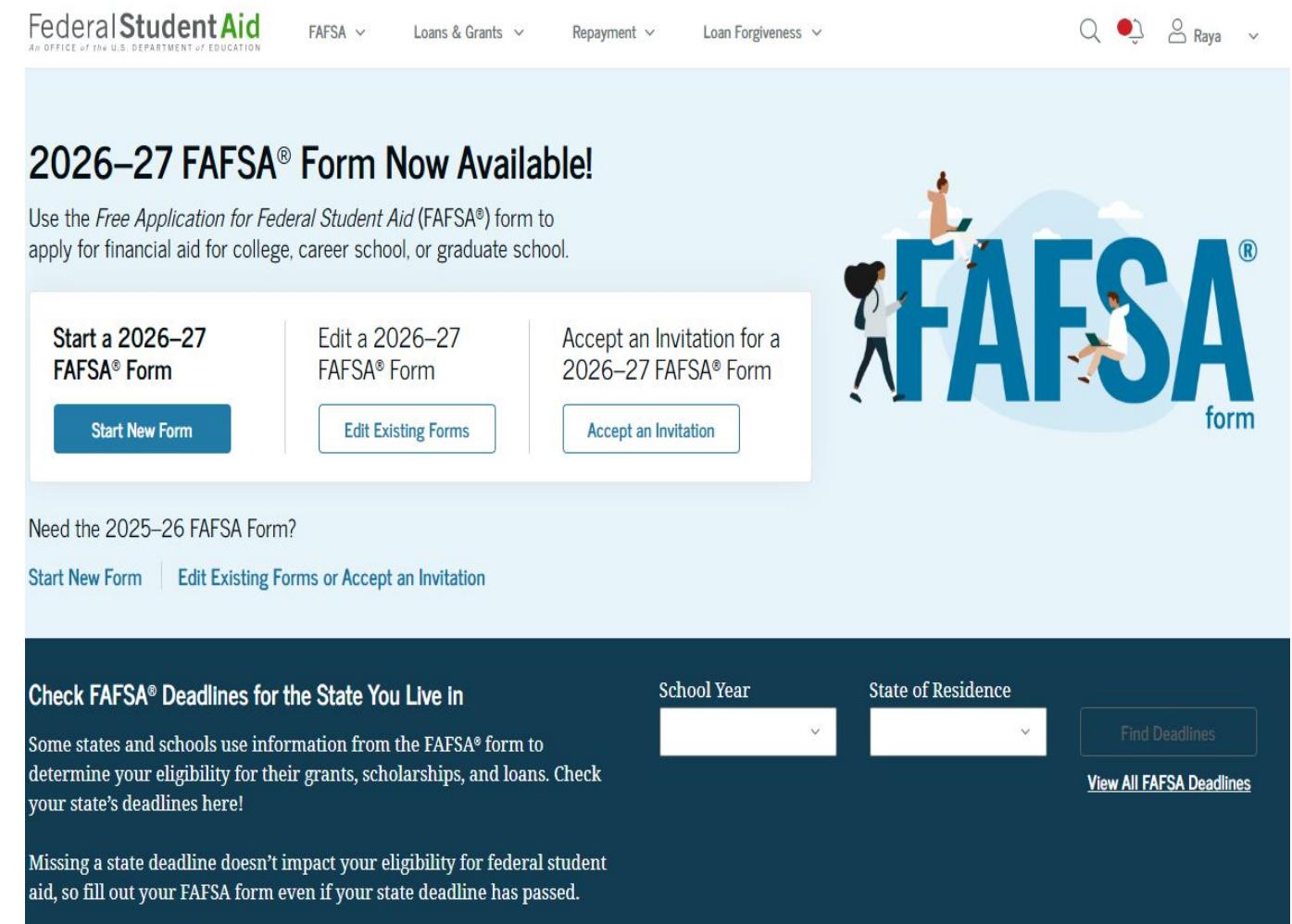


A copy of their tax return if the student filed taxes in 2024 and received grants, scholarships, or AmeriCorps that was reported on their tax return, or their filing status changed (e.g. married to divorced).

Landing Page

Begin at **fafsa.gov** which can be used on a computer or phone. You can "Start a New Form" or "Edit Existing Form."

Note that incomplete FAFSAs are deleted 45 days after the most recent activity.



The screenshot shows the Federal Student Aid website. At the top, the logo "Federal Student Aid" is displayed, followed by navigation links for "FAFSA", "Loans & Grants", "Repayment", and "Loan Forgiveness". On the far right, there are icons for search, notifications, and a user profile named "Raya".

The main headline reads "2026–27 FAFSA® Form Now Available!". Below it, a sub-headline says "Use the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)* form to apply for financial aid for college, career school, or graduate school." There are three main buttons: "Start a 2026–27 FAFSA® Form", "Edit a 2026–27 FAFSA® Form", and "Accept an Invitation for a 2026–27 FAFSA® Form". Each button has a corresponding sub-button below it: "Start New Form", "Edit Existing Forms", and "Accept an Invitation".

Below these buttons, a question "Need the 2025–26 FAFSA Form?" is followed by "Start New Form" and "Edit Existing Forms or Accept an Invitation".

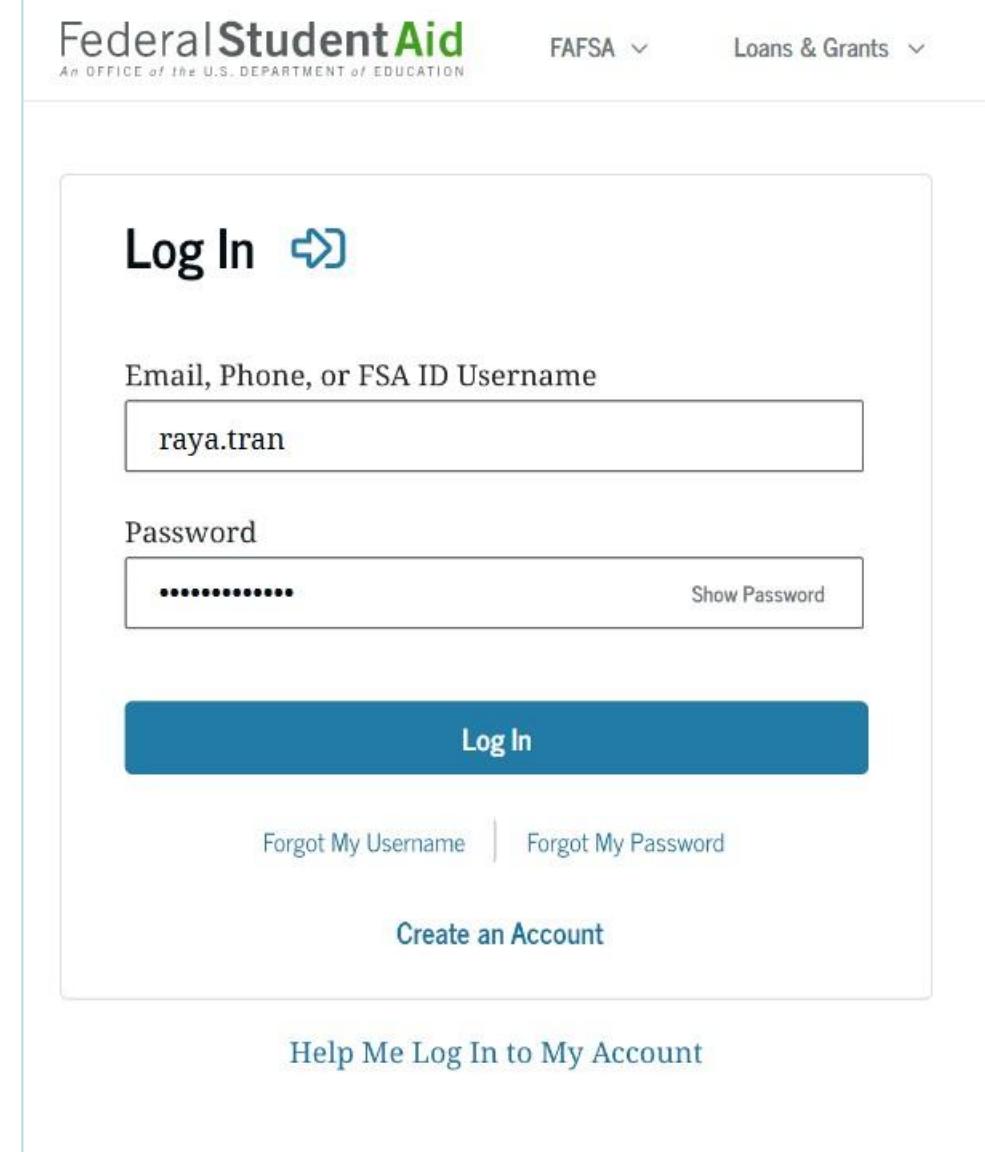
A large graphic on the right features the word "FAFSA" in large blue letters with a registered trademark symbol, and "form" in smaller letters below it. Three stylized figures (a person walking, a person sitting, and a person standing) are shown interacting with the letters.

At the bottom, there is a section titled "Check FAFSA® Deadlines for the State You Live In". It includes a "School Year" dropdown, a "State of Residence" dropdown, a "Find Deadlines" button, and a "View All FAFSA Deadlines" link. A note below states: "Some states and schools use information from the FAFSA® form to determine your eligibility for their grants, scholarships, and loans. Check your state's deadlines here!" and "Missing a state deadline doesn't impact your eligibility for federal student aid, so fill out your FAFSA form even if your state deadline has passed."

Student Log In

If you select "Start a New Form" you are taken to the "Log In" page to enter your log-in credentials (FSA ID username and password).

If you don't have an FSA ID, you can select "Create an Account" to create an FSA ID. (See section 1 for details on how to create an FSA ID).



The image shows the "Log In" page of the Federal Student Aid website. At the top, the "Federal Student Aid" logo is displayed, followed by "An OFFICE of the U.S. DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION". To the right are links for "FAFSA" and "Loans & Grants". The main form area has a "Log In" button with a right-pointing arrow icon. Below it is a text input field labeled "Email, Phone, or FSA ID Username" containing "raya.tran". Underneath is a password input field with a "Show Password" link to its right. A large blue "Log In" button is centered below the fields. At the bottom of the form, there are links for "Forgot My Username", "Forgot My Password", and "Create an Account". Below the form, a link for "Help Me Log In to My Account" is visible.

Two-Step Verification

Select if you want a code sent via text (SMS Verification) or via email and enter the code provided. You can also choose to verify through an authenticator app.

Two-Step Verification

You have the following two-step verification methods enabled. Select one to complete verification.

 **SMS Verification**
*****8382 Send Code

 **Email Verification**
de*****@jbay.org Send Code

 **Enter Secure Code**

Enter the secure code we sent in a text message to your mobile phone: *****8382

Enter the secure code below

[Resend code](#)

Student Log In

Accept the disclaimer that pops up to continue.

Please Read Before Continuing

You are accessing a U.S. Federal Government computer system intended to be solely accessed by individual users expressly authorized to access the system by the U.S. Department of Education. Usage may be monitored, recorded, and/or subject to audit. For security purposes and in order to ensure that the system remains available to all expressly authorized users, the U.S. Department of Education monitors the system to identify unauthorized users. Anyone using this system expressly consents to such monitoring and recording. Unauthorized use of this information system is prohibited and subject to criminal and civil penalties. Except as expressly authorized by the U.S. Department of Education, unauthorized attempts to access, obtain, upload, modify, change, and/or delete information on this system are strictly prohibited and are subject to criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. § 1030, and other applicable statutes, which may result in fines and imprisonment. For purposes of this system, unauthorized access includes, but is not limited to:

- any access by an employee or agent of a commercial entity, or other third party, who is not the individual user, for purposes of commercial advantage or private financial gain (regardless of whether the commercial entity or third party is providing a service to an authorized user of the system); and
- any access in furtherance of any criminal or tortious act in violation of the Constitution or laws of the United States or any State.

If system monitoring reveals information indicating possible criminal activity, such evidence may be provided to law enforcement personnel.

Decline

Accept

Returning Users

If you are returning to complete a FAFSA that you started previously, you will be taken to your dashboard when you log in.

Select “2026-27 FAFSA Form.” You will be taken to the overview page where you can select to return to where you left off.



My Dashboard

My Aid



You currently don't have any federal loans or grants.

My Activity

[View All Activity >](#)

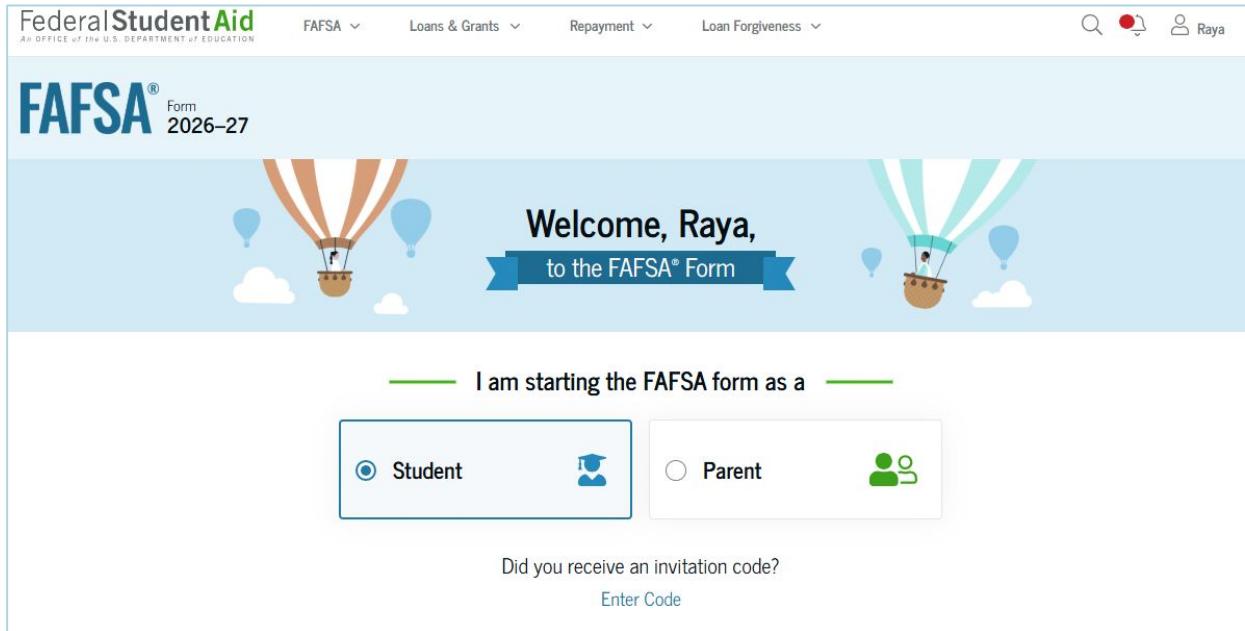
2026–27 FAFSA® Form



Action Required

Last Updated: 10/1/2025

Starting Page



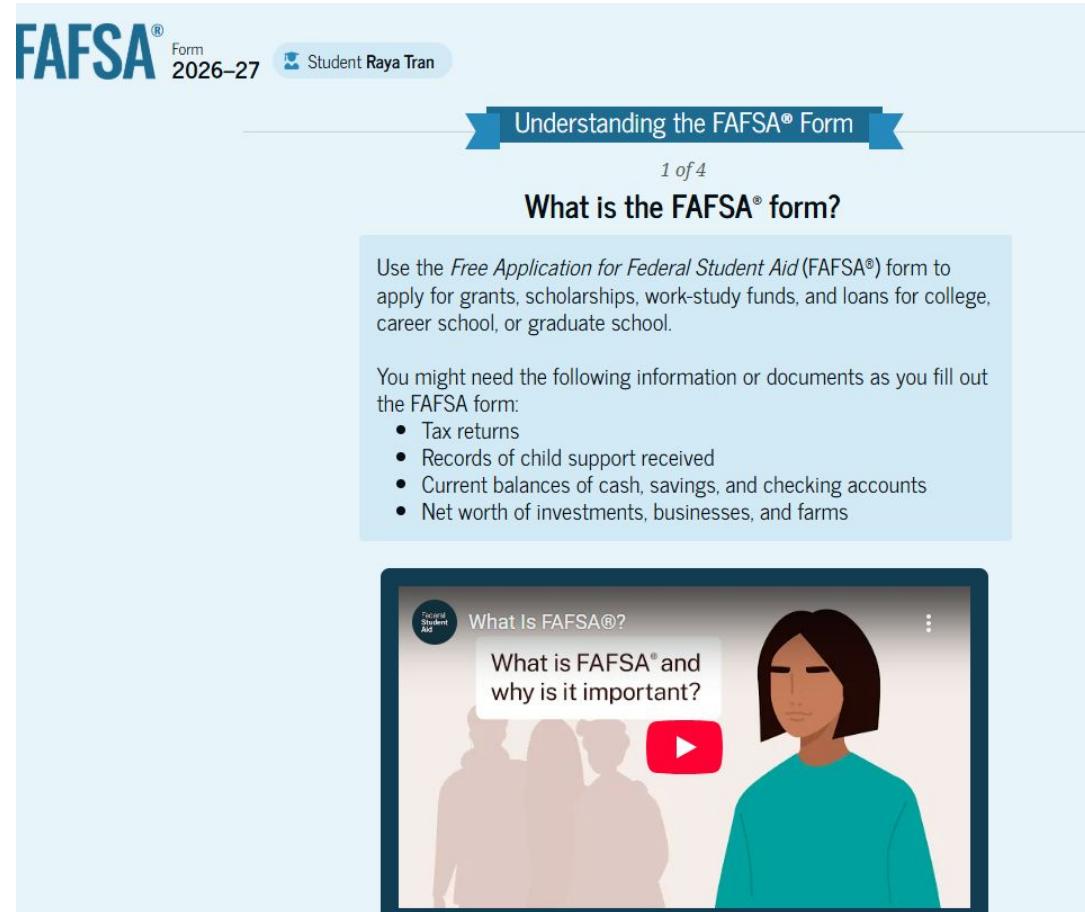
New users will be taken to the starting page. Select “Student” as your role.

Students who are not independent will need to have parents fill out their portion of the form. A dependent student can invite parents to be contributors and thus, to provide their information by providing the parents’ email addresses. Screens for this process are not covered in this document.

Onboarding (1 of 4)

When a student starts the FAFSA form for the first time, they are taken through the FAFSA onboarding process. The first onboarding page provides an overview of the FAFSA form and an accompanying video.

Select Continue to move on.



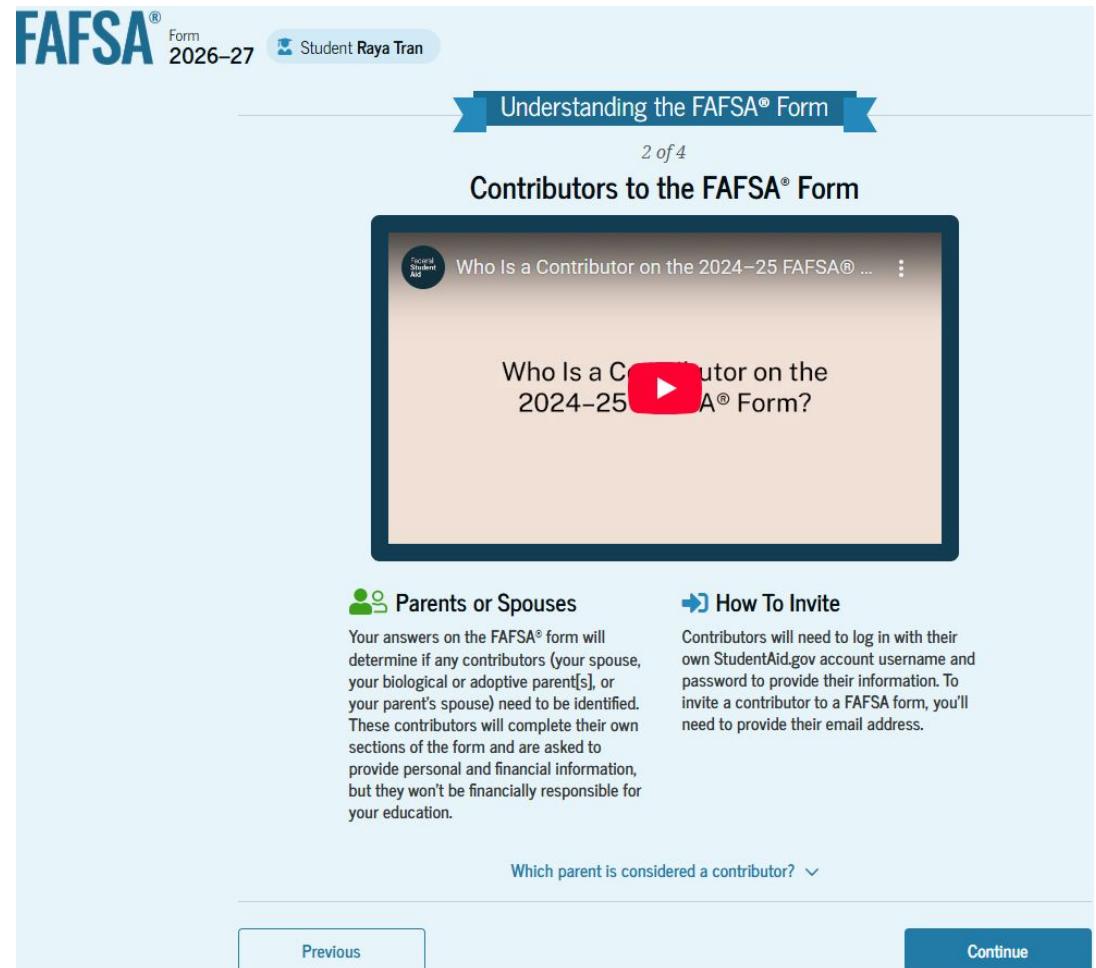
The image shows a screenshot of the FAFSA onboarding process. At the top, it displays the FAFSA logo, 'Form 2026-27', and a profile picture of a student named Raya Tran. Below this, a blue banner reads 'Understanding the FAFSA® Form' with '1 of 4' underneath. The main content area is titled 'What is the FAFSA® form?'. It explains that the form is used to apply for grants, scholarships, work-study funds, and loans for college, career school, or graduate school. It also lists the information needed to fill out the form, including tax returns, records of child support received, current balances of cash, savings, and checking accounts, and net worth of investments, businesses, and farms. At the bottom, there is a video thumbnail titled 'What Is FAFSA®?' with a play button, showing a woman speaking about the importance of the FAFSA form.

Onboarding (2 of 4)

The second FAFSA onboarding page provides information about the different roles that may be required to participate in the student's FAFSA form and documents that may be needed to fill out the form.

If you are not independent (see section 4) and need to provide parental information or are married and need to provide spouse information, this video provides instructions for this process.

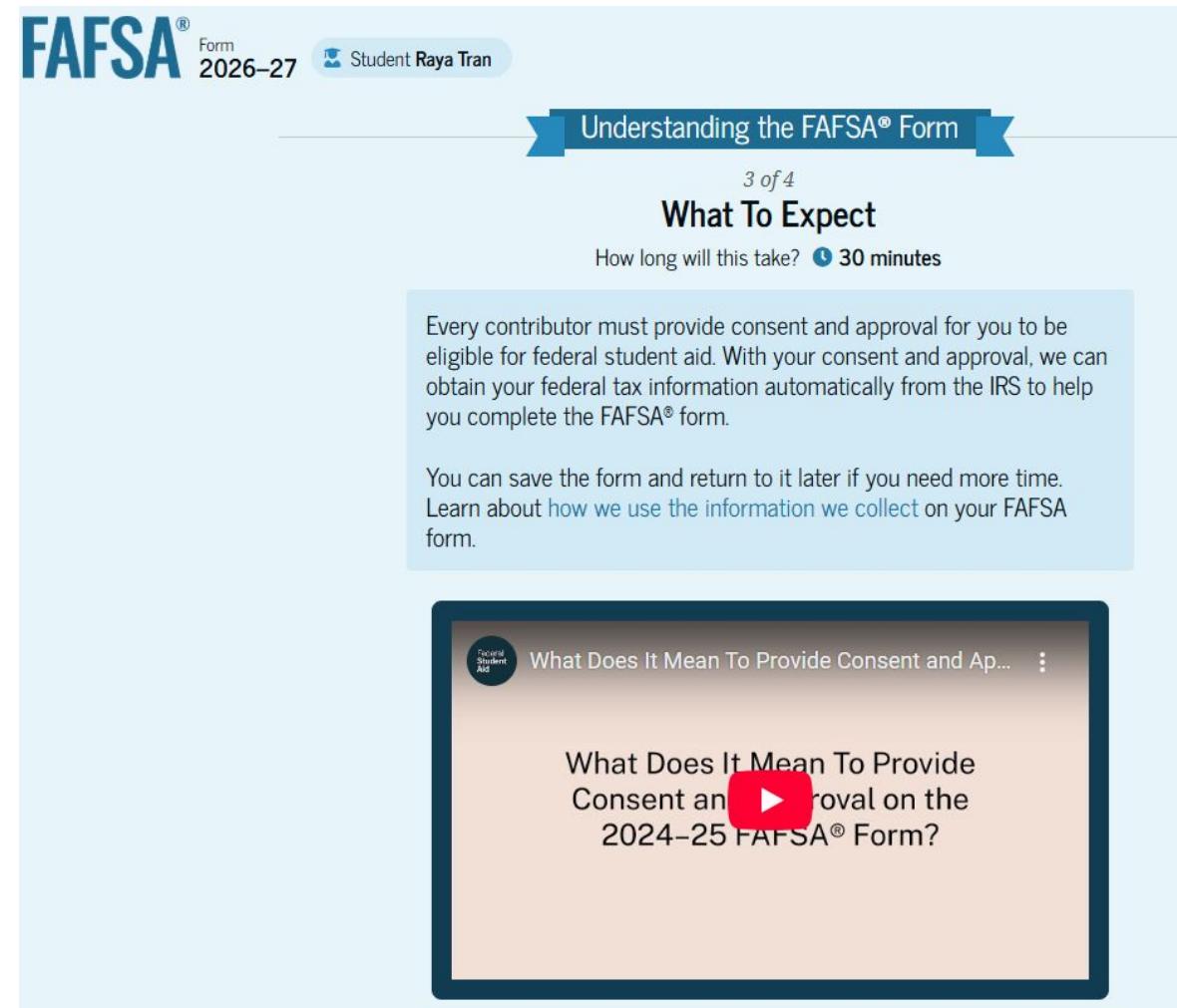
Select Continue to move on.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA onboarding interface. At the top, it displays 'FAFSA® Form 2026-27' and 'Student Raya Tran'. Below this, a banner reads 'Understanding the FAFSA® Form' with '2 of 4' and 'Contributors to the FAFSA® Form'. A video player window is open, showing a thumbnail for 'Who Is a Contributor on the 2024-25 FAFSA® ...' and the title 'Who Is a Contributor on the 2024-25 FAFSA® Form?'. To the right of the video, there are two sections: 'Parents or Spouses' (with a green icon) and 'How To Invite' (with a blue icon). The 'Parents or Spouses' section explains that answers on the FAFSA form determine if contributors (spouse, parents) need to be identified, and that they will complete their own sections. The 'How To Invite' section explains that contributors log in with their StudentAid.gov account to provide information. At the bottom, there is a dropdown menu for 'Which parent is considered a contributor?' and buttons for 'Previous' and 'Continue'.

Onboarding (3 of 4)

The third FAFSA onboarding page provides information about the types of questions the student can expect to see and how they can get additional help with filling out the FAFSA form.



FAFSA® Form 2026–27 Student Raya Tran

Understanding the FAFSA® Form

3 of 4

What To Expect

How long will this take? 30 minutes

Every contributor must provide consent and approval for you to be eligible for federal student aid. With your consent and approval, we can obtain your federal tax information automatically from the IRS to help you complete the FAFSA® form.

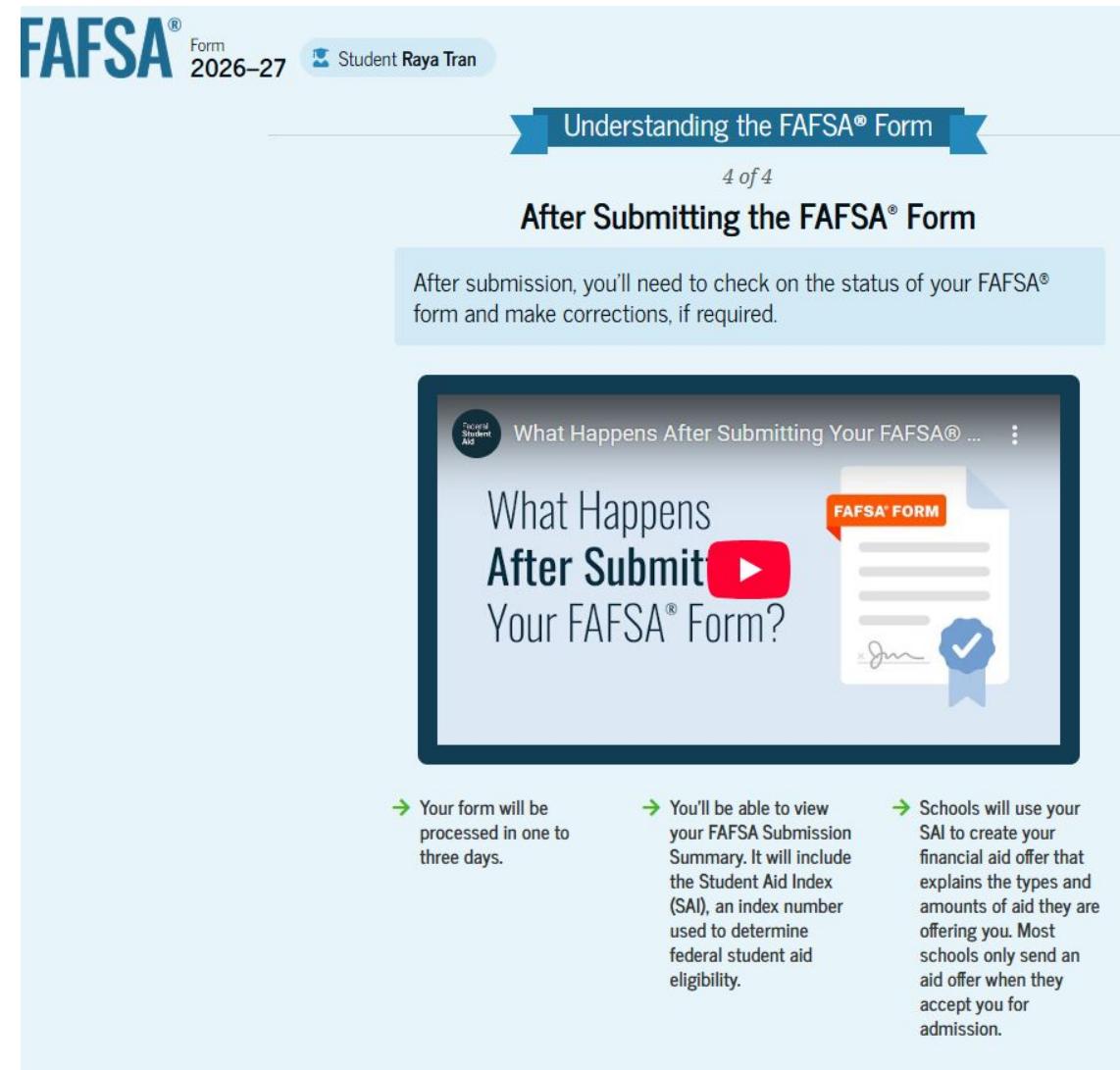
You can save the form and return to it later if you need more time. Learn about [how we use the information we collect](#) on your FAFSA form.

What Does It Mean To Provide Consent and Approval on the 2024–25 FAFSA® Form?

Onboarding (4 of 4)

The last FAFSA onboarding page provides information about what to expect once the FAFSA form is completed and submitted.

Select "Start FAFSA form" to begin.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA onboarding page for the 2026-27 form. The top navigation bar includes the FAFSA logo, the form year '2026-27', and a user profile for 'Student Raya Tran'. A blue banner at the top right reads 'Understanding the FAFSA® Form' with a progress indicator '4 of 4'. Below this, a section titled 'After Submitting the FAFSA® Form' contains a message: 'After submission, you'll need to check on the status of your FAFSA® form and make corrections, if required.' A video player titled 'What Happens After Submitting Your FAFSA® ...' is embedded, showing a thumbnail for a video titled 'What Happens After Submit Your FAFSA® Form?'. Below the video, three green bullet points list what happens after submission: 1. Your form will be processed in one to three days. 2. You'll be able to view your FAFSA Submission Summary. It will include the Student Aid Index (SAI), an index number used to determine federal student aid eligibility. 3. Schools will use your SAI to create your financial aid offer that explains the types and amounts of aid they are offering you. Most schools only send an aid offer when they accept you for admission.

FAFSA® Form 2026-27 Student Raya Tran

Understanding the FAFSA® Form

4 of 4

After Submitting the FAFSA® Form

After submission, you'll need to check on the status of your FAFSA® form and make corrections, if required.

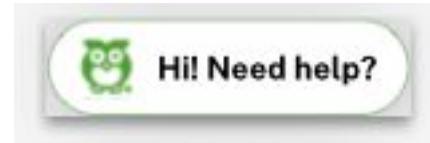
What Happens After Submitting Your FAFSA® ...

What Happens After Submit Your FAFSA® Form?

- Your form will be processed in one to three days.
- You'll be able to view your FAFSA Submission Summary. It will include the Student Aid Index (SAI), an index number used to determine federal student aid eligibility.
- Schools will use your SAI to create your financial aid offer that explains the types and amounts of aid they are offering you. Most schools only send an aid offer when they accept you for admission.

Using the FAFSA Form

- Use the dropdown menu at the top of the screen and click “Save” to save your responses. Responses will save automatically when you move to a new page.
- Help is available through the menu at the top of the screen or by clicking the ⓘ icon next to individual fields.
- You can also click the icon shown below to ask a question through the chatbot.



Ask Aidan® Beta

October 12th, 2025

Hi, I'm Aidan!

I'm here to assist. Just type your question or select one of the topics below to get started.

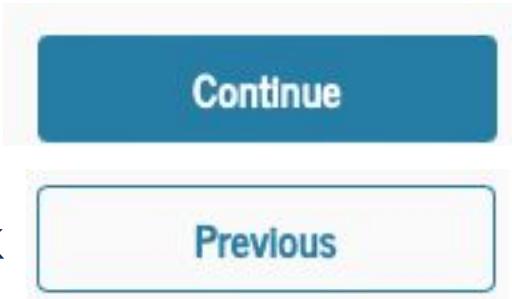
Ways I can help...

- I have questions about the FAFSA® form
- I'm having trouble logging in to my account
- I need help with loan payments
- I want my loan and grant info

Chat with Aidan... 0/140 characters

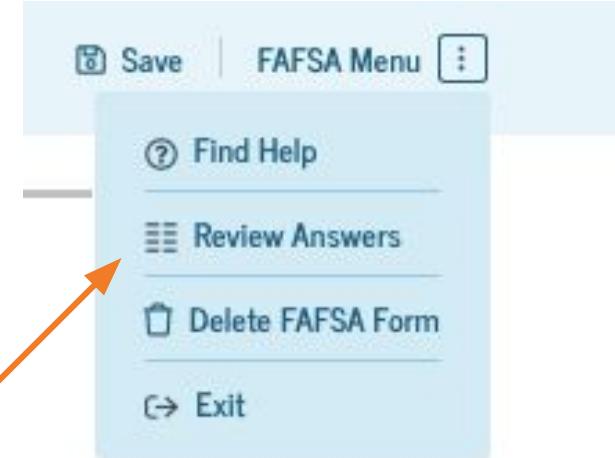
Using the FAFSA Form

- To move through the form, click
- To go to the previous screen, click



Do not use your computer's back button

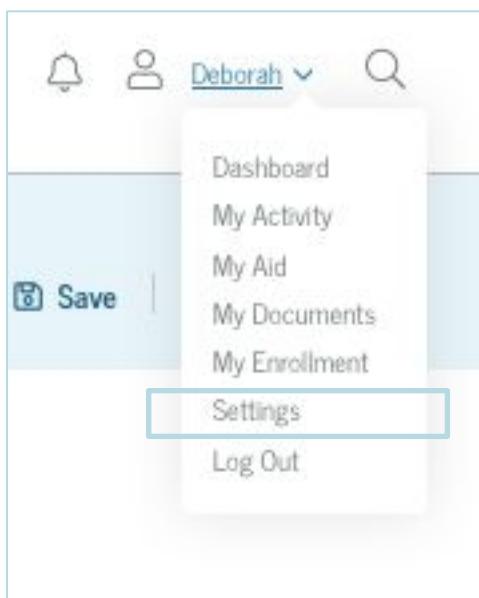
- To go back to a specific screen, select the dropdown menu at the top of the screen and Review Answers.
- You will be taken to the review page where you can expand any section and click on the link for any question already answered (shown in blue) to return to that question.

A screenshot of the FAFSA review page for 'Section 1 Personal Circumstances'. It shows four questions with their answers:

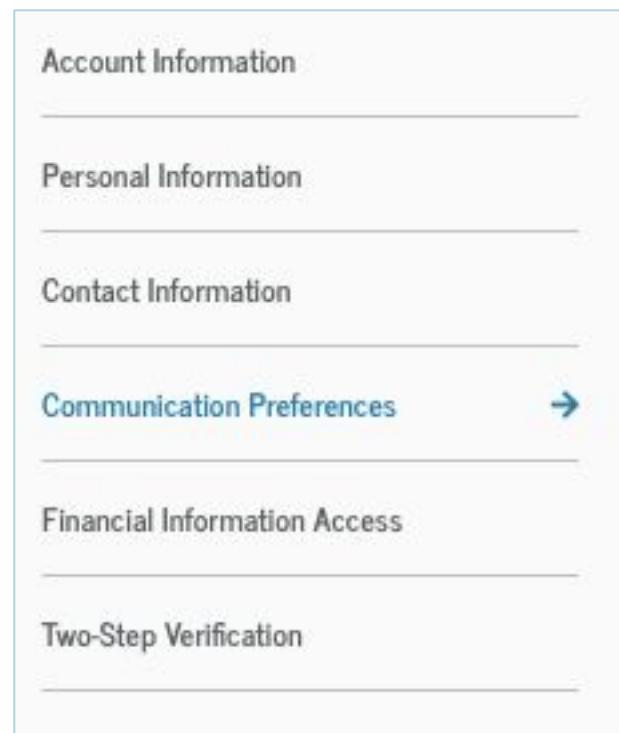
- Current Marital Status: → Single (never married)
- Grade Level for 2025–26 School Year: → First year (freshman)
- First Bachelor's Degree Before 2025–26 School Year: → No
- Pursuing Initial Teaching Certification: → (link)

Language Options

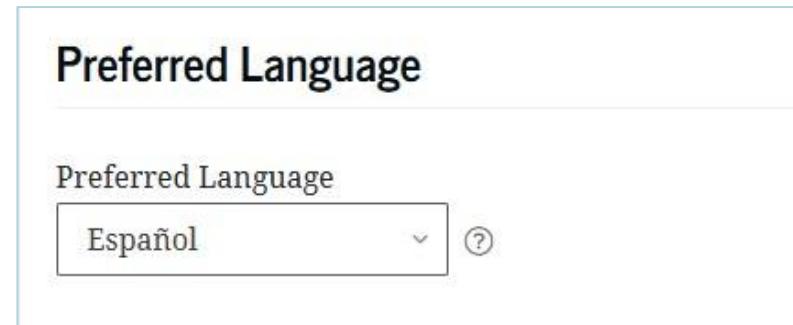
1. To access the Spanish language version, access your Account Settings, which are available through a dropdown menu under your name at the top of the screen.



2. Select “Communication Preferences” from the lefthand menu



3. Select Español as your preferred language

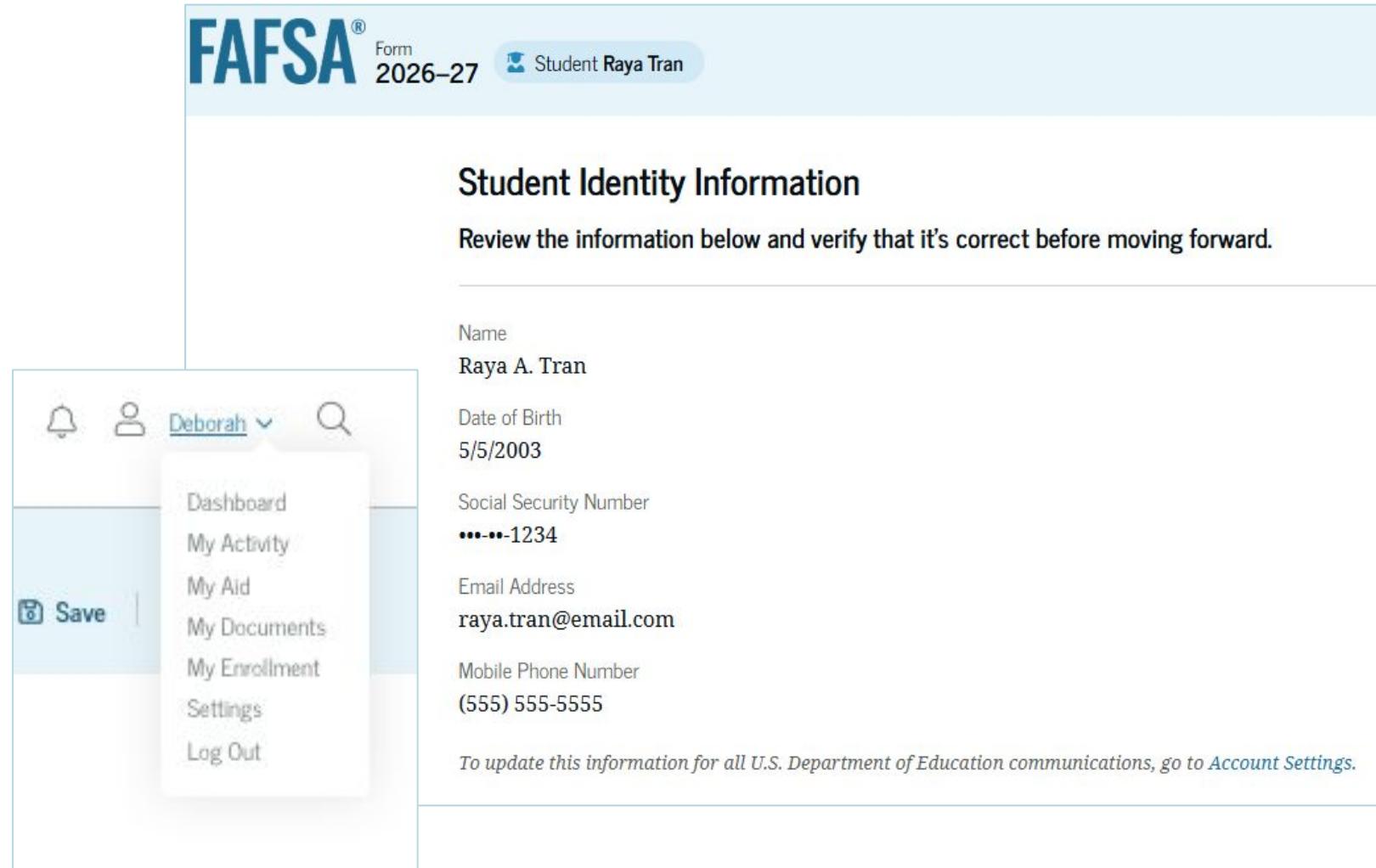


3.

Identity Information and Consent to Import Tax Info

Identity Information

Review the information on the screen and verify that it is correct. To update any of this information, you must access your Account Settings, which are available through a dropdown menu under your name at the top of the screen.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA Form 2026-27 interface. At the top, it displays "FAFSA® Form 2026-27" and "Student Raya Tran". Below this, the "Student Identity Information" section is shown, prompting the user to review the information before moving forward. The information listed includes: Name (Raya A. Tran), Date of Birth (5/5/2003), Social Security Number (*****-1234), Email Address (raya.tran@email.com), and Mobile Phone Number (555) 555-5555. A note at the bottom of this section states: "To update this information for all U.S. Department of Education communications, go to Account Settings." On the left side of the screen, a dropdown menu is open, showing options: Dashboard, My Activity, My Aid, My Documents, My Enrollment, Settings, and Log Out. The "Save" button is also visible.

Student Identity Information

Review the information below and verify that it's correct before moving forward.

Name
Raya A. Tran

Date of Birth
5/5/2003

Social Security Number
*****-1234

Email Address
raya.tran@email.com

Mobile Phone Number
(555) 555-5555

To update this information for all U.S. Department of Education communications, go to Account Settings.

Identity Information (Continued)

For fields related to your mailing address, you can edit them directly on this page. The address should be a place that you can receive mail.

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.

Permanent Mailing Address
Include apartment number.

12345 Sesame Street

City
New York

State
New York (NY)

Zip Code
67891

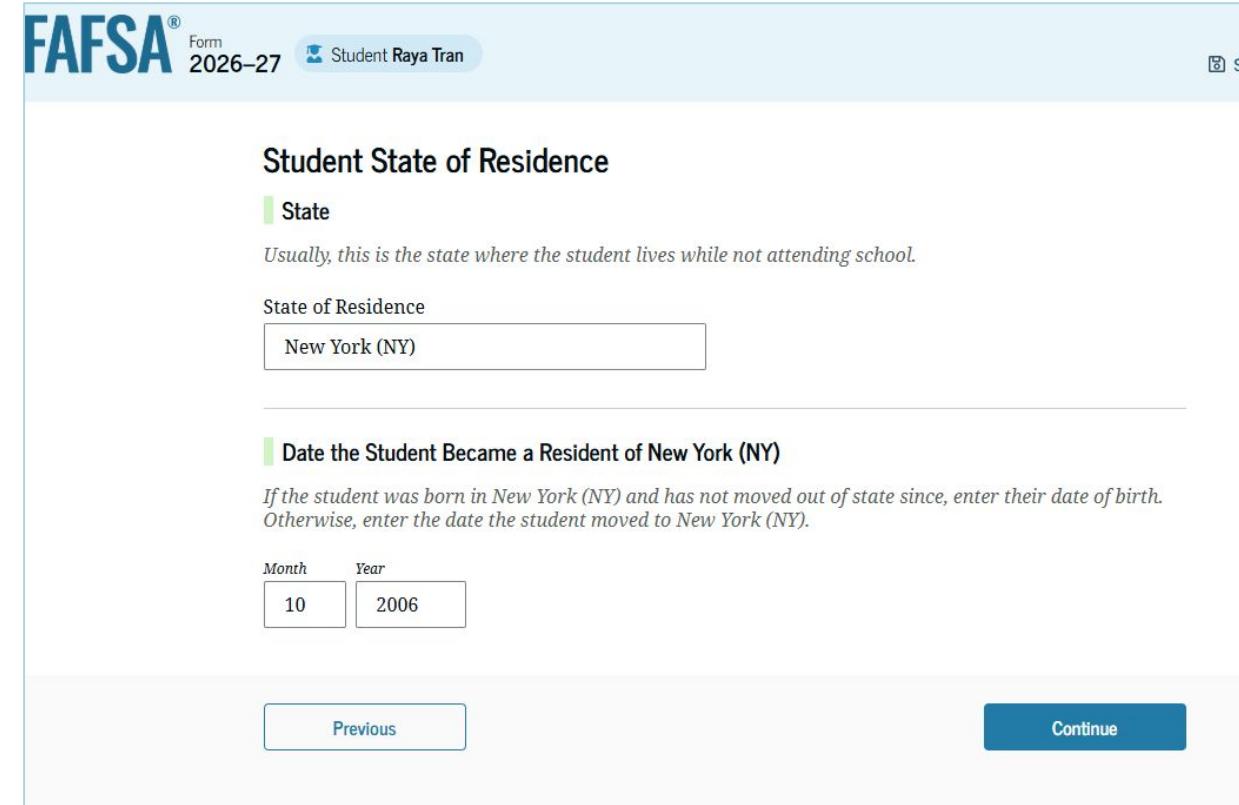
Country
United States of America (US)

[Previous](#) [Continue](#)

State of Legal Residence

Select your state of legal residence from a dropdown box and provide the month and year when you began living in the state. If you have lived in the same state since birth, enter your date of birth.

This information is used to determine eligibility for state aid. If you are unsure if you are considered a California resident, consult your college.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA Form 2026-27 interface. At the top, it displays the FAFSA logo, the form number 'Form 2026-27', and the student's name 'Student Raya Tran'. Below this, the section title 'Student State of Residence' is shown, with a sub-instruction 'Usually, this is the state where the student lives while not attending school.' A dropdown menu is open, showing 'New York (NY)' as the selected state. A horizontal line separates this from the next section. The next section is titled 'Date the Student Became a Resident of New York (NY)' with the instruction 'If the student was born in New York (NY) and has not moved out of state since, enter their date of birth. Otherwise, enter the date the student moved to New York (NY)'. It contains two input fields: 'Month' (10) and 'Year' (2006). At the bottom of the form are 'Previous' and 'Continue' buttons.

Federal Tax Information (FTI)

This page informs the student about consent and their federal tax information. By providing consent, your federal tax information is transferred directly into the FAFSA from the IRS.

(Only the summary, and not the full text on the screen, is shown here.)

Summary

Your consent and approval are needed to retrieve and disclose federal tax information. With your consent and approval, we can obtain tax return information automatically from the IRS to help you complete the FAFSA® form. If you don't provide consent and approval, you will not be eligible for federal student aid, including grants and loans. You must provide consent and approval even if you didn't file a U.S. federal tax return or any tax return.

- Get your 2024 tax return information for the 2026–27 FAFSA form.
- Tax return information is required to complete the FAFSA form.
- Federal tax information is used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid.

Federal Tax Information (FTI)

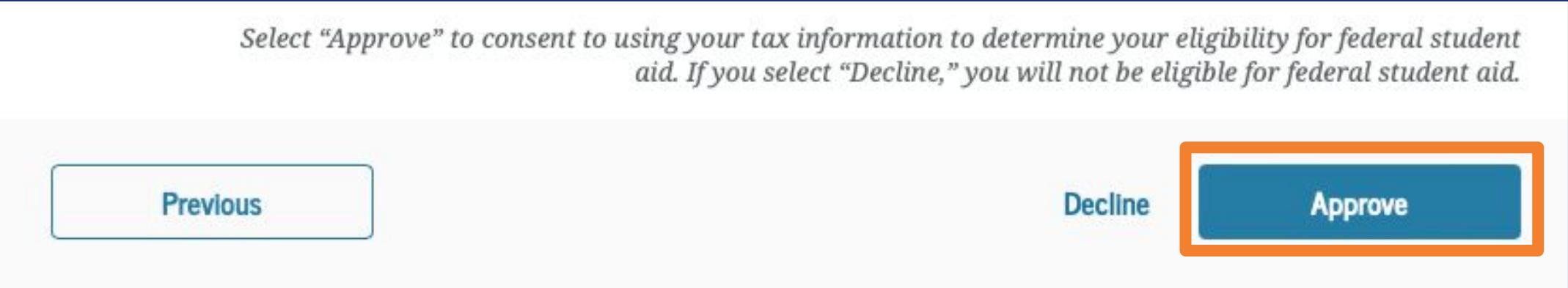
Students must approve & consent to importing data from the Federal Tax Information (FTI) (even if no tax return was filed).

The application looks at income information from the “prior-prior” year. If applying for the 2026-2027 school year, this would be from 2024.

If you decline the FTI transfer, you will be ineligible for federal and state student aid.

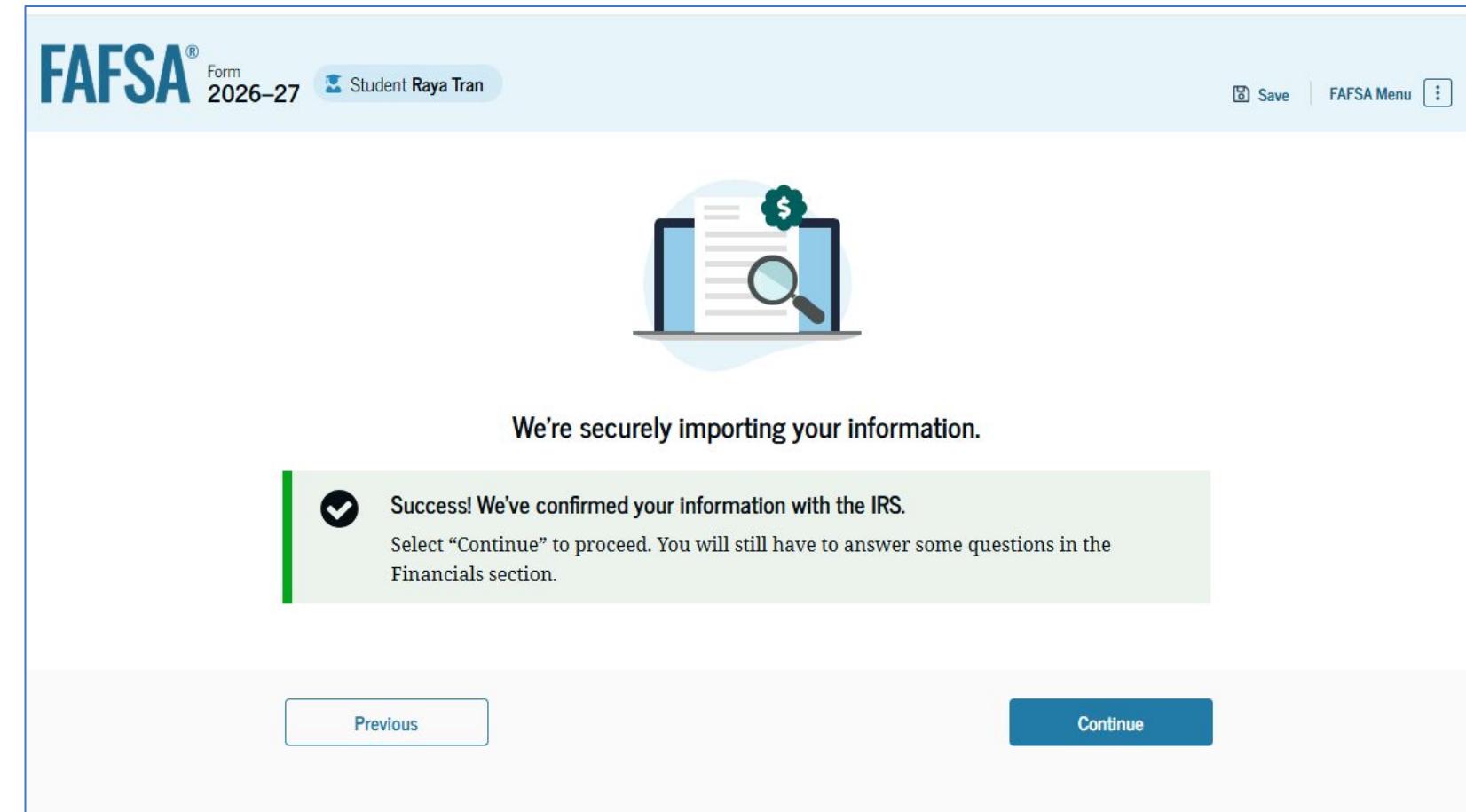
Select “Approve” to consent to using your tax information to determine your eligibility for federal student aid. If you select “Decline,” you will not be eligible for federal student aid.

[Previous](#) [Decline](#) [Approve](#)



Federal Tax Information (FTI)

After submitting “Approve”, students will see a processing screen, indicating that their tax information is being imported. If you did not file a tax return in 2024, you will see a message stating “Data Not Received”.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA processing screen. At the top, it displays the FAFSA logo, the form number "Form 2026-27", the student's name "Student Raya Tran", and buttons for "Save" and "FAFSA Menu". Below this is a central graphic of a document with a magnifying glass and a dollar sign, with the text "We're securely importing your information." To the left of the message is a green checkmark icon. The message itself says: "Success! We've confirmed your information with the IRS. Select ‘Continue’ to proceed. You will still have to answer some questions in the Financials section." At the bottom, there are "Previous" and "Continue" buttons.



If your income or circumstances have changed, submit the FAFSA 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

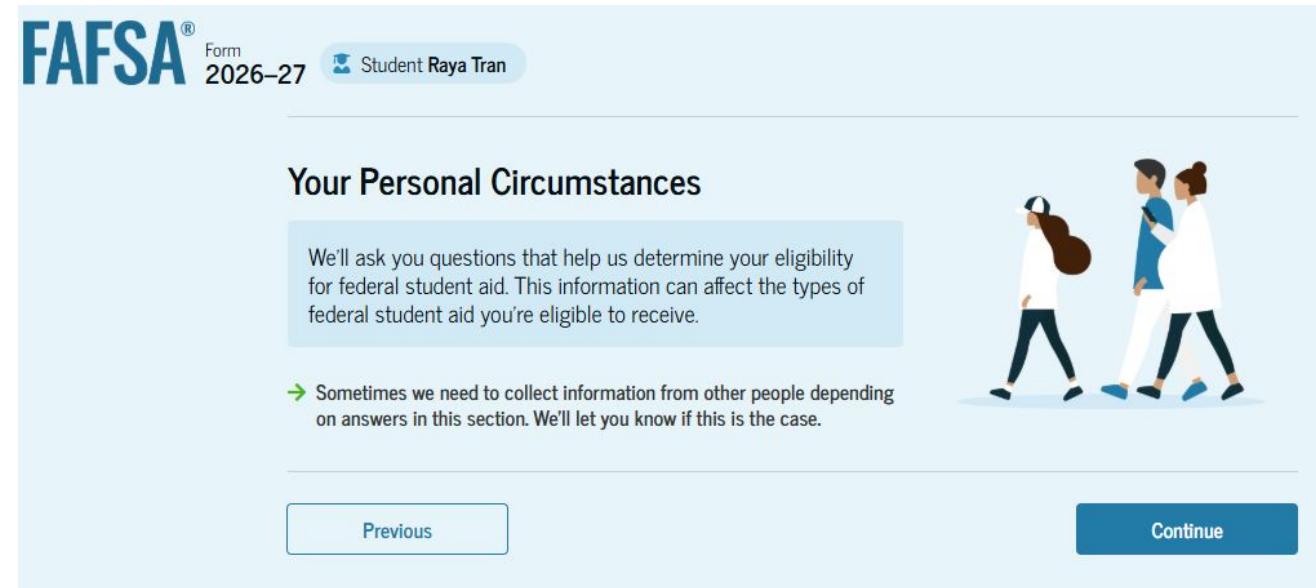
Your school may ask you to document your special circumstances so that they can consider making an adjustment to your FAFSA information.

4.

Personal Circumstances

Personal Circumstances

The first page within the Student Personal Circumstances section provides an overview of the section.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA 2026-27 application interface. At the top, it displays the FAFSA logo, the form number 'Form 2026-27', and the student's name 'Student Raya Tran'. Below this, the section title 'Your Personal Circumstances' is centered. A text box explains that the user will be asked questions to determine their eligibility for federal student aid, which can affect the types of aid they are eligible to receive. A note states that sometimes information from other people is needed, and the user will be informed if this is the case. At the bottom, there are 'Previous' and 'Continue' buttons, and an illustration of three people walking together.

Marital Status

You are first asked about your marital status. Your legal 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 Current Marital Status

Single (never married)

Married (not separated)

Remarried

Separated

Divorced

Widowed

Student College or Career School 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.

FAFSA® Form 2026–27 Student Raya Tran

1 Personal Circumstances 2 Demographics 3 Financials 4 Colleges 5 Signature

Student College or Career School Plans

When the student begins the 2026–27 school year, what will their college grade level be?

First year (freshman)

Second year (sophomore)

Other undergraduate (junior and beyond)

Master's, doctorate, or graduate certificate program (such as M.A., MBA, M.D., J.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.)

When the student begins the 2026–27 school year, will they already have their first bachelor's degree?

Yes

No

Student 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 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

Select all that apply or “None of these apply.”

- The student is currently serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces for purposes other than training.
- The student is a veteran of the U.S. armed forces.
- The student has children or other people (excluding their spouse) who live with them and receive more than half of their support from the student now and between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027.
- At any time since the student turned 13, they were an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent).
- At any time since the student turned 13, they were a ward of the court.
- At any time since the student turned 13, they were in foster care.
- The student is or was a legally emancipated minor, as determined by a court in their state of residence.
- The student is or was in a legal guardianship with someone other than their parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in their state of residence.
- None of these apply.

4a.

Current & Former Foster Youth

Current & 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 FAFSA 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 the student turned 13, they were an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent).
- At any time since the student turned 13, they were a ward of the court.
- At any time since the student turned 13, they were in foster care.
- The student is or was a legally emancipated minor, as determined by a court in their state of residence.
- The student is or was in a legal guardianship with someone other than their parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in their state of residence.
- None of these apply.

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:

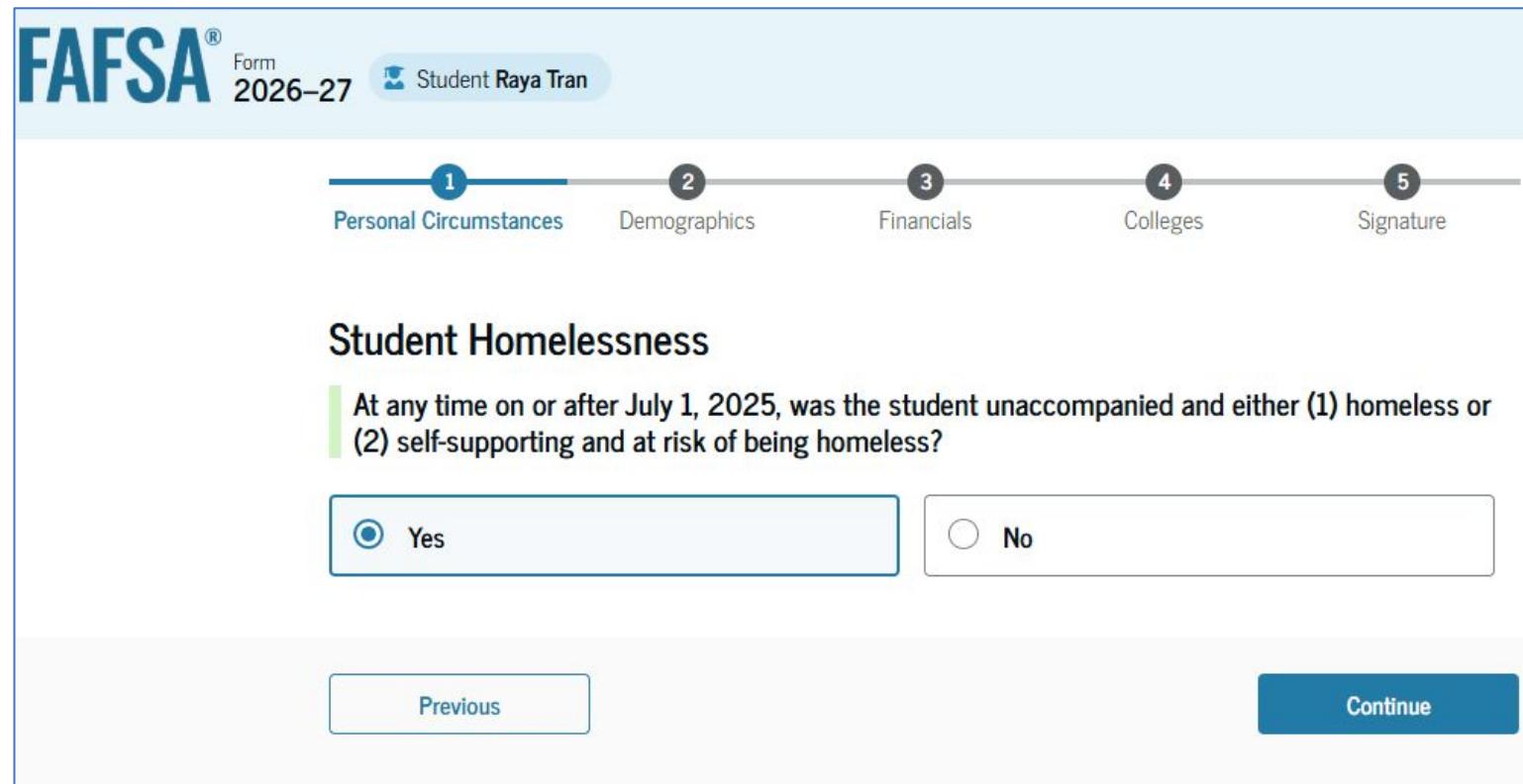
- ✓ **Current foster youth:** Contact your social worker or Independent Living Program (ILP) representative
- ✓ **Former foster youth:** May also contact the Office of the California Foster Care Ombudsman: 877-846-1602 or fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/verification-request-form

4b.

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Unaccompanied Homeless Students

Students are then asked about their homelessness status.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA Form 2026-27 interface. At the top, the FAFSA logo and "Form 2026-27" are displayed, along with a student profile for "Student Raya Tran". Below the header, a progress bar shows five steps: "Personal Circumstances" (step 1, highlighted in blue), "Demographics" (step 2), "Financials" (step 3), "Colleges" (step 4), and "Signature" (step 5). The "Personal Circumstances" step is currently active. The main content area is titled "Student Homelessness" and contains the question: "At any time on or after July 1, 2025, was the student unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?". Two radio buttons are provided: "Yes" (selected) and "No". At the bottom, there are "Previous" and "Continue" buttons.

FAFSA® Form 2026-27 Student Raya Tran

1 Personal Circumstances 2 Demographics 3 Financials 4 Colleges 5 Signature

Student Homelessness

At any time on or after July 1, 2025, was the student unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?

Yes No

Previous Continue

Definition of Homeless Youth on the FAFSA

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)

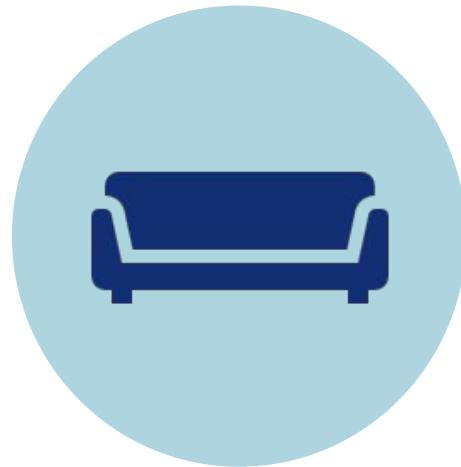
OR

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

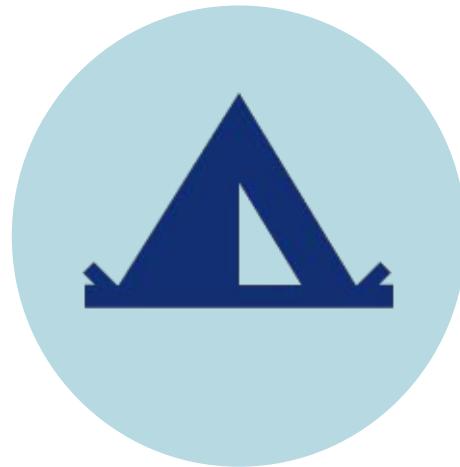
A student is paying for their living
expenses (including housing) AND
when a student's housing may cease
to be fixed, regular, and adequate.

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.

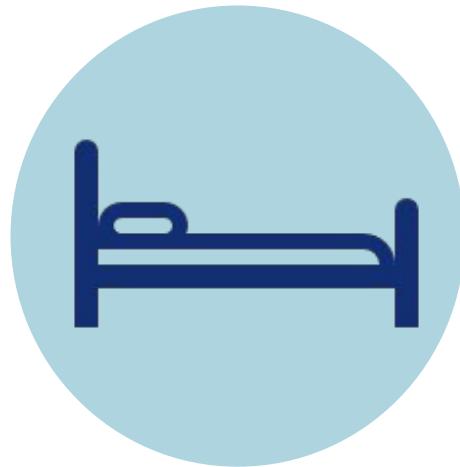
“Lacking fixed, regular and adequate housing” includes students who:



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

- If you select “yes,” you will be asked who will provide a homeless youth determination. Select all that apply.
- Financial aid administrators must accept documentation, including a documented phone call from these entities unless there is “documented conflicting information.”
- Status does not need to be redetermined every year if the student is at the same institution unless the student informs the institution that circumstances have changed, or the institution has specific conflicting information about the student’s independence and has informed the student of this information.
- If you don’t have verification from one of the listed entities, select “none of these apply.”

Homelessness Determinations

Did any of the following determine the student was homeless or at risk of becoming homeless?

Select all that apply.

- Director or designee of an emergency or transitional shelter, street outreach program, homeless youth drop-in center, or other program serving those experiencing homelessness
- The student’s 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 these apply.

Homelessness Determinations

If “None of these apply,” you can complete the FAFSA as an independent student but must contact the financial aid office for a determination.

Your Dependency Status



Provisionally Independent or **Unaccompanied Homeless Youth**

You Can Proceed without Parent Information

Based on your answers, you can submit your application without answering questions about your parent(s).

To complete the financial aid process, you'll need to contact the financial aid office at the school you wish to attend.

If you are not in contact with a parent, or contacting a parent would pose a risk to you, you are considered a provisionally independent student. You will need to speak with the financial aid office at your school about your circumstances.

If you have indicated that you are unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless, the financial aid office at your school is required to make a determination of your status based on a written statement from you or a documented interview with you. Please contact your school's financial aid office to complete this process.

We won't be able to calculate your Student Aid Index (SAI) until your financial aid office confirms your circumstances. Until then, we will provide only an estimate of your federal student aid eligibility as an independent student.

Homelessness Determinations

- Financial aid administrator's
 - **MUST** make a determination based on a written statement, or documented interview, with a student.
 - **MUST** make the determination without regard to the reasons why the student is unaccompanied and/or homeless.
- Once a determination is made by a financial aid administrator you may need to update your FAFSA. See next slide for details.
- Different rules apply to determinations of provisional independence (see next section "Unusual Circumstances").

FAFSA Correction to Homeless Determination

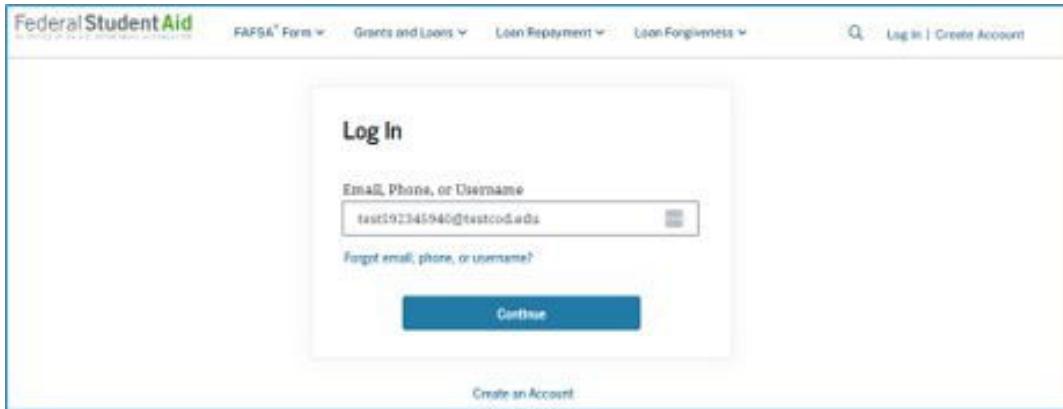
Homeless Determination Correction

If you answered "yes" to the homelessness status question and selected "none of the above" in response to the homelessness determination question, once a financial aid administrator makes a determination regarding your homeless status, a correction will have to be made to your FAFSA.

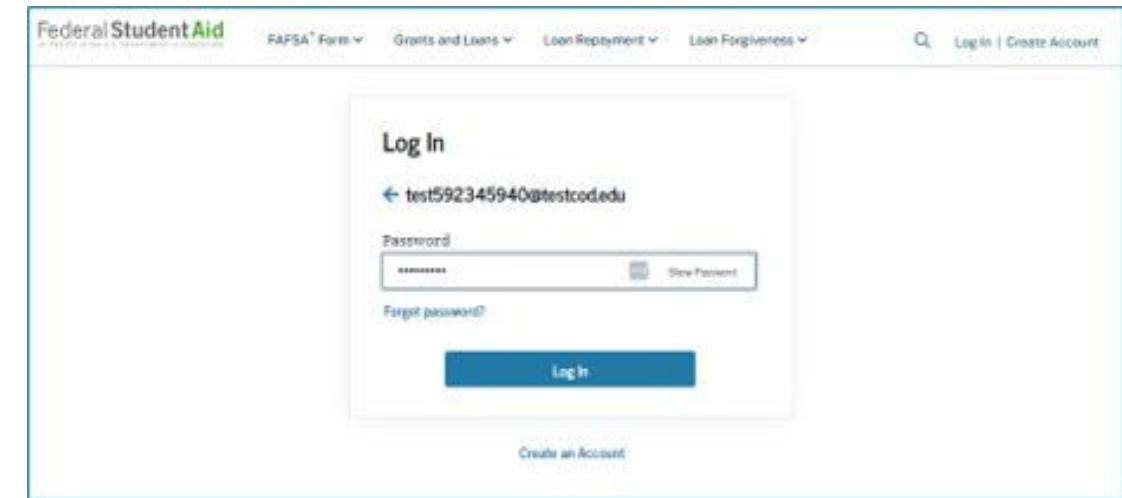
Financial Aid Administrators may update the application after making a determination, in which case no action is required. They may, however, request that you make the correction on your FAFSA. The following slides provide guidance on how you can make that correction.

Homeless Determination Correction: Log-in

To access an existing FAFSA form, log in to your StudentAid.gov account.



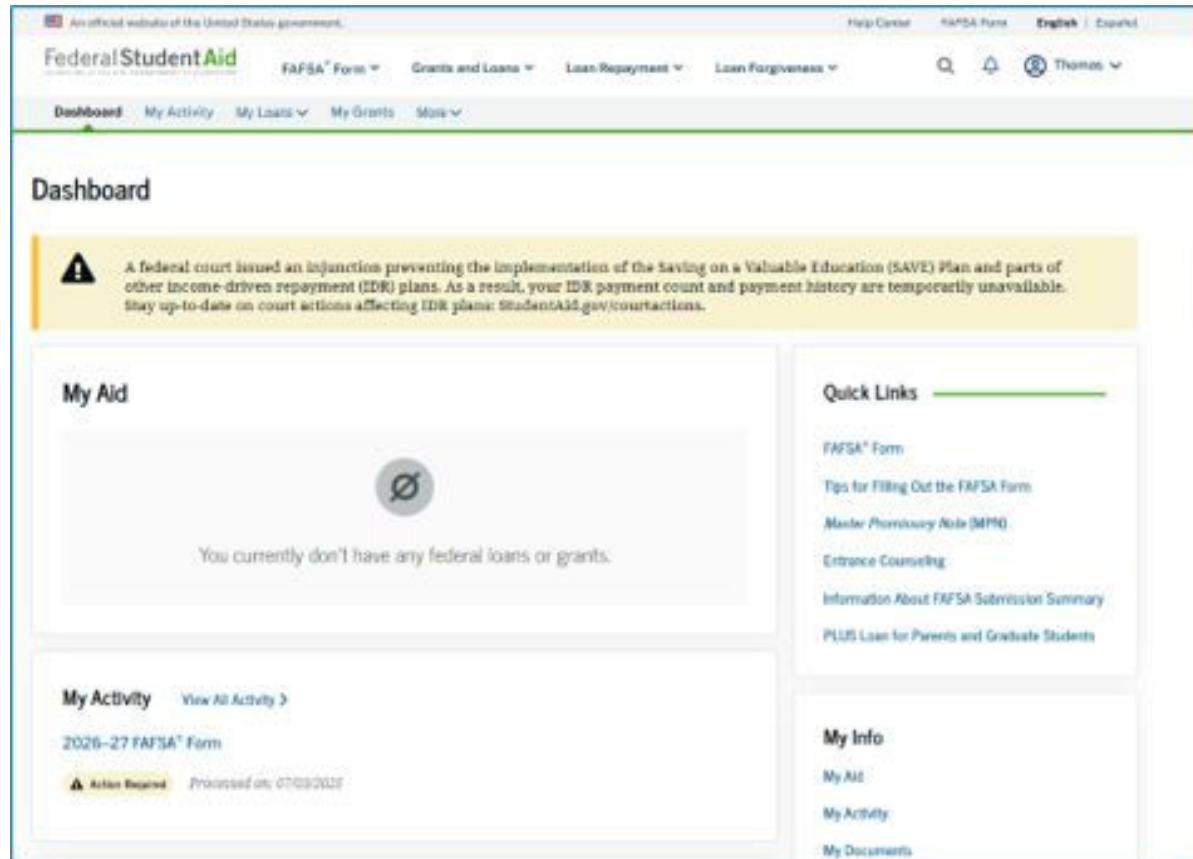
The screenshot shows the 'Log In' page of the Federal Student Aid website. At the top, there are navigation links: 'FAFSA® Form', 'Grants and Loans', 'Loan Repayment', 'Loan Forgiveness', 'Log In | Create Account', and a search bar. Below the navigation, a 'Log In' box contains a text input field labeled 'Email, Phone, or Username' with the value 'test192345940@testcodelab.edu'. Below the input field is a 'Forgot email, phone, or username?' link. A large blue 'Continue' button is centered below the input field. At the bottom of the box, there is a 'Create an Account' link.



The screenshot shows the 'Log In' page of the Federal Student Aid website. The layout is identical to the first screenshot, with the same navigation links and search bar. The 'Log In' box now contains a text input field labeled 'Password' with the value 'test192345940@testcodelab.edu'. To the right of the password field is a 'View Password' link. Below the password field is a 'Forgot password?' link. A large blue 'Log In' button is centered below the password field. At the bottom of the box, there is a 'Create an Account' link.

Homeless Determination Correction: Dashboard

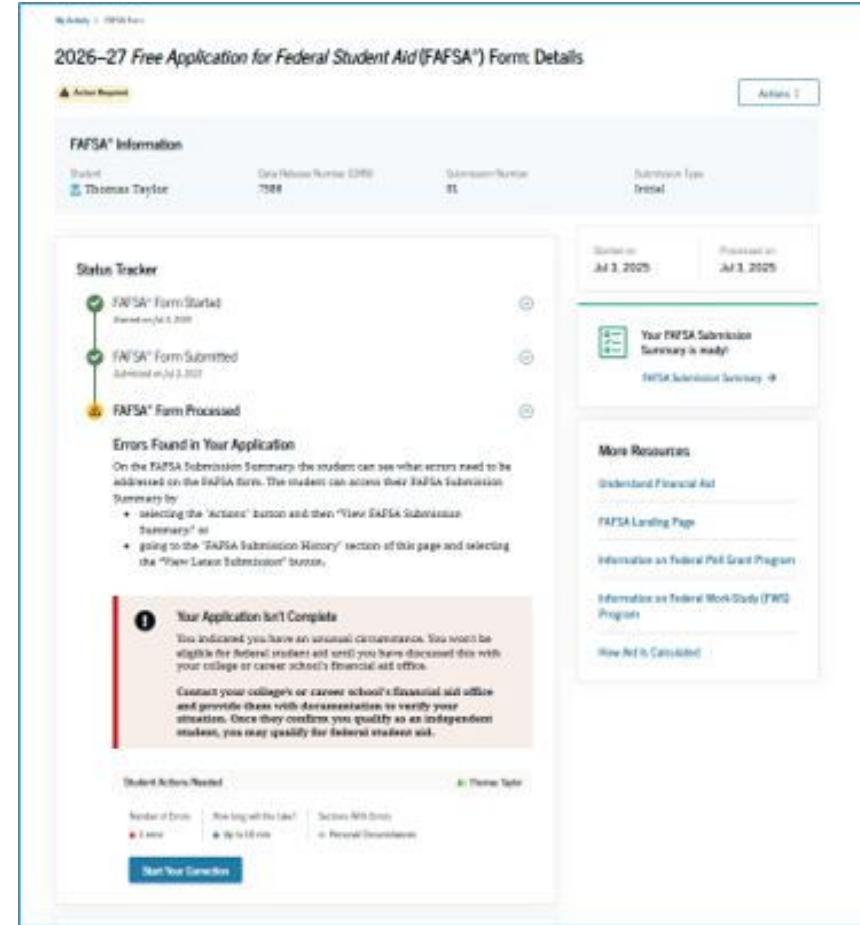
On the account Dashboard, you will see your most recent 2026-27 FAFSA activity under the "My Activity" Section. Select the application to be taken to a "Details" page.



The screenshot shows the Federal Student Aid account dashboard. At the top, there is a banner with a warning icon: "A federal court issued an injunction preventing the implementation of the Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE) Plan and parts of other income-driven repayment (IDR) plans. As a result, your IDR payment count and payment history are temporarily unavailable. Stay up-to-date on court actions affecting IDR plans: StudentAid.gov/courtactions." Below the banner, the "My Aid" section shows a message: "You currently don't have any federal loans or grants." The "My Activity" section shows the "2026-27 FAFSA" application with a status of "Action Required" and a processing date of "07/03/2023". To the right, there is a "Quick Links" sidebar with links to "FAFSA Form", "Tips for Filling Out the FAFSA Form", "Master Promissory Note (MPN)", "Entrance Counseling", "Information About FAFSA Submission Summary", and "PLUS Loan for Parents and Graduate Students". There is also a "My Info" sidebar with links to "My Aid", "My Activity", and "My Documents".

Homeless Determination Correction: Details

On the "Details" page, you will see information about your FAFSA. An error notification will appear in this scenario informing you to contact your school's financial aid office to provide documentation. Select "Start Your Correction."



My Activity / FAFSA Form

2026-27 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Form: Details

Action Required

FAFSA® Information

Student: Thomas Taylor Date Release Number: 0386 Submission Number: 81 Submission Type: Draft

Status Tracker

- FAFSA® Form Started: Started on 6/1/2025
- FAFSA® Form Submitted: Submitted on 7/3/2025
- FAFSA® Form Processed

Errors Found in Your Application

On the FAFSA Submission Summary, the student can see what errors need to be addressed on the FAFSA form. The student can access their FAFSA Submission Summary by:

- selecting the "Actions" button and then "View FAFSA Submission Summary" in
- going to the "FAFSA Submission History" section of this page and selecting the "View Latest Submission" button.

Your Application isn't Complete

You indicated you have an unusual circumstance. You won't be eligible for federal student aid until you have discussed this with your college or career school's financial aid office.

Contact your college's or career school's financial aid office and provide them with documentation to verify your situation. Once they confirm you qualify as an independent student, you may qualify for federal student aid.

Student Actions Needed

Number of Errors: 1 Note: Up to 10 cm

Start Your Correction

Homeless Determination Correction: Onboarding

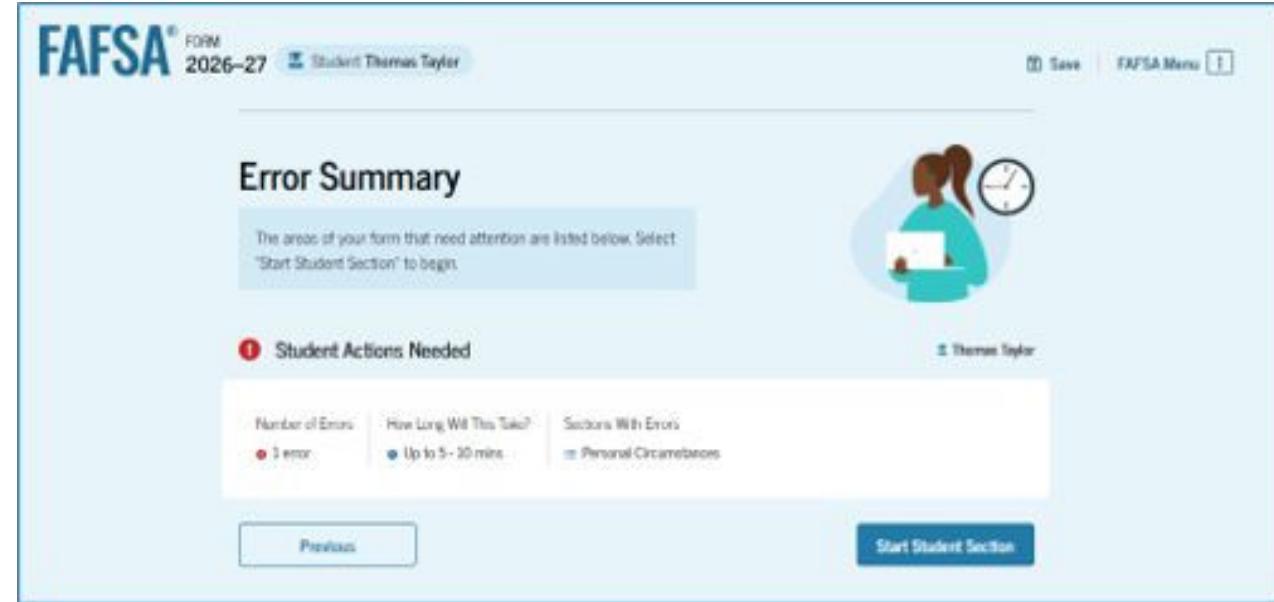
When you start a correction,
you are taking through an
onboarding process.

Corrections should only be
submitted if critical
information was missing or
had incorrect information



Homeless Determination Correction: Error Summary

Review the Error Summary page to check the number of errors on your form. Select "Start Student Section" to begin FAFSA correction.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA Error Summary page. At the top, it displays "FAFSA FORM 2026-27" and "Student Thomas Taylor". On the right, there are "Save" and "FAFSA Menu" buttons. The main section is titled "Error Summary" with the sub-instruction: "The areas of your form that need attention are listed below. Select 'Start Student Section' to begin." Below this, there is a section titled "1 Student Actions Needed" with three categories: "Number of Errors" (1 error), "How Long Will This Take?" (Up to 5-10 mins), and "Sections With Errors" (Personal Circumstances). At the bottom, there are "Previous" and "Start Student Section" buttons, along with a profile icon for "Thomas Taylor".

Homeless Determination Correction: Updates

You will then be taken through the pages on:

- Student Identity
- State of Residence
- Marital Status
- College or Career School Plans
- Personal Circumstances

Confirm that each section remains accurate

Student Identity Information
Review the information below and make changes if anything is incorrect.

Name: Thomas U Taylor
Date of Birth: 12/08/2005
Social Security Number: ***-**-1234
Email Address: thomas.taylor@kentucky.gov
Main Phone Number: (555) 123-4568

To update this information for the U.S. Department of Education, go to [Account Summary](#)

Student State of Residence
State: Kentucky (KY)

Date the Student Became a Resident of Kentucky (KY):
If the student was born in Kentucky (KY) and has not moved out of state since, enter their date of birth. Otherwise, enter the date the student moved to Kentucky (KY).

Month: 01 Year: 2006

[Previous](#) [Skip to end of form](#) [Continue](#)

Homeless Determination Correction: Other Circumstances

You will be asked if you are homeless or at risk of being homeless. Do not change the response of "Yes."

You will be asked who made the homelessness determination. You can update this answer from "None of these apply" to "Financial aid administrator."

You will see a notification that you are considered independent. Select "Continue."

The image displays two screenshots of the FAFSA application interface. The top screenshot shows the 'Student Homelessness' section of the form. It asks if the student was unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless. The 'Yes' radio button is selected. The bottom screenshot shows the 'Your Dependency Status' section, which indicates the student is an 'Independent Student'. It states that based on the answers, the student does not need to answer financial questions about their parents to complete the form.

Homeless Determination Correction: Submission

- You will then be routed to "Student Demographic Information" where you can select "Skip to end of form."
- On the next page, select "Continue" if ready to submit.
- After confirming changes, you will digitally sign and submit.
- You will see the confirmation page after signing.

FAFSA® FORM 2026-27 Student Thomas Taylor

Save | FAFSA Menu

Personal Circumstances Demographics Financials Colleges Signature

Student Demographic Information

Questions Used for Research Purposes Only and Do Not Affect Federal Student Aid Eligibility

Your answers will not

- affect the student's eligibility for federal student aid,
- be used in any aid calculations, or
- be shared with the schools to which the student applies.

What is the student's sex? 

Male

Female

Previous Skip to end of form Continue

FAFSA® FORM 2026-27 Student Thomas Taylor

Save | FAFSA Menu

You're Almost Done!

Select "Continue" to sign and complete the correction.



Student Sections Updated

Section 1: Personal Circumstances 

Student Homelessness	Updated Answer	Previous Answer	Actions
None of the Above	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Yes	
Determined Homeless by Financial Aid Administrator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	No	

Make More Changes Continue

You also certify that you understand that the secretary of education has the authority to verify information reported on your application.

If you sign this application or any document related to the federal student aid programs electronically using a username and password and/or any other credential, you certify that you are the person identified by the username and password, and/or any other credential and have not disclosed that username and password, and/or any other credential to anyone else. If you purposefully give false or misleading information, including applying as an independent student without meeting the unusual circumstances required to qualify for such a status, you may be subject to criminal penalties under 20 U.S.C. 1097, which may include a fine up to \$20,000, imprisonment, or both.

Additionally, by signing this application electronically using your FSA ID, you authorize the U.S. Department of Education to disclose all information provided on this application, as required under Section 483(a)(2)(D)(i) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, to the institutions you have identified herein, state higher education agencies (in your state of residence and the states in which the institutions identified herein are located), and designated scholarship organizations to assist with the application, award, and administration of federal, state, or institutional financial aid programs and designated scholarship programs. Notwithstanding this authorization, the name of an institution that you select to authorize such disclosure shall not be shared with any other institution.

Sign and Submit Your FAFSA® Form

I, Thomas Taylor, agree to the terms outlined above.

Previous Sign and Submit

4c.

Unusual Circumstances

Students may complete the FAFSA 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.

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.

Colleges have discretion to use professional judgement when evaluating whether to consider unusual circumstances.

Student Unusual Circumstances

Student Unusual Circumstances

This information will help us evaluate the student's ability to pay for school.

Do unusual circumstances prevent the student from contacting their parents or would contacting their parents pose a risk to the student?

A student may be experiencing unusual circumstances if they

- left home due to an abusive or threatening environment;
- are abandoned by or estranged from their parents;
- have refugee or asylee status and are separated from their parents, or their parents are displaced in a foreign country;
- are a victim of human trafficking;
- are incarcerated, or their parents are incarcerated and contact with the parents would pose a risk to the student; or
- are otherwise unable to contact or locate their parents.

If the student's circumstances resulted in not having a safe and stable place to live, they may be considered a homeless youth and should review the answer to the previous question about being unaccompanied and homeless.



Yes



No

Impact of Provisionally Independent Status

If a student has “unusual circumstances”, they will be “Provisionally Independent.”

The student can sign and submit their FAFSA 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.

Your Dependency Status



Provisionally Independent or Unaccompanied Homeless Youth
You Can Proceed without Parent Information

Based on your answers, you can submit your application without answering questions about your parent(s).

To complete the financial aid process, you'll need to contact the financial aid office at the school you wish to attend.

If you are not in contact with a parent, or contacting a parent would pose a risk to you, you are considered a provisionally independent student. You will need to speak with the financial aid office at your school about your circumstances.

If you have indicated that you are unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless, the financial aid office at your school is required to make a determination of your status based on a written statement from you or a documented interview with you. Please contact your school's financial aid office to complete this process.

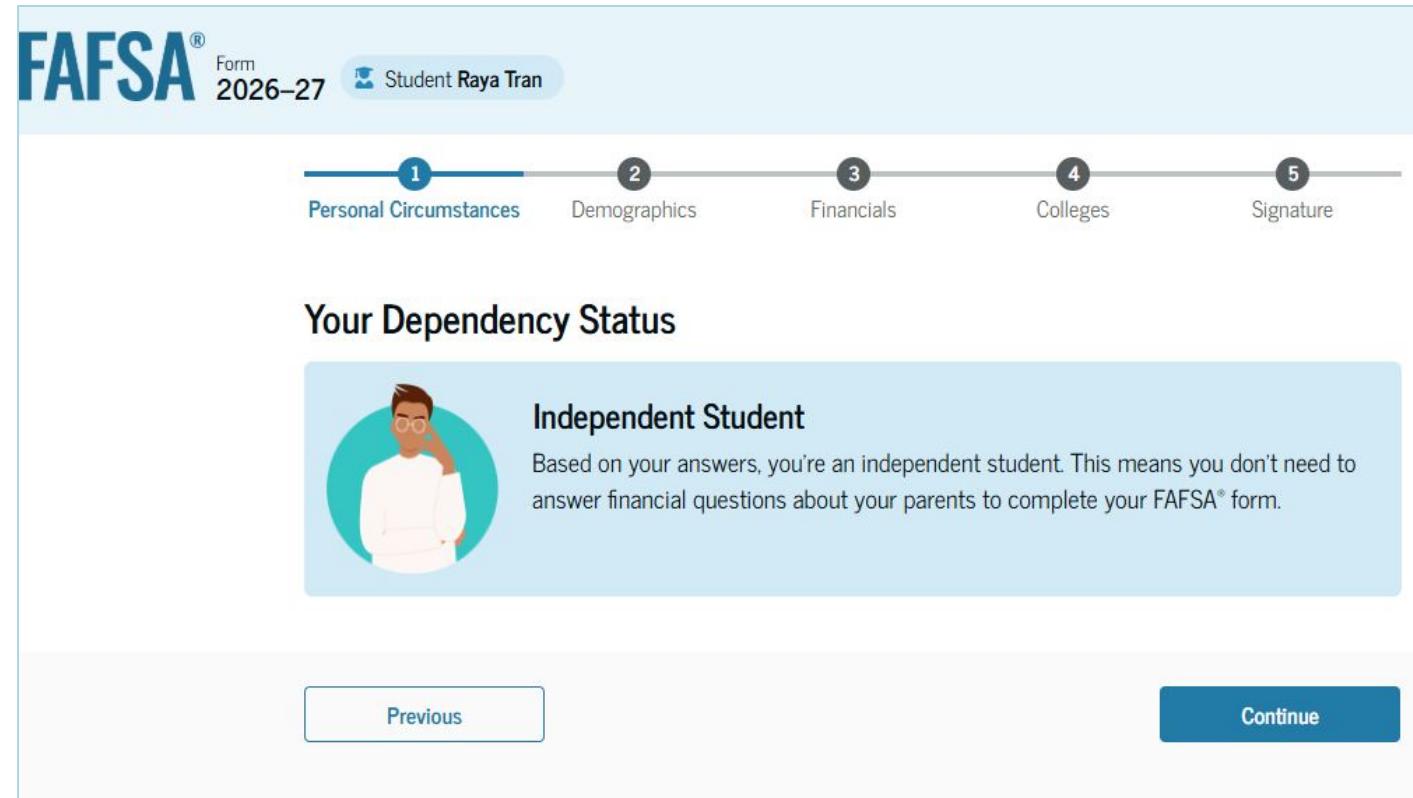
We won't be able to calculate your Student Aid Index (SAI) until your financial aid office confirms your circumstances. Until then, we will provide only an estimate of your federal student aid eligibility as an independent student.

4d.

Independent Status Confirmation

Independent Status Confirmation

If you indicated that you meet one or more of the criteria for independent status, this screen will appear.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA application interface for the 2026-27 academic year. At the top, it displays "FAFSA® Form 2026-27" and "Student Raya Tran". Below this is a navigation bar with five steps: 1. Personal Circumstances (highlighted in blue), 2. Demographics, 3. Financials, 4. Colleges, and 5. Signature. The main content area is titled "Your Dependency Status". It features a circular profile picture of a young man and the text "Independent Student". A descriptive message states: "Based on your answers, you're an independent student. This means you don't need to answer financial questions about your parents to complete your FAFSA® form." At the bottom are "Previous" and "Continue" buttons.

5.

Student Demographics

Student Demographics

This is the first view within the Student Demographics section. It provides an overview of the section.

Student Demographics

We'll ask questions about your background and family.



[Previous](#) [Continue](#)

Demographic Information

You are asked about your sex.
Select your response from the options.

The answers are not shared with the colleges and are for research purposes only.

Student Demographic Information

Questions Used for Research Purposes Only and Do Not Affect Federal Student Aid Eligibility

Your answers will not

- affect the student's eligibility for federal student aid,
- be used in any aid calculations, or
- be shared with the schools to which the student applies.

What is the student's sex?

Male

Female

Race and Ethnicity

You are asked to identify your race and/or ethnicity. You can select multiple options. For each selection, a pop up will appear that allows you to select a subcategory. 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.

Questions Used for Research Purposes Only and Do Not Affect Federal Student Aid Eligibility

Your answers will not

- affect the student’s eligibility for federal student aid,
- be used in any aid calculations, or
- be shared with the schools to which the student applies.

What is the student’s race and/or ethnicity?

Select all that apply and enter additional details in the spaces below.

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Hispanic or Latino

Middle Eastern or North African

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

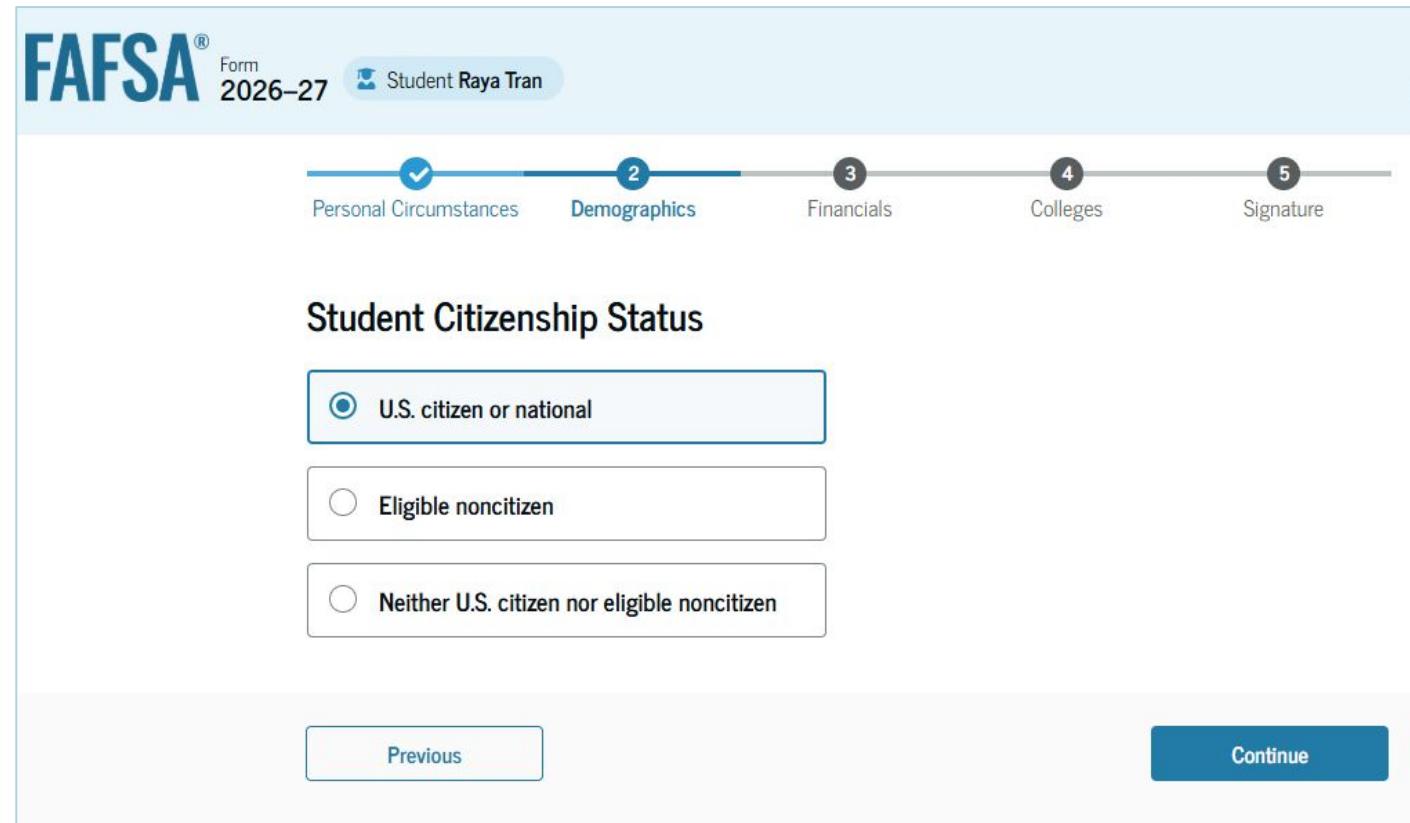
White

Prefer not to answer

Citizenship Status

You are asked about your citizenship status. If you are an eligible non-citizen, you will be asked to enter your Alien Registration Number.

If you select that you are not a US citizen or eligible non-citizen the form will allow you to continue, however you are not eligible for federal aid and should complete the CADAA instead.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA application interface for the 2026-27 academic year. The student's name, Raya Tran, is displayed at the top. A progress bar at the top indicates the current step is 'Personal Circumstances' (step 1, marked with a checkmark), followed by 'Demographics' (step 2), 'Financials' (step 3), 'Colleges' (step 4), and 'Signature' (step 5). The 'Student Citizenship Status' section is the current focus. It contains three radio button options: 'U.S. citizen or national' (selected, highlighted with a blue border), 'Eligible noncitizen' (unselected), and 'Neither U.S. citizen nor eligible noncitizen' (unselected). At the bottom of the screen are 'Previous' and 'Continue' buttons.

FAFSA®
Form 2026-27 Student Raya Tran

1 Personal Circumstances 2 Demographics 3 Financials 4 Colleges 5 Signature

Student Citizenship Status

U.S. citizen or national

Eligible noncitizen

Neither U.S. citizen nor eligible noncitizen

Previous Continue

Parent Education Status

You are asked if either 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.

Personal Circumstances **2** Demographics **3** Financials **4** Colleges **5** Signature

Parent Education Status

Did either of the student's parents attend college or complete college? ⓘ

Neither parent attended college

One or both parents attended college, but neither parent completed college

One or both parents completed college

Don't know

[Previous](#) [Continue](#)

Parent Killed in Line of Duty

All students under the age of 33 are asked if their parent or guardian was killed in the line of duty in the armed forces or as a public safety officer. If you do not know, select “no.”



Parent Killed in Line of Duty

Was the student's parent or guardian killed in the line of duty while either (1) serving on active duty as a member of the U.S. armed forces on or after the events of 9/11, or (2) performing official duties as a public safety officer?

Public safety officers include law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency service workers.

Yes

No

[Previous](#)

[Continue](#)

High School Completion Status

You are asked what your high school completion status will be when you start the 2026–27 school year.

Students who were home-schooled or received a high school equivalency certificate (i.e., GED) are eligible for aid.

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

If you select “None of the above” you will be allowed to continue to complete the form. However, aid is available only under extremely limited “ability to benefit” criteria* or for eligible foster youth through the Chafee Grant.

*<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements#ability-to-benefit>.

FAFSA® Form 2026-27 Student Raya Tran



Personal Circumstances 2 Demographics 3 Financials 4 Colleges 5 Signature

Student High School Completion Status

What will the student's high school completion status be at the beginning of the 2026–27 school year?

- High school diploma
- State-recognized high school equivalent (e.g., GED certificate)
- Homeschooled
- None of the above

[Previous](#) [Continue](#)

High School Information

If you select "High school diploma", you are asked which high school you did or will graduate from. Enter your high school's state and city. After selecting "Search," select the correct high school from the search results and select continue.



Personal Circumstances **2** Demographics **3** Financials **4** Colleges **5** Signature

Student High School Information

From what high school did or will the student graduate?

State: California (CA)

City: Tulare

High School Name - *optional*: Accelerated Charter High

Search

i To add a high school to this application, choose a school from the following list, and select "Continue."

Search Results 1 to 1 of 1

SORT BY: **MOST RELEVANT** **A-Z**

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Accelerated Charter High
Tulare, CA

Is the student's school not listed? [Add school manually](#)

Confirm High School

You have the option to edit the high school information presented on this page by selecting "Edit," which will return you to the high school information page. If the information is correct, select "Continue" to proceed to the next section.



Personal Circumstances **2** Demographics **3** Financials **4** Colleges **5** Signature

Confirm Your High School

Verify that your high school information below is correct. Once you're ready, select "Continue" and we'll add it to your FAFSA® form.

High School Name	<input type="text" value="Accelerated Charter High"/> Edit
City	<input type="text" value="Tulare"/> Edit
State	<input type="text" value="California (CA)"/> Edit

6.

Student Financials

Introduction: Financials

This is the first page within the Student Financials section. It provides an overview of the section.

FAFSA® Form 2026–27 Student Raya Tran

Your Finances

The FAFSA® form helps determine your ability to pay for school. We ask about your financial information in this section.

What if you have special financial circumstances?

[Previous](#) [Continue](#)



Financials Section: Federal Benefits Received

- Students are asked if they received certain means-tested public benefits at any time in 2024 or 2025.
- If you answer yes to any of these, you will be able to skip the question about your current assets.



In California:
Medicaid = MediCal
SNAP = Cal Fresh
TANF = CalWorks

Federal Benefits Received

Responses Won't Reduce Federal Student Aid Eligibility

Answering these questions won't reduce your eligibility for federal student aid or these programs.

At any time during 2024 or 2025, did the student or anyone in their family receive benefits from any of the following federal programs?

Family includes the student's spouse, children, and other dependents. Select all that apply or "None of these apply."

- Earned Income Credit (EIC)
- Federal Housing Assistance
- Free or Reduced Price School Lunch
- Medicaid
- Refundable Credit for Coverage Under a Qualified Health Plan (QHP) or Health Insurance Subsidy
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- None of these apply.

Previous

Continue

Tax Filing Status

These questions only appear if you do not consent to import your Federal Tax Information (FTI) from the IRS.

If you indicated that you are married, these questions look slightly different.

If you respond no to the first question, you will be asked about any foreign income and a couple other unlikely scenarios.



Student Tax Filing Status

Did or will the student file a 2024 IRS Form 1040 or 1040-NR? ⓘ

Yes

No

Did the student earn income in a foreign country in 2024, were they employed by an international organization but not required to report their income on any tax return, or did they file a tax return with Puerto Rico or another U.S. territory? ⓘ

Examples of international organizations include the United Nations, World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.

Yes

No

Previous

Continue

Family Size

This screen appears if the student's family size is different than what is reported on their 2024 tax return.

For most independent students, your family size will be 1 and will likely not have changed.

However, if you got married or have dependents who live with you and will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027, and you did not report them on your 2024 tax return, you would update your family size here.



Family Size

Is the student's family size different from the number of individuals claimed on their 2024 tax return?

Family size includes the student, their spouse, and other people, if they now live with the student and the student will provide more than half of their support between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027. This includes dependent children who meet these criteria, even if they live apart because of college enrollment. Examples of family size changing include the birth of a child and a child independently supporting themselves such that they are no longer a dependent.

Yes

No

Based on answers to previous questions, we've made some assumptions about the student's family. The student (and student's spouse, if married) are always included in the family size. The box below shows the student's family size based on our assumptions and the number of children or other dependents you report.



The student's family size is **1**.

Student: 1

Student's Children and Other Dependents: 0

Enter the number of children or other dependents who live with the student and will receive more than half of their support from the student between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027.

Do not include the student applicant.

0

Previous

Continue

Number in College

You are asked how many people in your family will be in college between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027, 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).

The screenshot shows a progress bar at the top with five steps: Personal Circumstances (checked), Demographics (checked), Financials (step 3), Colleges (step 4), and Signature (step 5). The 'Financials' step is highlighted with a blue background. Below the bar, the section title 'Number in College' is displayed in bold. A question is shown in a green box: 'How many people in the student's family, including the student, will be in college between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027?'. Below the question is a large empty input field. At the bottom of the section are 'Previous' and 'Continue' buttons.

Personal Circumstances

Demographics

Financials

Colleges

Signature

Number in College

How many people in the student's family, including the student, will be in college between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027?

Previous

Continue

Tax Information

If you answered yes to whether you filed taxes or had foreign income, you will be asked to answer two tax-related questions.

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 FAFSA. The amount reported will be **DEDUCTED** from your total income and could result in eligibility for more aid.

If your tax return shows that you are married and you report a different marital status on the FAFSA (e.g., single, divorced) you will be asked to provide additional detailed information from your tax return (not shown here).

Student 2024 Tax Return Information

Refer to the student's 2024 tax return to answer the following questions.

If the answer is zero or the question does not apply, enter 0.

IRA Rollover Into Another IRA or Qualified Plan

\$.00
----	--	-----

Pension Rollover Into an IRA or Other Qualified Plan

\$.00
----	--	-----

Amount of College Grants, Scholarships, or AmeriCorps Benefits Reported as Income to the IRS

Students typically answer this question with a zero because most scholarships and grants, including Federal Pell Grants, are not considered taxable income. If the student is married, include the amount their spouse reported. If the response is other than zero, the amount is typically not the same as the amount reported on IRS Form 1098-T (Box 5) or the adjusted gross income reported on the tax return.

\$.00
----	--	-----

Foreign Earned Income Exclusion

IRS Form 1040 Schedule 1: Line 8d

\$.00
----	--	-----

Student Assets

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.

If you indicated that you receive public benefits on a previous screen, this question will not appear.



Annual Child Support Received

Enter the total amount of child support the student received for the last complete calendar year.

Student Assets

Current Total of Cash, Savings, and Checking Accounts

Don't include student financial aid.

Current Net Worth of Investments, Including Real Estate

Don't include the home the student lives in. Net worth is the value of the investments minus any debts owed against them.

Current Net Worth of Businesses and Investment Farms

Enter the net worth of the student's businesses or for-profit agricultural operations. Net worth is the value of the businesses or farms minus any debts owed against them.

[Previous](#)

[Continue](#)

7.

College Selection

Introduction: Select Colleges

This is the first page within the College Selection section. It provides an overview of the section.

Select Colleges

Search for and select colleges and career schools you're considering so they automatically receive an electronic copy of the FAFSA® form.



[Previous](#) [Continue](#)

College Search

You are asked to search for the colleges and/or career schools you would like to receive your FAFSA information.

You can search for a school by entering a state, city, and/or school name.

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

Personal Circumstances Demographics Financials 4 Colleges 5 Signature

Where should we send the FAFSA® information?

Search and select colleges and career schools.

If you can't find your school when searching by School Name or State, try searching by School Code.

You can add up to 20 colleges and career schools to the FAFSA® form.

0 out of 20 schools selected [View Selected Schools](#)

Search by School Name [Search by School Code](#)

State
California (CA)

City - optional
San Francisco

School Name - optional

[Search](#)

College Search

After selecting "Search," select the correct school from the search results and click "+Select." You can select to send your FAFSA information to a maximum of 20 schools.

A minimum of one school is required to proceed.



The screenshot shows a search result for San Francisco State University. The institution's name and location (San Francisco, California (CA)) are listed on the left. To the right, the Federal School Code (001154) is shown. On the far right, a green button with the text "+ Select" is highlighted with a red box, indicating the action to take.



Some 4-year institutions have separate codes for their graduate schools. If the code starts with a letter rather than a number, it is a graduate program and shouldn't be used by a student applying as an undergraduate.

Selected Colleges

You can then view which colleges and/or career schools you have selected. If you have not selected 20 schools, you have the option to search and select more schools.

Selected Colleges and Career Schools

These are the colleges and career schools that you've selected to receive the FAFSA® form.

Review this list of schools and confirm your selection(s).

School List Guidelines for California Residents

To be eligible for state grant aid in California, you must list an eligible in-state college. The order of schools in your college list will not impact your eligibility for state aid programs.

 3 out of 20 schools selected

Showing 1 to 3 of 3

San Francisco State University
San Francisco, California (CA)

Federal School Code
001154

 Remove [View Info](#)

University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, California (CA)

Federal School Code
001312

 Remove [View Info](#)

Laney College
Oakland, California (CA)

Federal School Code
001266

 Remove [View Info](#)

 [Search More Schools](#)

8.

Review & Signature

Review Page

The review page displays the responses that you provided. You can view all the responses by selecting "Expand All" or expand each section individually. To edit a response, you can select the question's link, and you will be taken to the corresponding page.

FAFSA® Form 2026-27 Student Raya Tran

Personal Circumstances Demographics Financials Colleges 5 Signature

Review Your FAFSA® Responses

If you need to change any of your FAFSA responses, select the question to return to that page.



Student Sections Expand All ▾

- Introduction Personal Identifiers
- Section 1 Personal Circumstances
- Section 2 Demographics
- Section 3 Financials
- Section 4 Colleges

Signature

You acknowledge the terms and conditions of the FAFSA form and sign.

Sign and Submit the FAFSA® Form

Summary

This page confirms that you understand the terms and conditions of the FAFSA® form and filled out the form accurately to the best of your ability.

The FAFSA form is a legal document you will electronically sign with your account username and password (FSA ID). Because your FSA ID is associated with your personal information, do not share it with anyone.

By signing this application electronically using your FSA ID, YOU, THE STUDENT, certify that you

- will use federal and/or state student aid only to pay the cost of attending an institution of higher education,
- are not in default on a federal student loan or have made satisfactory arrangements to repay it,
- do not owe money back on a federal student grant or have made satisfactory arrangements to repay it,
- will notify your school if you default on a federal student loan, and
- will not receive a Federal Pell Grant from more than one school for the same period of time.

By signing this application electronically using your account username and password, you certify that all of the information you provided is true and complete to the best of your knowledge and you agree, if asked, to provide

- information that will verify the accuracy of your completed form, and
- U.S. or foreign income tax forms that you filed or are required to file.

You also certify that you understand that the secretary of education has the authority to verify information reported on your application.

If you sign this application or any document related to the federal student aid programs electronically using a username and password, and/or any other credential, you certify that you are the person identified by the username and password, and/or any other credential and have not disclosed that username and password, and/or any other credential to anyone else. If you purposefully give false or misleading information, including applying as an independent student without meeting the unusual circumstances required to qualify for such a status, you may be subject to criminal penalties under 20 U.S.C. 1097, which may include a fine up to \$20,000, imprisonment, or both.

Additionally, by signing this application electronically using your FSA ID, you authorize the U.S. Department of Education to disclose all information provided on this application, as required under Section 483(a)(2)(D)(i) of the *Higher Education Act of 1965*, as amended, to the institutions you have identified herein, state higher education agencies (in your state of residence and the states in which the institutions identified herein are located), and designated scholarship organizations to assist with the application, award, and administration of federal, state, or institutional financial aid programs and designated scholarship programs. Notwithstanding this authorization, the name of an institution that you select to authorize such disclosure shall not be shared with any other institution.

Sign and Submit Your FAFSA® Form

I, Raya Tran, agree to the terms outlined above.

Cancel

Sign and Submit

- Once submitted, you will receive a **confirmation page** with your estimated “**Student Aid Index (SAI)**”
- The SAI is used to determine eligibility for federal student aid. It is not how much aid you are eligible to receive.
- Typically*, students receive a **FAFSA Submission Summary** indicating that their FAFSA was processed in 1-3 days.

Confirmation Page & FAFSA Submission Summary



Confirmation Page (Continued)

What Happens Next

-  **Check Your Email**
You will receive an email version of this confirmation page at the following email address:
raya.tran@email.com.
-  **Track the Status of Your Form**
In one to three days, your FAFSA form will be processed and made available to your schools. Check the status of your form by logging in to StudentAid.gov and selecting your FAFSA submission from the "My Activity" section of your account Dashboard.
-  **You Will Receive School Communications**
We use the information collected on your FAFSA form to calculate your Student Aid Index (SAI). The SAI lets schools determine the aid you're eligible to receive. Your schools will reach out to you if they need more information. They will also contact you with your financial aid offers. Once received, you can contact their financial aid offices directly to ask questions about their student aid packages.

Start Your Application for New York State-Based Aid

[Apply for State Aid](#)

Track and Manage Your FAFSA® Form

You can check the status of your application in the "My Activity" section of your account Dashboard. We'll let you know if we need anything more from you.

[View Status](#)

9.

FAFSA Submission Summary

FAFSA Submission Summary Landing Page

The FAFSA Submission Summary is broken into four tabs: Eligibility Overview, FAFSA Form Answers, School Information, and Next Steps.

At the top, you will see information about when your form was received and processed. You also have the option to print your FAFSA Submission Summary to keep for your records.

FAFSA® FORM 2026-27 FAFSA Submission Summary

Student



Raya Tran

Application Received
Sept. 12, 2025

Application Processed
Nov. 15th, 2025

Data Release Number
1234

Viewing: **Submission 1**

Eligibility Overview

On the Eligibility Overview tab, you see information about what federal student aid you may be eligible for, such as a Federal Pell Grant and Federal Direct Loans. You are also able to view your Student Aid Index. Any amounts of financial aid that display on this tab are estimates and are not guaranteed. **Final determination of your financial aid eligibility will be provided by your school's financial aid office.**

Your Estimated Federal Student Aid

Federal Pell Grant

A [Federal Pell Grant](#) is awarded to undergraduate students who have financial need and who have not earned a degree or are in a teacher certification program. Federal Pell Grants don't need to be repaid.

Up to **\$4,556**

Federal Direct Loans

A [federal direct loan](#) is money lent to you by the government to you that you must repay with interest.

Up to **\$4,556**

Federal Work-Study

[Federal Work-Study](#) is a way for students to earn money to pay for school through part-time jobs on or off campus.

You May Be Eligible

Amounts shown here are only estimates of federal student aid based on full-time enrollment and the average cost of attendance. Your school will determine how much student aid to offer you, which may include additional aid from your school or state.

[Learn more about financial aid](#)



Keep in mind, this is only an estimate

Always refer to your school's financial aid offer for a final determination of financial aid available.

Eligibility Overview (Continued)

Student Aid Index (SAI) can go as low as -1500. The lower the number, the more aid you are eligible for.

Your Student Aid Index (SAI)

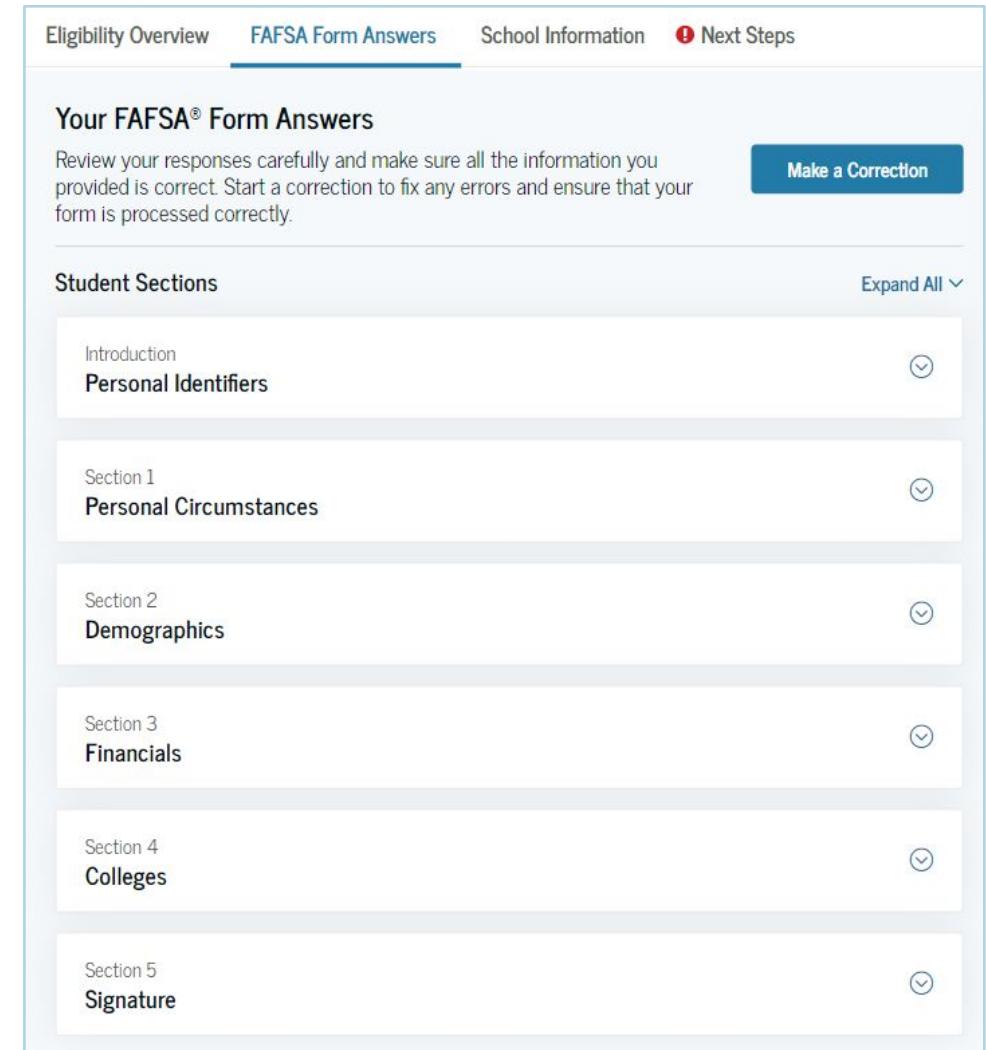
Your SAI is an index number used by your school to determine your federal student aid eligibility and to build your financial aid offer. Your SAI may change due if you update or correct your FAFSA information or due to verification.

-355

[What does this mean?](#)

FAFSA Form Answers

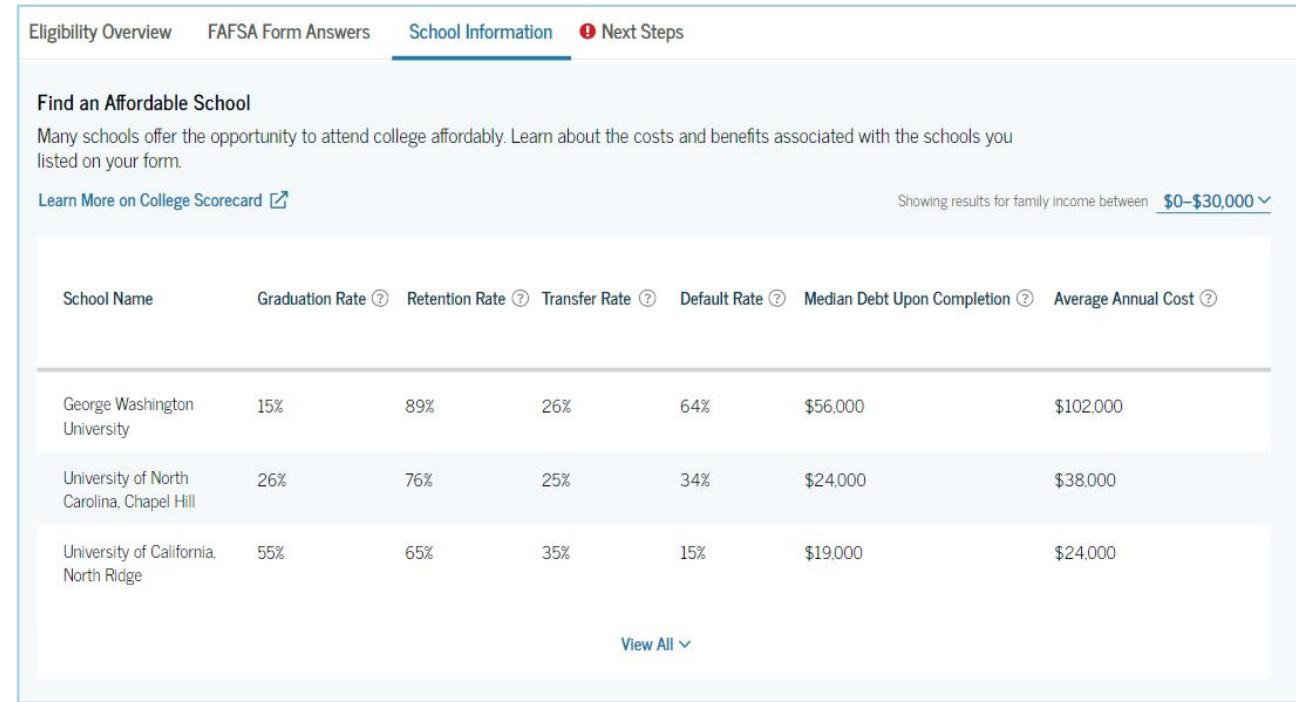
On the Answers tab, you will see the answers that you and, if applicable, your contributor(s) (parents and/or spouse) provided on your FAFSA. If any of the provided answers are incorrect, you can choose to start a correction.



The screenshot shows a user interface for reviewing FAFSA form answers. At the top, there are tabs: 'Eligibility Overview', 'FAFSA Form Answers' (which is underlined, indicating it is the active tab), 'School Information', and 'Next Steps'. Below the tabs, the heading 'Your FAFSA® Form Answers' is displayed, followed by a sub-instruction: 'Review your responses carefully and make sure all the information you provided is correct. Start a correction to fix any errors and ensure that your form is processed correctly.' A 'Make a Correction' button is located in the top right corner of this section. The main content area is titled 'Student Sections' and contains five expandable sections: 'Introduction Personal Identifiers', 'Section 1 Personal Circumstances', 'Section 2 Demographics', 'Section 3 Financials', and 'Section 4 Colleges'. Each section has a 'Signature' section below it. On the far right of the 'Student Sections' title, there is a 'Expand All' button. The entire interface has a light blue background with white and light gray sections for different levels of detail.

School Information

On the School Information tab, you see information about the college(s) and/or career school(s) that you selected to send your FAFSA to. You can compare the graduation rate, retention rate, transfer rate, default rate, median debt upon completion, and average annual cost of your selected schools.



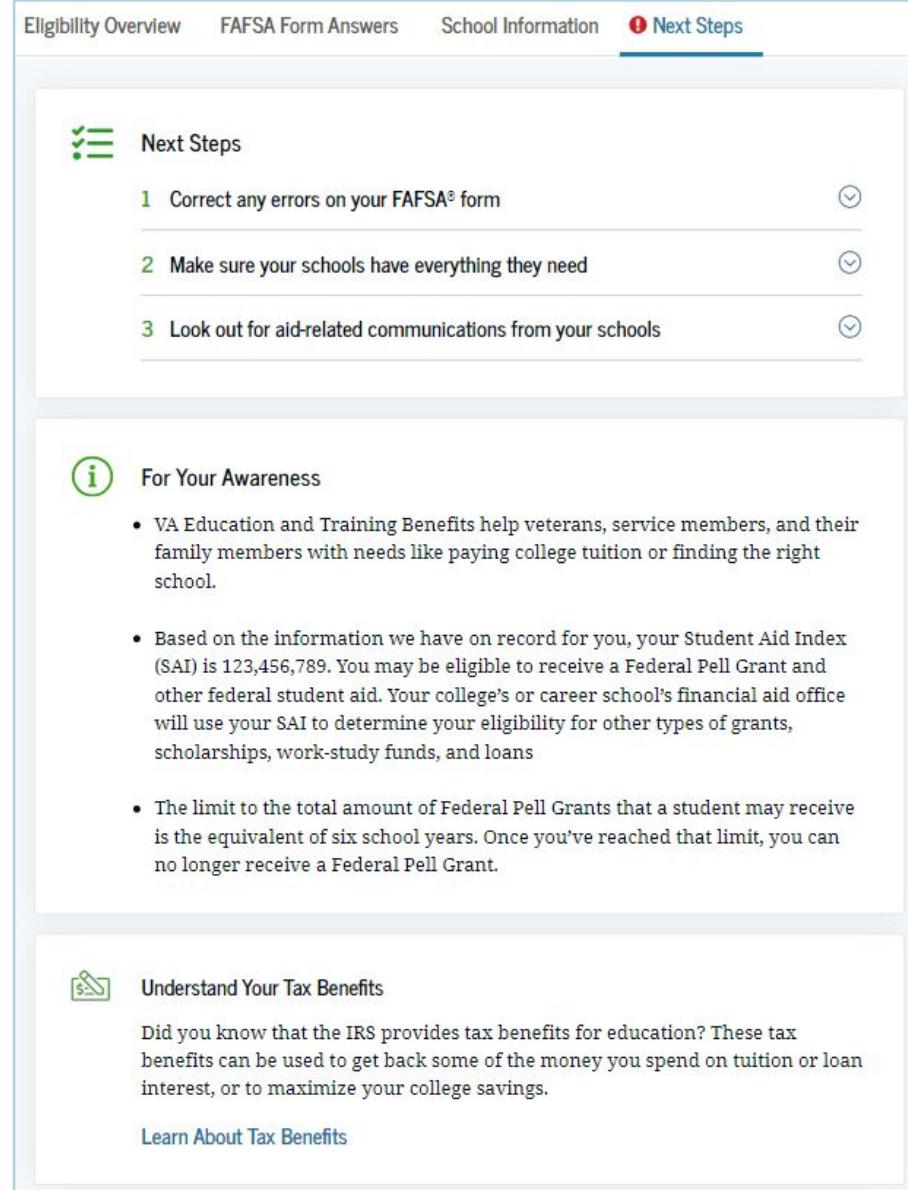
The screenshot shows the 'School Information' tab of a FAFSA form. The tab is part of a navigation bar with other tabs: 'Eligibility Overview', 'FAFSA Form Answers', 'School Information' (which is underlined in blue, indicating it is the active tab), and 'Next Steps'. Below the tabs, the heading 'Find an Affordable School' is displayed. A sub-section titled 'Learn More on College Scorecard' is present. A dropdown menu shows 'Showing results for family income between \$0-\$30,000'. The main content is a table comparing six schools across six metrics: School Name, Graduation Rate, Retention Rate, Transfer Rate, Default Rate, Median Debt Upon Completion, and Average Annual Cost. The schools listed are George Washington University, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and University of California, Northridge. The table data is as follows:

School Name	Graduation Rate	Retention Rate	Transfer Rate	Default Rate	Median Debt Upon Completion	Average Annual Cost
George Washington University	15%	89%	26%	64%	\$56,000	\$102,000
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	26%	76%	25%	34%	\$24,000	\$38,000
University of California, Northridge	55%	65%	35%	15%	\$19,000	\$24,000

[View All](#)

Next Steps

On the Next Steps tab, you will see comments that pertain to your FAFSA. Some comments may require you to start a correction or send additional documentation to your school. Other comments may be informational and do not require any further action from you.



The screenshot shows the 'Next Steps' tab selected in a top navigation bar. The bar also includes 'Eligibility Overview', 'FAFSA Form Answers', 'School Information', and a 'Next Steps' tab with a red exclamation mark icon. The main content area is titled 'Next Steps' and contains three numbered items:

- 1 Correct any errors on your FAFSA® form
- 2 Make sure your schools have everything they need
- 3 Look out for aid-related communications from your schools

Below this is a section titled 'For Your Awareness' with an information icon. It contains three bullet points:

- VA Education and Training Benefits help veterans, service members, and their family members with needs like paying college tuition or finding the right school.
- Based on the information we have on record for you, your Student Aid Index (SAI) is 123,456,789. You may be eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant and other federal student aid. Your college's or career school's financial aid office will use your SAI to determine your eligibility for other types of grants, scholarships, work-study funds, and loans
- The limit to the total amount of Federal Pell Grants that a student may receive is the equivalent of six school years. Once you've reached that limit, you can no longer receive a Federal Pell Grant.

At the bottom is a section titled 'Understand Your Tax Benefits' with a money icon. It contains the text: 'Did you know that the IRS provides tax benefits for education? These tax benefits can be used to get back some of the money you spend on tuition or loan interest, or to maximize your college savings.' Below this is a link 'Learn About Tax Benefits'.

More Resources

Along the right side of your FAFSA Submission Summary, you can choose from additional resources, including an Aid Summary and College Scorecard.

Eligibility Overview FAFSA Form Answers School Information ! Next Steps

Estimated Federal Student Aid

Federal Pell Grant ⓘ Up to \$4,556

A Federal Pell Grant is awarded to undergraduate students who have financial need and who have not earned a degree or are in a teacher certification program. Federal Pell Grants don't need to be repaid.

Federal Direct Loans ⓘ Up to \$4,556

A federal direct loan is money lent by the government to you that you must repay with interest.

Federal Work-Study ⓘ You May Be Eligible

Federal Work-Study is a way for students to earn money to pay for school through part-time jobs on or off campus.

Amounts shown here are only estimates of federal student aid based on full-time enrollment and the average cost of attendance. Your school will determine how much student aid to offer you, which may include additional aid from your school or state.

Learn more about financial aid

 Keep in mind, this is only an estimate

Always refer to your school's financial aid offer for a final determination of financial aid available.

View All of Your Federal Student Aid in One Place

View detailed information about your federal loan and grant aid, including your enrollment history, payment history, and subsidized usage.

[Visit Aid Summary](#)

Find the Right College or Career School

Use the College Scorecard to compare schools by size, location, graduation rate, and more.

[Visit College Scorecard](#)



10. After the FAFSA

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 (6 units).





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).
- **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

- Wait until your FAFSA is processed. It can take 1-2 weeks for the FAFSA 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





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.



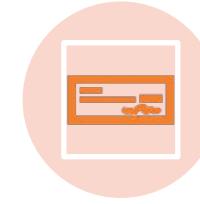
Confirm that school of attendance is accurate.



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)

FAFSA	
Status	Received
Incomplete !	Complete your FAFSA

Chafee Application	
Status	Received
Complete ✓	11/03/2020

Department of Social Services Record	
Status	County
Incomplete !	Complete your Foster Care Eligibility Certification Form
	LOS ANGELES

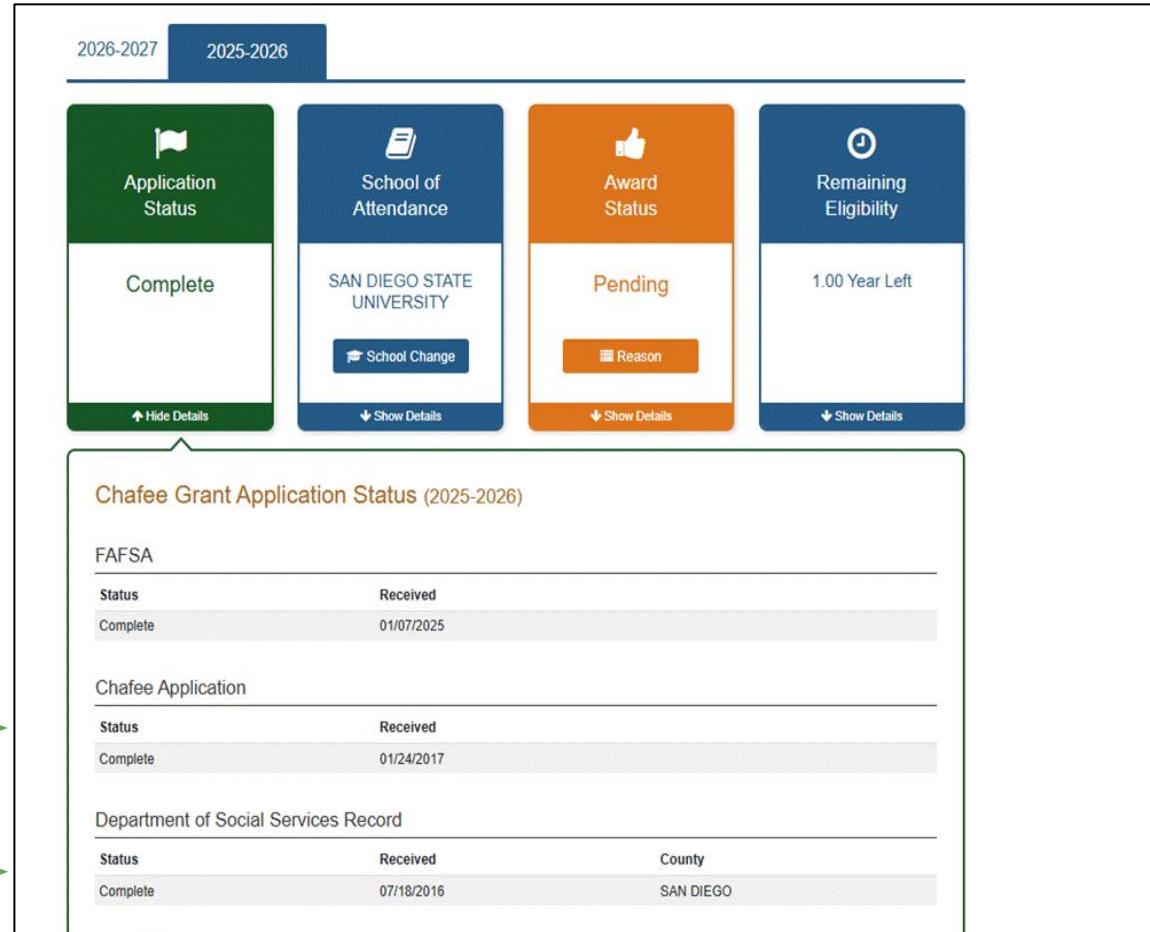
**There is an automated match with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to verify foster youth status, however this match only happens monthly and may not appear immediately. If the match is not successful, you must manually submit the Certification Form.*

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



2026-2027 2025-2026

Application Status
Complete
↑ Hide Details

School of Attendance
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
School Change
↓ Show Details

Award Status
Pending
Reason
↓ Show Details

Remaining Eligibility
1.00 Year Left
↓ Show Details

Chafee Grant Application Status (2025-2026)

FAFSA

Status	Received
Complete	01/07/2025

Chafee Application

Status	Received
Complete	01/24/2017

Department of Social Services Record

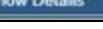
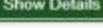
Status	Received	County
Complete	07/18/2016	SAN DIEGO

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

The screenshot shows the 'CHAFEE FOR FOSTER YOUTH ONLY' dashboard for the 2026-2027 year. The 'School of Attendance' section displays 'CSU SACRAMENTO' with a 'School Change' button. A green arrow points from this button to a modal window titled 'Cal Grant - Submit School Change (2024-2025)'. The modal shows the 'Choose school' section with 'Current School' set to 'School Code: CSU SACRAMENTO - 00115000' and 'Housing Code: OFF CAMPUS'. A green box highlights the 'Choose this School' button, which is also highlighted by a green arrow pointing from the 'School Change' button on the main dashboard. The modal also contains a list of schools under 'Choose New School'.

School Code	School Name
00753100	ACADEMY OF ART UNIVERSITY - 00753100
04267600	ALDER GRADUATE SCHOOL (TCP ONLY) - 04267600
01111100	ALLAN HANCOCK COLLEGE - 01111100
01111700	ALLIANT INTERNATIONAL UNIV - 01111700
00746501	AMERICAN ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ART - 00746501
02241801	AMERICAN CAREER COLL ANAHEIM - 02241801
02241800	AMERICAN CAREER COLL - LA - 02241800
03971300	AMERICAN CAREER COLL - ONTARIO - 03971300
00274100	AMERICAN JEWISH UNIVERSITY - 00274100
00757201	AMERICAN MUSICAL DRAMATIC ACAD - 00757201
00123200	AMERICAN RIVER COLLEGE - 00123200
04160400	ANGELES COLLEGE - 04160400
00111300	ANTELOPE VALLEY COLLEGE-BA PROG - 00111301
00301002	ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY - LOS ANGELES - 00301002
00301003	ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY-SANTA BARBARA - 00301003
00111600	ART CENTER COLLEGE OF DESIGN - 00111600
04057300	ASHER COLLEGE - 04057300
04242500	ASSOCIATED BARBER COLLEGE - 04242500
04240200	AVIATION INST OF MAINTENANCE - 04240200

- 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. CSAC will need:
 - Proof of enrollment
 - Name and address of school
 - Financial Aid contact info: Name, email, phone

Claim Your CalKIDS Award

- 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 available to you to use at an eligible college, university, technical or vocational institution.
- Once funds are requested, they are sent to your institution. 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.



Claim Your CalKIDS Award



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

1. California county where you attended school in the previous year on census day.
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 homeless youth status or additional income verification.
- Update all your accounts if your address, email or phone number changes (e.g. WebGrants, college portal, FAFSA/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.
- Reapply for aid by submitting the FAFSA every year!

11.

Resources

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

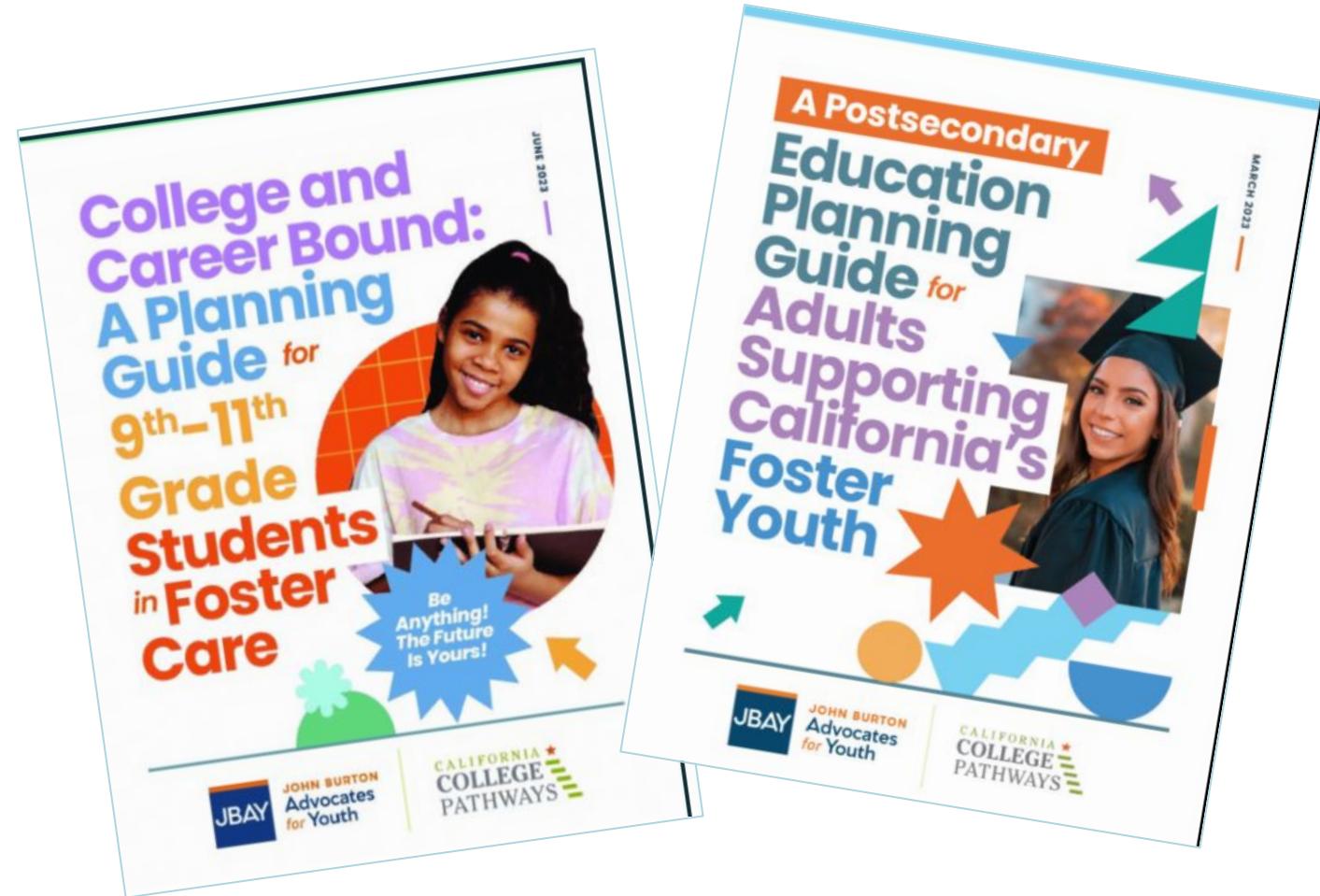
jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide

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

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 for comprehensive college planning information for current and former foster youth.



Resources for Homeless Youth

- School House Connection
www.schoolhouseconnection.org/fafsa/
 - ✓ Sample Verification Letters
 - ✓ Screening tools
 - ✓ Flowcharts
 - ✓ And more!
- National Center for Homeless Education
nche.ed.gov/higher-education/

Other Resources

- ICanGoToCollege.com
ICanGoToCollege.com
- National College Attainment Network
www.ncan.org/page/better-fafsa
- Financial Aid for Justice-Involved Youth
<https://www.ylc.org/financial-aid-guide-for-youth-with-juvenile-justice-involvement>
- Immigrants Rising
immigrantsrising.org

John Burton Advocates for Youth

(415) 348-0011 | info@jbay.org | jbay.org



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