

**Completing the FAFSA/CADAA For Adults Supporting
Youth with Experience in Foster Care or Homelessness**

Webinar Questions and Answers
October 22, 2025

	QUESTION	ANSWER
	AWARD AMOUNTS AND AVAILABLE AID	
1.	The amount shown that a foster youth can receive through financial aid at community college is 30k+. Is this an error, is this for a 4-year university? Community college is inexpensive and sometimes free.	Cost of attendance for community college includes living expenses, not just tuition and fees.
2.	Could someone clarify how much a foster youth can be awarded for Chafee? On the CSAC website it mentions \$5,000 but I just saw \$4,500 in your slides.	The Chafee Grant was reduced to \$4,500 from \$5,000 this year due to funding limitations.
3.	Are loans included in the calculation for unmet need? or are they excluded?	Unmet need is calculated based on the institution's Cost of Attendance and the Student Aid Index as determined by the FAFSA/CADAA. The college then will indicate what aid is available, including both grants and loans. The student can choose to accept loans or not.
4.	Is there more information on the different types of financial aid students can receive?	If you view our financial aid guide, you can see an overview of common types of financial aid: https://jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide-foster-homeless/
5.	Can the youth attend college out of state and receive all of the available grants?	Federal grants, such as the Pell Grant, can be used regardless of whether the student is considered an in-state or a resident student. State and institutional financial aid may require the student to be a resident of the institution's state. Institutional aid varies between schools.
6.	Can any of the grants etc. be used for living expenses like dorm living etc. for a foster youth	Yes, grants can be used for living expenses.
	DETERMINING WHICH APPLICATION TO USE	
7.	Is there a separate application for CADAA and FAFSA?	Yes, the FAFSA and CADAA are separate applications and students can submit only one.
8.	What application does an undocumented foster youth have to complete?	The CADAA
9.	What can a student do if he applied for FAFSA instead of CADDA?	If the student was not actually eligible to file the FAFSA, it will error out, so they can submit the CADAA.

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10.	If a youth has undocumented parents, which application is suggested to use?	If the student is a U.S. Citizen or an eligible non-citizen, completing the FAFSA will get them the greatest amount of aid. The parents' citizenship does not determine the financial aid application the student and contributors complete and submit. Sometimes students in mixed status families choose to file the CADAA instead of the FAFSA out of fear that submitting a FAFSA could expose their parents as undocumented. This is a choice that is up to each individual.
11.	How do we know if a student qualifies as an eligible non-citizen for FAFSA? I work with a foster youth who entered the system as undocumented. They now have a social security number and work permit but does not have a green card yet.	Refer to FSA's website, here: https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements/non-us-citizens
12.	Are undocumented foster youth eligible for the Chafee grant?	Yes, in California, students who are undocumented and meet CADAA eligibility are eligible for the Chafee Grant in California. This may vary by state.
13.	If a student is an unaccompanied refugee minor, would they do FAFSA or CADAA?	If the student is a citizen or eligible non-citizen, they are eligible to file a FAFSA. For more information on eligible statuses for the FAFSA, visit FSA's website: https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements/non-us-citizens
14.	If student does not have a social security number, they apply for CADAA?	If a student does not have a Social Security Number, they should submit the CADAA.
15.	For a youth in foster care....do they have to fill out the applications or is there another avenue for them?	Youth in foster care do still need to submit a FAFSA or CADAA to be considered for financial aid.
16.	If a student is in the system and has her immigration status pending before becoming a graduating senior, the CADAA is the best option of completing application? Will the following year change to FAFSA if she qualifies then?	A student who has been approved to apply for a green card or who has applied for a green card and has not yet received a green card should submit the CADAA. As soon as they receive their green card, they can submit the FAFSA, which may make them eligible for additional aid, such as federal student aid.
	APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID	
17.	Do foster youth need to be enrolled full-time to be eligible for Chafee?	Students must be enrolled in at least 6 units.
18.	Would a high schooler apply as First-Year Freshman, no matter how many dual enrollment classes passed, even if they attain AA degree? (College student would go by unit, credit earned?)	Dual enrollment does not count as enrollment in college, since the student is still enrolled in high school. They will apply as a first-year (freshman) for when they enroll in college.
19.	Can a student apply now to restart school in January.	A student can apply now for the Spring term and would complete the 25/26 FAFSA, not the 26/27 FAFSA

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20.	I have a few students for whom their school did not send the GPA verification needed to qualify for the Cal Grant on time. Can they appeal? How can I support student to receive it.	There is a form that can be completed if a GPA was not submitted on time: https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/cal-grant-appeals-g-18-form . You can also contact the California Student Aid Commission to discuss next steps.
21.	If a student submitted a FAFSA two years ago, but then didn't attend after one semester, do they need to do the FAFSA all over again?	Yes. It is an annual form. A new form must be submitted each year.
	DEPENDENCY STATUS	
22.	Regarding the dependency status question "At any time since you turned age 13, were you an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent)?" does this mean if a student was in foster care before turning 13 and reunited with their bio parents they would answer "No"? Does this also mean they would not be eligible for the Chafee Grant?	If the student was in foster care or an orphan prior to age 13 and is not adopted or reunited before reaching age 13, they are considered independent, even if they are adopted or reunited after reaching age 13. A student who reunited with their bio parents before age 13 would not be considered independent. For the Chafee, they must be a dependent or ward of the court at least one day between the ages of 16-18.
23.	Would they qualify for independent status if they were on probation and in out-of-home care on or after their 13th birthday?	Yes, if they were a foster youth served by probation in out of home care on or after their 13th birthday they would qualify.
24.	Can you clarify whether incarcerated youth are or are not considered wards of the court for financial aid purposes?	Incarceration (ward of the state) does not make an applicant a ward of the court and these students are not considered independent.
25.	What happens if a student was in Foster Care prior to age 13? There was not a category for this group. Are they not eligible to be considered a foster youth for the purposes of the FAFSA	They would not be independent if they exited foster care before turning 13, however they would be eligible if they were still in foster care for at least one day on or after their 13th birthday.
26.	If the student is already verified as an independent student due to being in foster care after the age of 13, is there any additional financial aid benefit they would receive by identifying as homeless/at risk of homelessness?	Not necessarily, since the student would already be considered independent as a foster youth. However, there might be additional campus programs and resources specifically for students experiencing homelessness that they may be eligible for.
27.	Are the questions about homelessness asking about current status or past status?	The question is asking about the student's status on or after July 1, 2025 (for the 26-27 FAFSA). For example, if a student qualifies as an unaccompanied homeless youth in May 2025 but then becomes stably housed in June 2025, they wouldn't be independent. But if the student is still meeting that definition after July 1st, they would.
28.	If a student had a legal relative guardian while a parent was in prison after the age 13 does this make them independent?	If a student has a court-ordered legal guardian, they are considered independent.

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29.	To clarify: for this homeless definition, would students then also be considered “foster youth eligible” for state aid / funds that UCs are now receiving to sustain foster youth programs on campuses?	The foster youth support programs at the UCs require the student to only be in foster care one day at any age. Some UCs also serve unaccompanied homeless youth in K-12, but this varies campus to campus as it is not a legal requirement for them to do so.
30.	Are independent former foster youth in college who are providing for themselves automatically considered at risk for homelessness?	No.
31.	Is a student who is in the foster care system who is in the independent living program also considered unaccompanied and at-risk of homelessness?	Not necessarily. To qualify as homeless or at-risk of homelessness they must meet the definitions for these statuses. However, this student would already be considered an independent student due to their foster care status and would not need to qualify as homeless.
32.	Will a letter from an Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) agency work for verifying a student as foster youth?	Yes, if it is their placement agency or provider.
33.	Any additional guidelines for youths in extended foster care.....NMD?	If a youth is a nonminor dependent (NMD) they would qualify for independent status on the FAFSA or CADAA.
34.	If a student lives with their parents but the whole family is living in someone’s bedroom, does this count as homeless? If a student is house surfing by getting some money from parents for food and necessities, are they considered homeless?	If a student is living with their parents, they would not be considered homeless for the purposes of the FAFSA because they are not unaccompanied (since they are with their parents). If a student is house surfing (not with their parents) but getting money from their parents for food and necessities, they might be considered an unaccompanied homeless youth.
35.	Can students who are homeless and none of the verification options apply, receive a letter of verification through someone in the Guardian Scholars Program on the campus?	If no determination is available from the list of authorized entities ("none of the above"), the financial aid administrator must make the determination based on a written statement from the student or a documented interview with the student. No other individuals may provide an unaccompanied homeless youth determination, however, a letter from the Guardian Scholars Program may be helpful for the financial aid administrator to make a determination.
36.	To clarify, if a youth does not come from child welfare, but is on probation and in an STRTP on or after their 13th birthday, they would not qualify?	If it is a foster youth served by probation in out of home care placement, such as a STRTP, they would qualify for independent status.
37.	What about low-income students who have not been in Foster Care? I know a youth whose only parent lost their job and has been job seeking for the last 10-12 months. The parent qualifies for CalFresh at this time.	If a parent lost their income, we recommend contacting the financial aid office, which can use professional judgement to re-package the financial aid offer based on current circumstances. They may also be aware of other resources that may be available to the student. Students can also contact their school's Basic Needs or Student Success offices for additional resources.

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38.	What's the phone number for former foster ombudsperson?	Former foster youth may contact the Office of the California Foster Care Ombudsperson to receive verification of foster care status at 877-846-1602. https://fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/
	CALKIDS	
39.	Is the recent expansion of CalKIDS only for students in K-12 currently? Would it be applied to students currently in college?	The expansion is available to students in grades 1-12 on census day October 2024.
40.	Do undocumented youth qualify for CALKIDS?	Yes
41.	What is the deadline for Cal Kids?	They have until the age of 26 to claim their account and request to disburse funds.
42.	CalKIDSis a NMD eligible (20 yrs old)	Any student who is enrolled in an eligible institution and who is under age 26 can utilize their CalKIDS funding.
43.	What year did the CalKIDS scholarship begin?	Accounts were initially created in 2021
44.	Can anyone help youth access their CalKIDS scholarship account?	Yes, anyone can support a youth to go online and complete the process to claim their account.
45.	If students do not claim their Cal Kids account, they can apply through WebGrants?	Starting this month, all students who have a WebGrants for Students account and a matched CalKIDS scholarship in their name will see a new CalKIDS section on their portal. If the student has claimed their CalKIDS account, a link will appear allowing them to log in directly to their CalKIDS account. If the account is unclaimed, a green box will display the word "Unclaimed," along with a link to claim their CalKIDS account. Please note that the data is updated monthly, so if a student recently claimed their scholarship, the status on WebGrants may not update immediately. Students who do not yet have a WebGrants for Students account can create one by visiting mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov .
46.	How might the CalKIDS or a 529 plan impact a foster youth's financial aid?	For CalKIDS, the student can utilize the funds at any time before the age of 26. It does not impact their FAFSA, however, when they request it, it is treated like any other scholarship.
	SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS	
47.	What is the GPA requirement to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)?	Typically, the GPA minimum requirement is a cumulative 2.0 GPA, but it is best to check the school's SAP policies.
48.	Are there different SAP requirements for Chafee vs FAFSA?	Yes, California implemented SAP standards for Chafee that are different from federal and state SAP standards, through SB 150. Here is our toolkit with more info: https://jbay.org/resources/sb-150-toolkit/
	MISC.	

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49.	Will the full-time requirements for next year be 15 units rather than 12 units? I know there was talk about changing the federal requirements	This change was proposed but was never enacted. 12 credits is still considered full time for federal financial aid.
50.	Can you answer questions about housing for foster youth? For example, can they stay over the breaks when other students might go home? Can they stay during the summer? Is this factored into their financial aid package?	In California, CSUs are required to provide priority housing to eligible foster youth and homeless youth. If the campus has housing available during academic breaks, such as winter break and spring break, they can stay in the housing with no additional costs. This does not include summer term. The UCs and CCCs are requested to do this as well, but not required, so implementation varies by campus.
51.	Do you have advice on where foster youth can set up a bank account without an ID, which can be hard to get if they are not at a permanent address and do not have utility or other bills in their name?	I would encourage the youth to get an ID. A resource from NN4Y helps students navigate obtaining essential identification and vital documents like IDs https://nn4youth.org/programs/vital-document-legal-hotline-for-youth/
52.	Are there waivers for 4-year university application fees for foster youth/homeless youth & how many universities can they apply for?	Low-income students can request a waiver for application fees at up to 4 UCs and 4 CSUs. For students applying to private institutions using the common app, foster youth and homeless youth have a fee waiver application for most institutions. Schoolhouse Connection hosted a webinar about the common app here: https://schoolhouseconnection.org/webinar/expanding-college-access-with-the-common-app
53.	I recall California passing a bill in 2018 (AB 2608) that would have provided student loan forgiveness for foster youth attending MFT, LCSW, LPCC, or nursing programs. Do you know if this is still in effect and how foster youth might apply?	The bill passed, but it is unclear if funding was appropriated by the legislature to implement. Information about all grant and loan forgiveness programs related to health care fields is available at https://hcai.ca.gov/workforce/financial-assistance/ .
54.	Does JBAY have a one pager that can be used to list what's needed to start the process of FAFSA or CADAA to provide to students and families?	We do not have a one-pager, but do have many other materials found here: https://jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/
55.	What is 1/2-time enrollment?	Each school determines what qualifies as half time, but 6 credits is commonly the threshold for halftime enrollment. It is best to confirm individually with the school.
56.	Can you share the link for creating a WebGrants account?	Create a WebGrants 4 Students Account at: mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov