

FAFSA first!

FAFSA is the **Free** Application for Federal Student Aid

- ★ It is the **ONLY** way to apply for federal student aid
- ★ Largest provider of student financial aid in the nation
- ★ \$150 billion offered annually to help millions of students pay for college or career school



Learn more at www.FAFSAfirst.org

5 Finish the FAFSA in STEPS



1. CREATE A STUDENTAID.GOV ACCOUNT

- ▶ Create your own StudentAid.gov account to apply for, receive, and manage your federal student aid.
- ▶ Go to StudentAid.gov to sign up. Click "Create Account" to get started.
- ▶ Save your account username and password to access and electronically sign your FAFSA and student loan applications, make corrections to your FAFSA and more.
- ▶ If you're a dependent student, review the Who Needs a StudentAid.gov Account? flyer to determine which parent(s) should also create an account.

2. GATHER MATERIALS

- ▶ Social Security or Permanent Resident card.
- ▶ W-2 forms and tax returns specified on the FAFSA.
- ▶ Current balance of cash, checking and savings accounts.
- ▶ If you're a dependent student, your parents will need to provide their financial information.

3. FILL IT OUT

- ▶ Apply online at FAFSA.gov.
- ▶ Choose up to 20 different college campuses to receive your FAFSA results.
- ▶ Enter parent email to invite them to contribute to FAFSA.
- ▶ Contributors must consent to have their tax information transferred to the FAFSA through the IRS.

4. SIGN & SUBMIT

- ▶ Check your application for errors and make any needed corrections.
- ▶ Sign the student section.
- ▶ Check with your parent(s) to make sure they completed their portion and submitted.

5. FOLLOW UP

- ▶ Watch your email for a FAFSA Submission Summary. Check the summary and next steps to make any necessary corrections.
- ▶ Provide any other necessary documentation required by your institution, such as your accepted financial aid offer, and follow up with your college financial aid office if you have additional questions.

RESOURCES

FAFSA.gov

Complete and submit the FAFSA.

StudentAid.gov

Create a StudentAid.gov Account prior to starting your online FAFSA. Parent(s) of dependent students will also need an account to access and sign the FAFSA.

FAFSA Glossary



Common terms and acronyms to know

Award Amount: Amount of aid a school expects to pay a student based on the student's current grant and loan eligibility, enrollment, Student Aid Index (SAI) and the school's Cost of Attendance (COA).

Consent and Approval: The student and all contributors must provide this consent and approval on the FAFSA in order to be eligible for federal student aid.

Contributor: Anyone (you, your spouse, your biological or adoptive parent, or your parent's spouse) who is required to provide information on the FAFSA form, sign the FAFSA form, and provide consent and approval to have their federal tax information transferred directly from the IRS into the form.

Cost of Attendance (COA): The average cost for a student to attend a postsecondary school, usually stated as a yearly figure. COA includes tuition and fees; room and board (or a housing and food allowance); and allowances for books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses.

Data Release Number (DRN): The four-digit number assigned to your FAFSA that allows you to release your FAFSA data to additional schools you did not list when first submitting your FAFSA. You need this number if you contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center to make corrections to your mailing address. The DRN can be found below the confirmation number on your FAFSA submission confirmation page or in the top of your FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS).

Dependent Student: A dependent student is assumed to have the support of parents, so the parents' information must be assessed along with the students to get a full picture of the family's financial resources.

Federal Pell Grant: A federal grant for undergraduate students with financial need. A Pell Grant is a type of financial aid, often based on financial need, which does not need to be repaid (unless, for example, you withdraw from school and owe a refund to the university).

Federal Student Aid: Federal student aid is aid from the government in the form of grants, loans, and/or work-study funds to assist students with college or career school. Students have to complete the FAFSA® form to apply for this aid.

Federal Student Loan: A loan funded by the federal government to help pay for your education. A federal student loan is borrowed money you must repay with interest.

Federal Work-Study: A federal student aid program that provides funds for part-time employment for undergraduate and graduate students while enrolled in school to help pay for education expenses. Reach out to your school's financial aid office for more info.

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Financial Aid: Is money to help pay for college or career school.

Financial Aid Direct Data Exchange (FA-DDX): Tool allows you to consent for the exchange of federal tax information into your FAFSA. All students and contributors must provide consent and approval to obtain their federal tax information directly from the IRS and to use their federal tax information to determine the student's eligibility and federal student aid. If the student or required contributor refuses consent to use the FA-DDX, the student will not be eligible for federal student aid.

Financial Aid Offer/Package: The total amount of financial aid (federal and nonfederal) a student is offered by a college or career school. The school's financial aid office combines various forms of aid into a "package" to help meet a student's education costs.

Financial Need: The difference between the Cost of Attendance (COA) at a school and your Student Aid Index (SAI) and other financial assistance. While COA varies from school to school, your SAI does not change based on the school you attend.

FSA ID: An account username and password combination that allows students and parents to log into StudentAid.gov and to identify themselves electronically to access U.S. Department of Education systems.

FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS): A summary of the information submitted on your *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) and gives you the basic information about your eligibility for federal financial aid. Applicants should review the FAFSA Submission Summary for accuracy and if necessary, make corrections or updates to the submitted FAFSA data.

Independent Student: An independent student will report their own information (and if married, your spouse's) on the FAFSA and not required to report parent information. Must meet one of the following: at least 24 years old, married, a graduate or professional student, a veteran, a member of the armed forces, an orphan, a ward of the court, or someone with legal dependents other than a spouse, an emancipated minor or someone who is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Scholarships: Gift aid awarded to a student based on academic achievement or other criteria. They don't have to be repaid and are designed to help students pay for an undergraduate or graduate degree. They can be a one-time gift or are renewable, depending on the scholarship.

Student Aid Index (SAI): Based on the financial information you provide in your FAFSA, this number is used to determine your eligibility for federal student financial aid. This number can be a negative number.

Tuition: Tuition is the amount of money you owe for receiving instruction, materials, and/or supplies, or for the rental or purchase of equipment, for a course of study at your institution.

Verification: To ensure that the information provided by students and parents on the FAFSA is accurate, the U.S. Department of Education requires postsecondary institutions to verify financial and other demographic information for certain applicants. FAFSA verification helps schools accurately and fairly determine the types and amounts of federal, state, and institutional aid students receive. School financial aid administrators will ask for students to submit verification documentation.

Filling Out The FAFSA



CREATE A STUDENTAID.GOV ACCOUNT

1

- You will need to create your own StudentAid.gov (FSA ID) account to apply for, receive, and manage your federal student aid.
- You will need to enter your personal information (first and last name, date of birth, social security number)
- Save your federal student aid (FSA) account information to use again next year.

GATHER YOUR INFORMATION

2

- Student and any contributor FSA account information.
- Social Security card and alien registration number (if applicable).
- Tax returns and W-2 forms specified on the FAFSA.
- Current balance of cash, checking, and saving accounts.
- If you're a dependent student, you'll also need your parent contributor financial information.
- Students will need to know any contributor(s) SSN (if applicable), DOB, email addresses, and mailing address (if they don't have SSN).

FILL OUT THE FAFSA FORM & SUBMIT

3

- Apply online at fafsa.gov.
- Select the FAFSA form you would like to complete and login with your StudentAid.gov account username and password.
- Start filling out your information and complete the entire application.
- Invite any contributors to enter information on the FAFSA form.
- Contributors must consent to have their Federal Tax Information (FTI) transferred to the FAFSA through the IRS.
- Review your answers from the summary page to search for errors.
- Submit your completed FAFSA form and review your confirmation page for an estimate of your federal aid eligibility.

REVIEW & FOLLOW UP

4

- After the student and contributors (if applicable) submit the FAFSA form and it has been processed, watch for the email with information about your FAFSA Submission Summary.
- Monitor your emails for any communications and information from the schools that received your FAFSA results.
- Provide any necessary documentation required by your school and follow up with the financial aid office if you have any questions.

Visit www.FAFSAfirst.org for more information.



How to Create an FSA ID Account



The Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID) allows students and parents to identify themselves electronically to access FSA websites, including the FAFSA website. An FSA ID is the fastest way to sign your application and have it processed and it's the only way to access or correct your information online.

1. Go to StudentAid.gov and click on "Create Account" link on top of the page.
2. Click the blue "Get Started" button on the page to begin creating your FSA ID.
3. Enter your personal information (first and last name, date of birth, social security number)
**Tip: Make sure you enter your name the way it appears on your social security card.*
**Note: FAFSA Contributors do not need to have a SSN to create an FSA ID*
4. Create Account Information by choosing a Username, entering an email address, and making a password.
**Tip: Use a personal email address. Do not use a school-based email address since you may not have access to it after graduation.*
5. Enter contact information, communication preferences, and select challenge questions.
6. Enable Two-Step Verification for your phone and email.
7. Your StudentAid.gov verification process takes one to three days. You'll receive an email once your information is matched with SSA.
8. Now you are ready to begin filling out your FAFSA.

STUDENT FSA ID INFORMATION

Username: _____

Email Address: _____

Password: _____

Backup Code: _____

Tip: Keep this page in safe place, add to your phone notes, and take photo of this information and email it to your personal email.

CONTRIBUTOR ONE FSA ID INFORMATION

Username: _____

Email Address: _____

Password: _____

Backup Code: _____

CONTRIBUTOR TWO FSA ID INFORMATION

Username: _____

Email Address: _____

Password: _____

Backup Code: _____

Visit www.FAFSAfirst.org for more information.





State Grants & Scholarships

When paying for college, students at Ohio public institutions of higher education have a number of ways to lower the cost of sticker price tuition. One way is to secure a financial aid package offered by the State of Ohio. Grants and scholarships are awards that directly lower students' out-of-pocket education costs, and generally do not have to be repaid. Loan repayment programs can help to repay some or all a qualifying graduate's educational loans. The State of Ohio invests significant resources in a wide array of these programs so that immediate cost-savings are available to students at Ohio public institutions.

State financial aid is awarded based on several factors including areas of study (such as teaching, science, engineering, technology, math and medicine), academic merit, financial need, military status, and more.

Learn more by exploring the state program webpages (listed below) or click this QR code:



CHOOSE OHIO FIRST - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/COF

The Choose Ohio First Scholarship is designed to strengthen Ohio's competitiveness within science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines and to increase the number of STEM teachers.

COLLEGE ADOPTION GRANT - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/adoption-grant

The College Adoption Grant provides a one-time award to students who were adopted after January 1, 2023, and choose to attend a qualifying college or university in the state of Ohio.

FINANCIAL AID FOR VETERANS - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/education-for-veterans

Ohio provides financial aid and other resources for students who are active service members, veterans, and sometimes their family members as well. It also helps connect students with financial aid resources through the Federal GI Bill or state-based initiatives.

GOVERNOR'S MERIT SCHOLARSHIP - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/GMS

The Governor's Merit Scholarship (GMS) is designed to incentivize Ohio's top graduating high school seniors to attend a college or university in the state.

GROW YOUR OWN TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/GYO

The Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship Program is designed to help school districts across Ohio recruit their own students and staff to become teachers within the district. Recipients of the Grow Your Own Scholarship agree to teach for a minimum of four years at their home school district in exchange for a scholarship of up to four years.

NURSE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE LOAN PROGRAM (NEALP) - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/NEALP

The Nurse Education Assistance Loan Program (NEALP) provides financial assistance to Ohio students enrolled for at least half-time study (or accepted for enrollment) in an approved Ohio nurse education program. NEALP provides funding for nurses who intend to serve as instructors or students who intend to serve as nurses after graduation.

OHIO COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY GRANT (OCOG) - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/OCOG

The Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG) provides financial assistance to Ohio residents with demonstrated financial need as determined by the results of your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

OHIO HIDDEN HEROES SCHOLARSHIP - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/hidden-heroes

The Ohio Hidden Heroes Scholarship Program will enable eligible caregivers who attend participating Institutions of Higher Education to receive additional funding towards tuition, fees, and books, as well as assist with credit transfers and gaining additional credits based on the caregiver's experience, if applicable.

OHIO SAFETY OFFICERS COLLEGE MEMORIAL FUND - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/OSO

The Ohio Safety Officers College Memorial Fund provides financial assistance to a child, spouse, or qualified former spouse of peace officers, firefighters, and certain other safety officers who are killed in the line of duty anywhere in the United States. It also provides financial assistance to the children and spouses of a member of the armed services of the U.S. who has been killed in the line of duty during Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or a combat zone designated by the President of the United States.

OHIO WAR ORPHAN & SEVERELY DISABLED VETERANS' CHILDREN SCHOLARSHIP (WOS)

- **HigherEd.Ohio.gov/WOS**

The Ohio War Orphan & Severely Disabled Veterans' Children Scholarship (WOS) program provides financial assistance to the children of veterans killed in combat or severely disabled Ohio veterans who served in the armed forces during a period of declared war or conflict.

OHIO WORK READY GRANT (OWRG) - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/work-ready

The Ohio Work Ready Grant (OWRG) provides funding to Ohio residents who demonstrate the highest levels of financial need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Eligible students must be enrolled in a qualified program at an Ohio community college, an Ohio technical center, or a state university branch campus.

SECOND CHANCE GRANT - HigherEd.Ohio.gov/second-chance

The State of Ohio further strengthened its commitment to assisting students in attaining a degree or credential through the establishment of the Second Chance Grant. The objectives of the Second Chance Grant are to reduce financial barriers preventing Ohioans with some college credit but no bachelor's degree from returning to higher education and to increase the number of Ohioans with a degree or credential.



**Department of
Higher Education**

HigherEd.Ohio.gov

2027-2028 FAFSA Priority Deadlines

Ohio colleges were last surveyed in July 2026, and all updates completed on July 31, 2026. Students are strongly encouraged to verify information on college websites.
When applicable, dates/timelines from prior survey data have been advanced one calendar year.

Institution Name	Dept. of Education School Code	FAFSA Priority Deadline?	FAFSA Priority Date Fall 2026 Starts	Supplemental Form Required?	Estimated Aid Offer Start Date	Early Decision/ Action	Date
Art Academy of Cincinnati	003011	☒	4/1/2027		TBD		
Ashland University	003012	☒	4/1/2027		January 2026		
Athens Career Academy	041922			Institutional App	TBD		
Aultman College	006487				Rolling		
Baldwin Wallace University	003014				December 2026		
Belmont College	009941				March 2027		
Bluffton University	003016	☒	5/1/2027		January 2027		
Bowling Green State University	003018	☒	2/18/2027		Mid March 2027		
Bryant & Stratton College	015298				Rolling		
Capital University	003023				Rolling		
Case Western Reserve University	003137	☒	11/15/2026	CSS Profile	12/19/2026	☒	11/1/2026
Cedarville University	003025				Rolling		
Central Ohio Technical College	011046	☒	2/1/2027		Rolling		
Central State University	003026	☒	3/1/2027		Late March 2027		
Christ College of Nursing & Health Science	006489	☒	5/1/2027		December 2026		
Cincinnati State Tech & Comm Coll	010345				TBD		
Clark State College	004852	☒	5/15/2027		Rolling		
Cleveland Institute of Art	003982	☒	3/15/2027		1/15/2027		
Cleveland State University	003032	☒	2/15/2027		February 2027		
College of Wooster	003037	☒	1/1/2027		TBD		
Columbus College of Art & Design	003039	☒	3/1/2027		Rolling		
Columbus State Community College	006867	☒	7/18/2026		Late March 2027		
Cuyahoga Community College	003040	☒	5/1/2027		Rolling		
Defiance College	003041				December 2026		
Denison University	003042	☒	1/15/2027	CSS Profile	11/15/2026	☒	11/15/2025
Edison State Community College	012750				March 2026		
Franciscan University of Steubenville	003036				11/2/2026		
Franklin University	003046	☒	6/15/2027		Rolling		
Good Samaritan College of Nursing & Health Science	006494	☒	4/30/2027		TBD		
Heidelberg University	003048				TBD		
Hiram College	003049	☒	1/15/2027		2/28/2026		

2027-2028 FAFSA Priority Deadlines

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Institution Name	Dept. of Education School Code	FAFSA Priority Deadline?	FAFSA Priority Date Fall 2026 Starts	Supplemental Form Required?	Estimated Aid Offer Start Date	Early Decision/ Action	Date
Hocking College	007598				Rolling		
James A. Rhodes State College	010027				April 2027		
John Carroll University	003050	☒	12/1/2026		February 2027	☒	11/1/2026
Kent State University	003051	☒	1/15/2027		TBD		
Kenyon College	003065	☒	11/15/2026	CSS Profile	3/16/2026	☒	11/15/2026
Kettering College	007035	☒	3/31/2027		November 2026		
Lake Erie College	003066				December 2026		
Lakeland Community College	006804			Institutional App	Rolling		
Lorain County Community College	003068				Rolling		
Lourdes University	003069				3/1/2027		
Malone University	003072	☒	3/1/2027		11/1/2026		
Marietta College	003073				January 2027		
Marion Technical College	010736				Rolling		
Mercy College of Ohio	030970	☒	3/1/2027		TBD		
Methodist Theological School in Ohio	G03075			Institutional App	4/1/2027		
Miami University	003077	☒	2/1/2027		2/1/2027		
Mount Carmel College of Nursing	030719				December 2026		
Mount St. Joseph University	003033	☒	TBD		2/1/2027		
Mount Vernon Nazarene University	007085				Early December 2026		
Muskingum University	003084	☒	3/1/2027		December 2026		
North Central State College	005313	☒	6/27/2027		February 2027		
Northwest State Community College	008677	☒	6/1/2027	Yes	Rolling		
Oberlin College	003086	☒	2/15/2027	CSS Profile	11/1/2026	☒	11/1/2025
Ohio Business College	015153/E00686/E40515			Sometimes	Rolling		
Ohio Christian University	003030				2/1/2027		
Ohio Dominican University	003035	☒	2/15/2027		TBD		
Ohio Northern University	003089	☒	3/1/2027		December 2026		
Ohio University	003100	☒	1/15/2027		Mid February 2027	☒	11/15/2026
Ohio Wesleyan University	003109	☒	2/15/2027		12/15/2026		
Otterbein University	003110	☒	1/31/2027		1/15/2027		
Owens State Community College	005753				3/1/2027		
Shawnee State University	009942	☒	2/15/2027		3/15/2027		

2027-2028 FAFSA Priority Deadlines

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Institution Name	Dept. of Education School Code	FAFSA Priority Deadline?	FAFSA Priority Date Fall 2026 starts	Supplemental Form Required?	Estimated Aid Offer Start Date	Early Decision/ Action	Date
Sinclair Community College	003119	☒	5/1/2027		TBD		
Southern State Community College	012870				Mid March 2027		
Stark State College	011141	☒	7/1/2026		Mid March 2027		
The Ohio State University	003090	☒	2/1/2027		TBD	☒	11/1/2026
The University of Akron	003123	☒	12/1/2026		Mid February 2027		
Tiffin University	003121				January 2027		
University of Cincinnati	003125	☒	2/15/2027		Early February 2027		
University of Dayton	003127	☒	2/1/2027		Early January 2027	☒	11/1/2026
University of Findlay	003045				TBD		
University of Mount Union	003083				December 2026		
University of Northwestern Ohio	004861	☒	4/1/2027		January 2027		
University of Rio Grande	003116	☒	3/15/2027		TBD		
University of Toledo	003131	☒	2/1/2027		3/1/2027		
Ursuline College*	TBA				TBD		
Valor Christian College	042243	☒	3/1/2027	Yes	5/1/2027		
Walsh University	003135	☒	3/1/2027		Rolling		
Washington State College of Ohio	010453	☒	3/1/2027		Late February 2027		
Wilmington College	003142	☒	3/15/2027		January 2027		
Wittenberg University	003143	☒	2/1/2027		December 2026		
Wright State University	003078	☒	2/1/2027		March 2027		
Xavier University	003144	☒	2/1/2027		2/1/2027		
Youngstown State University	003145	☒	2/1/2027		Early April 2027		
Zane State College	008133	☒	5/1/2027		2/15/2027		

*Due to an ongoing merger with Gannon University, all information is not available at this time - contact Ursuline College directly for up-to-date information



PREPARING FOR COLLEGE YOUR SENIOR YEAR

BACK TO SCHOOL Plan Ahead

- Schedule college visits to get on campus.
- Register for early ACT or SAT test dates.
- Mark down college application deadlines.
 - Early Decision, Early Action or Regular Admission.
- Begin drafting your Common Application essay.
- Keep an eye out for scholarships!

Try keeping a calendar, planner, or a college binder to stay on track!



FALL Submit Applications

- Begin applying to colleges.
 - Request letters of recommendation.
 - Request application waivers.
 - Request transcript.
 - Revise your college essays.
- Create your FSA IDs at studentaid.gov.
- Complete your FAFSA.

Navigating financial aid can feel overwhelming, but we're here to help! We have resources to help you explore your financial aid options.

WINTER Tidy Up

- Finish up college applications.
- Apply for scholarships.
- Stay up-to-date on financial aid forms.
- Retake the ACT or SAT if you need to improve.



Visit your I Know I Can College Advisor often for help with scholarships and guidance on the college application process.

SPRING Review and Decide

- Look for acceptance letters/instructions.
- Take a second look at campus.
- Review financial aid award letters.
- Create your college student portal.
- Secure housing if living on campus.
- Accept admission by May 1st.