

# FAFSA®



FREE APPLICATION  
FOR FEDERAL  
STUDENT AID

# Tipsheet

## The basics on filing the FAFSA & getting financial aid

Visit [FAFSA.gov](http://FAFSA.gov) to complete & submit your application for financial aid.

### WHAT IS THE FAFSA?

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) is the most important application you must complete in order to qualify for almost all types of financial aid including federal, state, local, and private grants and scholarships.

### WHY COMPLETE A FAFSA?

The U.S. Department of Education uses the information provided on your FAFSA to determine your eligibility for aid from federal student financial assistance programs. In Pennsylvania, the FAFSA is used to determine State Grant eligibility. Schools also use FAFSA data to award their own financial aid.

### WHAT ARE THE DEADLINES?

Current high school seniors should complete the FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1. Financial aid deadlines vary by school, state, program of study, and more. To ensure that you are considered for all financial aid programs, the FAFSA should be filed by the earliest application deadline date for each school you are considering attending. Check with your school for details.

**YOU MUST COMPLETE A NEW FAFSA APPLICATION EACH YEAR.**

### FOR PENNSYLVANIA STATE GRANT APPLICANTS, THE FAFSA DEADLINES ARE:

- **MAY 1** – For students attending colleges, universities and college-transferable programs (excluding community colleges) and for all renewal students
- **AUGUST 1** – If you plan to enroll in a community college, a business, trade, or technical school, a hospital school of nursing, an “Open-Admission” institution (visit [PHEAA.org](http://PHEAA.org) for a list of these schools), or a non-transferable 2-year program

### WHAT DO I NEED TO FILE MY FAFSA ON FAFSA.GOV?

- Your Social Security Number
- Your driver’s license number, if you have one (optional)
- Your alien registration number, if you are not a U.S. citizen
- Your W-2 forms
- Records of other untaxed income received, including workers’ compensation, child support, payments to tax-deferred pension and savings plans, etc.
- Your federal income tax return – (1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ). If your taxes are not yet finalized, use the prior year tax return and current W-2 forms to estimate your income. Be sure to update your FAFSA with accurate information once your tax return is filed.
- Your current bank statements and records of stocks, bonds and other investments

**If you are a dependent student, you will also need:**

- Your parent’s Social Security Number(s)
- Your parent’s income and financial records (as listed above)

### FSA ID

The FSA ID is a username and password that you will use to log into certain U.S. Department of Education websites, and electronically sign the FAFSA. Students interested in receiving federal student aid should create a FSA ID. You and any parent electronically signing the FAFSA will need their own separate FSA ID.

### IRS DATA RETRIEVAL TOOL

If you complete your FAFSA online, you have the option of retrieving your income and tax data from the Internal Revenue Service and having it automatically transferred into your FAFSA.

### FAFSA CHANGES FOR 2017-18

| IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND COLLEGE FROM | YOU CAN SUBMIT THE FAFSA FROM        | USING TAX INFORMATION FROM |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016         | January 1, 2015–June 30, 2016        | 2014                       |
| July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017         | January 1, 2016–June 30, 2017        | 2015                       |
| <b>July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018</b>  | <b>October 1, 2016–June 30, 2018</b> | <b>2015</b>                |
| July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019         | October 1, 2017–June 30, 2019        | 2016                       |