



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

2024-25 Utah FAFSA Completion Events Site Coordinator Manual



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Section 1: Introduction</u>	4
<u>Section 2: Planning a FAFSA Event</u>	5
<u>FAFSA Completion Open House Event Checklist</u>	5
<u>Promoting your event – scripts and messages</u>	7
<u>Promoting your event – social media</u>	8
<u>FAFSA Night Flyer</u>	9
<u>College Deadlines</u>	10
<u>Other Online Resources</u>	12
<u>Section 3: During your Event</u>	12
<u>Attendance Sheet</u>	13
<u>Instructions for In-Person Volunteers</u>	14
<u>How to Offer Virtual Volunteers</u>	15
<u>Common FAFSA Night Issues and Resolutions</u>	16
<u>Answering the Question: Why Should I File the FAFSA?</u>	17
<u>FAFSA Encouragement Strategies</u>	18
<u>Section 4: Event Handouts for Students & Families</u>	19
<u>FSA ID – Your Key to Financial Aid</u>	20
<u>Checklist to Complete the 2024-25 FAFSA</u>	21
<u>FSA ID – Su Clave para Ayuda Financiera</u>	22
<u>FAFSA Night in 3 Steps</u>	23
<u>FAFSA Scholarship Survey QR Code</u>	24
<u>Who is my FAFSA Parent Contributor(s)?</u>	25
<u>Deferment and the FAFSA (English & Español)</u>	26
<u>Section 5: Post-Event & Follow-Up</u>	28
<u>FAFSA Follow-Up and FAFSA Submission Summary</u>	28



Utah FAFSA Completion Events provide high school seniors with a supportive environment and free assistance to complete their FAFSA applications. These events can open doors for first-generation, low-income, and other students who may have thought college was beyond their reach.

FAFSA Completion Events are typically offered in the evening to accommodate families outside working hours. “FAFSA Night” or “Financial Aid Night” titles are used since these events occur later in the day, usually after school, but schools can host events when it’s best for them and their attendees.

This manual provides tools, resources, and guidance to help schools host a successful FAFSA event. It is designed to support high school FAFSA Site Coordinators—typically school counselors or advisers—as they plan and execute these events. Inside are strategies, flyers, templates, and other materials that are easily customized for the school's needs. We hope this guide is valuable as you work to improve college affordability for your students.

For any questions regarding the information included in this manual or with assisting students and families with the FAFSA form, please contact the USHE student success and access team at fafsahelp@ushe.edu. If you need to refer a student or family with a FAFSA question, you may also direct them to fafsahelp@ushe.edu.

Utah System of Higher Education

801-646-4562

ushe.edu/fafsa

ktsutah.org/resources



Section 1: Introduction

Welcome, FAFSA Site Coordinators!

Use this manual as a guide to host a successful FAFSA Completion Event. Instructions, handouts, and many more resources are shared to support your events throughout the school year. If this is your first time hosting, or if you're an expert, there are plenty of refreshed resources here to pull from.

There is no perfect model for a FAFSA event. Each high school has its own culture, and our primary goal is to *“provide high school seniors with a supportive environment to receive free assistance filing the FAFSA application.”*

Utah high schools have traditionally held Utah College Application Week alongside FAFSA Completion Events throughout October and November. Since the FAFSA release was delayed again this year, we hope to find other ways to continue coordinating betweenUCAW and FAFSA Completion Events to increase FAFSA completion. We recommend integrating FAFSA efforts with other higher education activities, like celebrating Higher Ed Day, Decision Day, and others later in the year.

High schools should host at least one FAFSA event during the school year, but we encourage schools to host more in order to increase FAFSA completion.

If you have questions about this year's FAFSA timeline or next school year's schedule, please direct them to fafsahelp@ushe.edu. We are here to help you!



Section 2:

Site Coordinator Planning

FAFSA Completion Open House Event Checklist

This checklist outlines the steps to ensure a successful FAFSA Completion Open House.

Up to Several Months Prior

- Confirm FAFSA Completion Event with the USHE: fafsahelp@ushe.edu
- Reserve computer lab(s) or a location for the event with access to computers
- List events on all internal school calendars

One Month Prior

- Post notice of event on all public-facing school websites and calendars
- Post notice of the event on the district website and calendar
- Hang [flyers](#) around your school
- Ask teachers who instruct seniors to hang [flyers](#) in classrooms (optional)
- Coordinate with teachers to offer extra credit points for event attendance (optional)
- Arrange for make-up citizenship/attendance points for event attendance (optional)
- Confirm the technology is available and working for the event:
 - Computers
 - Guest logins for parents attending without students.
 - Access to necessary websites is enabled for students and guests—check to ensure your school’s network can load fafsa.gov, studentaid.gov, irs.gov, gmail.com, hotmail.com, aol.com, and yahoo.com
 - This is necessary for students and parents to access their StudentAid.Gov accounts, which require authentication sent via email
- Confirm there is no scheduled school/district IT maintenance occurring during the time of the event
- Distribute details about the USHE FAFSA scholarship for those attending the event using the school’s scholarship board/newsletter/website
- If possible, coordinate with the school’s student council/student body officers to help advertise and assist at the event (e.g., ushering guests, distributing materials, ensuring signs are posted, etc.)

Three Weeks Prior

- Include the event in any [newsletters](#), [social media](#), or communication to parents of seniors—use universal instructions and resources for students who may be ineligible to file the FAFSA
- Send one email, text message, or phone call to parents of seniors [about the event](#)



- Coordinate to ensure that at least one counselor, access adviser, or educator is on staff who has attended the [FAFSA Boot Camp series](#) and will be present for the duration of the event
 - We encourage you to invite several colleagues who can help students and parents during this event

Two Weeks Prior

- Send a second email, text message, or phone call to parents of seniors [about the event](#)
- Include the “StudentAid.Gov Account Setup” Handout (on page 26)
 - This handout explains how to set up a StudentAid.Gov account (formerly FSA ID), which is necessary to complete the FAFSA form on the event night. Since StudentAid.Gov account verification usually takes 1-3 business days, you should advise families to do this before the event so they can finish the FAFSA when they attend the event in person. Both students and parents need a StudentAid.Gov account.
- Share [posts about the event](#) on the school or district’s social media accounts
- Remind teachers about the event and coordinate extra credit (optional)

One Week Prior

- Send a third email, text message, or phone call to parents of seniors [about the event](#)
- Include the “[Checklist to Complete the 2025-26 FAFSA](#)” Handout (on page 25)
- Share [posts about the event](#) on your school or district's social media accounts
- If possible, remind teachers that instruct seniors about the event and coordinate extra credit opportunities (optional)
- Include the event in your school announcements throughout the school day
- Confirm that student council/SBOs will help advertise and assist at the event (e.g., ushering guests, distributing materials, ensuring signs are posted, etc.)
- Post the event to the school’s electronic or static marquee
- Confirm that the entrances to the school and computer lab will be unlocked
- Share [additional posts](#) on school and/or district social media accounts about the event
- Confirm that the lab will be available one hour before the start of the event for setting up (ensure that other classes, adult ed., or any scheduled maintenance will not overlap with your event)
- Print copies of “[FAFSA Night in 3 Easy Steps](#)” and additional handouts in [Section 4](#) to distribute copies to families attending the event

Day Before

- Confirm the lab will be ready for setup one hour before the start of the event
- Confirm the technology is available and working (computers, **guest logins**, internet access, printer access, etc.)
- Double-check that at least one counselor, access advisor, or another educator will be present for the duration of the event
- Print out a sign-in sheet to document attendance and know who to follow up with. An example or template is available on [page 17](#)
- Double-check that printed [handouts](#) are ready to share (if this wasn’t done last week)



- Connect with volunteers provided by USHE via email. Provide a welcome with information about your event

Day of the Event

- Arrive at the school at least one hour before the event to check that doors are unlocked and the computer lab is accessible
- Put instruction sheets in the entry area for parents and students to have access to them at the start
- Post signage through the school directing families to the computer lab
- Double-check that the front doors to the school are unlocked
- Welcome volunteers and provide instructions for how you anticipate the event will run

Promoting Your FAFSA Completion Open House – Scripts and Messages

Using the high school’s student communication resources is key to achieving maximum attendance at the event. High schools are welcome to use the following sample messages to promote the event with auto-dialers, email, text messages, and more.

Sample Phone Script: Seniors and their parent(s) or guardian(s) are invited to attend a free FAFSA Completion event at _____ High School. This event will offer expert help completing the FAFSA or the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Please join us on [date] from [start time] to [end time]; student attendees can enter to win a scholarship drawing.

Plan to bring the following items for both the student and parent(s): StudentAid.Gov account information, Social Security Number (although not required for everyone), A-Numbers (if applicable), birth dates, mailing address, start month/year as a Utah resident, 2023 federal tax forms, 2023 income form or W-2, and the asset, investment, and net worth of family business or investment farm information.

We look forward to seeing you on [date] from [start time] to [end time]. Filing the FAFSA is free and recommended for every Utah student. If you can’t attend, please contact our guidance office for additional information or questions on paying for college. Thank you!

Sample Email Message:

Dear Seniors and parent(s) or guardian(s),

You’re invited to attend a free FAFSA Completion event at _____ High School. This event will offer expert help completing the FAFSA or the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Please join us on [date] from [start time] to [end time]; student attendees can enter to win a scholarship drawing.

When & Where:

Plan to bring the following items for both the student and parent(s):

1. StudentAid.Gov account information (users must create this at least five days before the event. Both students and parents need an account).
2. Social Security Number—not required for everyone



3. A-Number (if applicable)
4. Birth date
5. Mailing address
6. Start date as a Utah resident (month/year)
7. 2023 federal tax forms
8. 2023 income form or W-2
9. Asset, investment, and net worth of family business or investment farm information

We look forward to seeing you! Filing the FAFSA is free and recommended for every Utah student. If you can't attend, please contact our guidance office for additional information or questions on paying for college. Thank you!

Sample Text Message:

Filing the FAFSA is an important part of your senior year. Get free expert help at _____ High School's free FAFSA Completion Open House event on [date] from [start time] to [end time]. Bring these items with you: StudentAid.Gov account information, tax information for 2023, W-2 for 2023, current asset and investment information, Social Security Numbers, permanent mailing address, and A-Number (if applicable).

Student Information System:

Seniors! Our school's free FAFSA Completion Open House is tomorrow! Filing the FAFSA is an important step in your senior year. Get free expert help from [start time] to end [time] on [date] in [room number]. List of necessary documents: StudentAid.Gov account information, tax information for 2023, W-2 for 2023, current asset and investment information, Social Security Numbers, permanent mailing address, and A-Number (if applicable).

Promoting Your FAFSA Completion Open House – Social

Use the customizable 8.5 x 11-inch flyer on the next page to post in your school and the community. If you prefer not to hand-write your school's event details on the flyer, directly edit the [PDF here](#).

We encourage you to use social media to achieve maximum attendance at your event. We have created templates to promote events on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, X/Twitter, and more.

Sample Instagram Post and Reel –

Seniors! Need help with your FAFSA? Get free expert help at your school anytime between [start time] and [end time] on [date] in [room number]. Here's what you'll need to bring:

- [Instagram template if you have a Canva.com account](#)
- [PDF Instagram Post](#)
- [Instagram reel template if you have a Canva.com account](#)
- [PDF Instagram Reel](#)



Sample X/Twitter –

Seniors! Need help with FAFSA? Get free expert help at **[event name]** on **[date/time info]**! Bring your StudentAid.Gov account info, 2023 tax info, 2023 W-2, current family asset and investment info, SSNs, mailing address, and A-Number. For more info, visit: **[insert high school URL or USHE URL]**.

- [X/Twitter template if you have a Canva.com account](#)
- [PDF X/Twitter Post](#)

Sample Facebook post –

Seniors! Filing the FAFSA is an important part of preparing for college. Get free expert help at _____’s FAFSA Completion Open House anytime between **[start time]** and **[end time]** on **[date]** in **[room number]**. List of documents to bring: StudentAid.Gov account information, tax information for 2023, W-2 for 2023, your current assets and investments, Social Security Numbers, permanent mailing address, and A-Number.

- [Facebook template if you have a Canva.com account](#)
- [PDF Facebook Post](#)

FAFSA Night Flyer Template

Use the following link to download this template and edit the date, time, and location:

- [Editable in Canva](#)
- [Editable PDF](#)



College Deadlines			
College	Admissions Deadline:	Submit FAFSA By:	Scholarship Application By:
Bridgerland Technical College btech.edu/students/financial-aid/ 435.213.1895	Year-Round	Year-Round	Year-Round
Brigham Young University enrollment.byu.edu/financial-aid 801.422.4104	Priority: Nov. 1, 2024 Final: Dec. 16, 2024	For need-based scholarships: Jan. 20, 2025	Dec. 16, 2024
BYU-Pathway byupathway.edu/financial-aid	Year-Round	N/A	Year-Round
Davis Technical College davistech.edu/financial-aid 801.593.2195	Year-Round	Mar. 31, 2025 (for students continuing after HS)	March 31, 2025 (continuing after HS) (FAFSA Required)
Dixie Technical College dixietech.edu/students/financial-aid/ 435.674.8400	Year-Round	Varies by program	Year-Round
Ensign College ensign.edu/financial-aid 801.524.8111	Sept. 1, 2025	Year-Round	Year-Round
Mountainland Technical College mtec.edu/financial-aid/ 801.753.4105	Year-Round	Year-Round	Year-Round
Ogden-Weber Technical College otech.edu/future-students/financial-aid/ 801.627.8327	Year-Round	Year-Round	Year-Round
Salt Lake Community College slcc.edu/financialaid/ 801.957.4410	Aug. 20, 2025	Year-Round	Feb. 1, 2025
Salt Lake Tech College (SLCC) slcc.edu/sltech/paying.aspx 801.957.4410	Aug. 20, 2025	Year-Round	Year-Round
Snow College snow.edu/offices/finaid/ 435.283.7129	Year-Round, must be admitted by 1st day of class	June 1, 2025	Mar. 1, 2025
Southern Utah University https://www.suu.edu/finaid/ 435.586.7735	Aug. 27, 2025	May 1, 2025	Resident: Mar. 1, 2025 Non-Resident: 1st day of fall
Southwest Technical College stech.edu/admissions/financial/ 435.586.2899	Year-Round	Year-Round	General: 15 th of each month Tech Ed Scholarship: Apr. 11, 2025
Tooele Technical College https://tooeletech.edu/future-students/financial-information/scholarships-and-funding-opportunities/ 435.248.1847	Year-Round	Varies by program	Year-Round
Uintah Basin Technical College	Year-Round	Year-Round	Year-Round



https://ubtech.edu/admissions/scholarships-financial-aid/ 435.722.6953			
College	Admissions Deadline:	Submit FAFSA By:	Scholarship Application By:
University of Utah financialaid.utah.edu/ 801.581.6211	Early Action: Dec. 1, 2024 Final: Apr. 1, 2025	Priority: Feb. 1, 2025	Dec. 1, 2024
Utah State University usu.edu/financial-support/ 435.797.0173	Priority: Mar. 1, 2025 Final: Aug. 1, 2025	Feb. 1, 2025	Priority: Dec. 1, 2024
Utah State University Eastern usu.edu/financial-support/ 435.797.0173	Sept. 1, 2025	Feb. 1, 2025	Apr. 1, 2025
Utah State University Statewide Campuses usu.edu/financial-support/ 435.797.0173	Priority: Mar. 1, 2025 Final: Sept. 1, 2025	Feb. 1, 2025	Dec. 1, 2024
Utah Tech University financialaid.utahtech.edu/ 435.652.7575	Year-Round	Priority: May 1, 2025	Mar. 1, 2025
Utah Valley University uvu.edu/financialaid/ 801.863.8888	Aug. 1, 2025	Year-Round	Mar. 1, 2025
Weber State University weber.edu/financialaid 801.626.7569	Year-Round	Apr. 1, 2025	Dec. 1, 2024
Westminster University westminsteru.edu/tuition-and-aid/financial-aid/index.html 801.832.2500	Early Action: Dec. 1, 2024 Regular: Feb. 1, 2025	Year-Round	Year-Round



Online FAFSA Resources

- [FSA Eligibility for Non-U.S. Citizens](#)
- [FSA Financial Aid and Students Without an SSN Q&A](#)
- FAFSA Walkthrough Videos: [Utah College Awareness & Financial Aid YouTube](#)
- Paying for College Toolkit with the basic FAFSA presentation, handout, and video (scroll down to the “+Paying for College Toolkit” dropdown box):
<https://ushe.edu/utah-college-application-week/>
- Financial Aid Webinars: [Utah College Awareness & Financial Aid YouTube Playlist: Webinars for Counselors & Educators](#)

Videos from Federal Student Aid:

- [Preparing for the FAFSA Form](#)
- [Completing the FAFSA Form](#)
- [Next Steps After Submitting Your FAFSA](#)

Handouts from Federal Student Aid:

- The Financial Aid Process ([English](#)/[Español](#))
- Types of Aid ([English](#)/[Español](#))
- Eligibility for Federal Student Aid ([English](#)/[Español](#))
- Who counts as my parent ([English](#))

Section 3: During the Event



Instructions for In-Person Volunteers

On behalf of the USHE student success and access team, thank you for agreeing to help with FAFSA Night events. Please share this document with anyone assisting students and families at your event.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is an important step to attending college after high school, but it can often create confusion and anxiety for students and their families. We want attendees to have a fun and rewarding experience at FAFSA Night, so we're offering a few tips for making your interactions as successful and comfortable as possible:

- ✔ **Business or business casual attire is preferred. If your employer provides you with a professional name tag or if you have a professional lanyard, we encourage you to wear it.**
- ✔ **Please arrive 15 minutes before the event's scheduled start time.**
- ✔ **Always ask permission before looking at an individual's demographic or tax information.**
- ✔ **Please serve as a neutral assistant for FAFSA completion. These events offer students a neutral place to seek financial aid assistance for all colleges, devoid of any recruitment pressure. We kindly ask that you refrain from actively recruiting students to attend a particular college. In addition, please do not dissuade a student from listing any not-for-profit college or university on their FAFSA.**
- ✔ **Please provide guidance only as it pertains directly to the FAFSA; do not provide legal advice regarding immigration processes or tax filing.**
- ✔ **When discussing potentially sensitive FAFSA topics, such as immigration status or financial hardship, always be conscientious of your surroundings. Consider asking the person to step outside the room to discuss their situation privately but attempt to do so in a way that doesn't draw an overt amount of attention.**
- ✔ **If you anticipate being late or encounter an emergency preventing your attendance, please communicate this promptly with the high school and USHE contact. This may allow us to arrange a substitute or alternative assistant in time.**

Thank you for your time and assistance in helping our high school students!

For questions, please contact the USHE student success & access team:
fafsahelp@ushe.edu / 801-646-4562



UTAH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION



Instructions for Virtual Volunteers

If your high school will offer virtual volunteer(s) to assist with FAFSA Night, consider these options to support helping students and their families:

- ☑ To offer a virtual volunteer service, prepare a mobile device, laptop, tablet, phone, or stationary location and share this with all attendees.
 - A mobile device allows the volunteer to move around during the event. However, a fixed station can be just as effective with clear instructions for students and parents.
- ☑ Each virtual volunteer will have their own individual Zoom meeting link. For multiple volunteers, high schools will need separate devices for each volunteer. The Zoom link(s) will be provided in advance using a calendar invite or email from the USHE team.
- ☑ Set up the virtual volunteer(s) 15-20 minutes before your FAFSA event starts to allow time for troubleshooting and additional event help if needed.
- ☑ Consider nominating a volunteer or staff member to help with virtual volunteers. This person can be on-site to set up Zoom, troubleshoot, and help families navigate the application.

Virtual Volunteer Best Practices

- **Ensure that Zoom is compatible with your device(s) and is updated before the event to avoid technical issues during student and parent interactions.**
- For security purposes, **please keep the computer or device in a public area when the video feed is on, or if your computer is in a separate room, please turn off your video feed.** Please instruct those using the virtual volunteer not to share their screen. However, volunteers can share their video feed and screen to provide visual aids or instructions.
- **Walk the laptop or tablet over to students as needed or instruct students to visit the computer to ask questions if the device is not mobile.** The virtual volunteer should be ready to answer questions in either situation. Their goal is to seem as accessible as an in-person volunteer would.

Thank you! If you have questions, please contact the USHE student success & access team:
fafsahelp@ushe.edu / 801.646.4562



UTAH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION



Common FAFSA Event Issues and Resolutions

Below are common issues and resolutions to prepare for during FAFSA Completion Events.

Sensitive situations: The combination of college stress, financial information, students or parents without a social security number, and other sensitive topics may cause people to experience various emotions.

Tips for handling sensitive situations:

- As a best practice, have a separate room available to consult families one-on-one, if needed.
- Pay attention to the tone and volume of your voice when talking to families about sensitive situations.
- Always ask permission before touching or viewing documents or requesting personal or financial information details.

StudentAid.Gov account problems: Mismatches in personal identification data are the biggest culprit for StudentAid.Gov account issues. This might include a mistyped birthdate or using a preferred name instead of a full legal first name. The student and parent (as a required contributor) must create their own StudentAid.Gov account. The Social Security Number (or mailing address for those without SSNs), name, and date of birth must be **exactly the same** on both the StudentAid.Gov account and when inviting a parent/student to the FAFSA form. Be sure to have the student and parents use a permanent email address and register their mobile phone and email for password recovery. If online troubleshooting is unsuccessful, call Federal Student Aid for assistance **(1-800-433-3243)**.

Computer problems: It is helpful to have someone from your IT department on-site or on call in case computer or network issues arise.

Missing documents: Please anticipate students or parents who bring incorrect taxes, forget to bring taxes, do not know their Social Security Number, lack specific financial documentation, or do not have parental information available. In these instances, have an action plan and adjust those instructions according to their needs. This will allow them to either work on the FAFSA or receive guidance on the next steps. Scheduling a follow-up meeting can be highly beneficial in these cases.

Using the wrong website: If you notice a student using any website other than studentaid.gov, stop them as soon as you catch it and have them file at the correct website (studentaid.gov or fafsa.gov).

Filing for the wrong application year: If students start college in the fall of 2025, they should complete the 2025-26 FAFSA. However, suppose a student wants to attend college during the spring or summer of 2025. In that case, they may need to fill out the 2024-25 FAFSA (for spring and summer aid) and the 2025-26 FAFSA (for the entire 2025-26 academic year).



Common FAFSA Night Issues Continued

Misinformation: Many people are eager to help at the FAFSA Completion Event but may not be properly trained. Keep your ears open for incorrect advice being given to parents and students. If you're unsure, don't hesitate to ask financial aid representatives for clarification or follow up with the USHE student support and access team (fafsahelp@ushe.edu). Please note that a response from the USHE team will usually come the following business day.

Sophomores and juniors: The FAFSA is for students attending college (**NOT** for AP classes or Concurrent Enrollment) within the next financial aid year. Only **seniors** should attend FAFSA Nights. We do encourage schools to provide resources to students before their senior year – like hosting a “paying for college night” or using the [Paying for College Toolkit](#) as a resource.

Answering the Question: Why Should I File the FAFSA?

Here are some tips for answering the common question from students and parents: Why should I file the FAFSA? Effectively informing students about the benefits of filing the FAFSA can help them make the best decision for them.

FAFSA is a gateway to ALL federal aid, most state financial aid resources, and some institutional and private aid/scholarships.

Federal aid includes Pell grants, work-study programs, and federal student loans. [Most state grants and scholarships](#) also require FAFSA completion. Some institutional aid/scholarships and private scholarships also require the FAFSA to be completed.

What if the student has a full-ride scholarship or savings prepared to pay for college?

Filing the FAFSA is a good backup plan to cover unexpected expenses. Many scholarships, including the [Utah Opportunity Scholarship](#), require students to file the FAFSA, if eligible, as part of the application process. Please note that students not eligible to complete the FAFSA can still apply for the Utah Opportunity Scholarship and will complete an alternative form.

Students never know what financial aid they might end up receiving.

Many students file the FAFSA and are surprised to find they qualify for aid.

It's not as difficult as many students may think.

Students can access the FAFSA at fafsa.gov or studentaid.gov. The FAFSA provides tips in every section, as well as online chat, phone help, and a frequently asked questions section. Students can also attend a USHE-sponsored FAFSA Completion Open House or get help from a school counselor, college advisor, or FAFSA coordinator. Let students know that it's easy to contact the financial aid office at the college or university they may want to attend and ask for school-specific financial aid information.

Students aren't required to accept loans.

The FAFSA is just an application; students can always decline any aid they are offered (such as federal student loans).

There's no reason not to file the FAFSA every year they're in college . . . It's FREE!



FAFSA Encouragement Strategies

Ways to alleviate parent and student concerns for FAFSA

Concern: "My parent doesn't have a social security number."

Solution: A parent's immigration status does not impact a student's eligibility for Title IV aid if the student is a U.S. citizen. The Department of Education does not share any information with immigration authorities.

Concern: "The application is too difficult."

Solution: Offer to schedule an appointment for personalized FAFSA assistance or direct them to helpful resources like your school's FAFSA Night.

Parents

Concern: "We make too much money."

Solution: Income is only one factor in determining eligibility for federal aid. It's important to emphasize that the FAFSA isn't just for need-based federal aid; it's also required to access state, institutional, and private scholarships and grants.

Concern: "I don't want to share my private information."

Solution: Reassure parents that the federal government already has access to much of the information requested on the FAFSA, such as Social Security numbers and tax details. Additionally, the FAFSA form uses federally approved encryption to safeguard their data.

Concern: "My parents don't want to be responsible for my debt."

Solution: Clarify that the FAFSA asks for parent information only to assess financial need. Federal student loans don't have cosigners.

Concern: "I probably won't qualify for a grant, and I don't want to take out a loan."

Solution: The FAFSA is just an application. Students don't have to take out federal student loans if they don't want or need to.

Students

Concern: "I already have a full-ride scholarship."

Solution: Encourage the student to utilize all free aid available to them. Federal student aid may help cover costs of college attendance that their scholarship may not, such as transportation.

Concern: "My parents aren't part of my life."

Solution: Ask questions to see if the student fits the FAFSA's definition of an "independent student" or explain that they can appeal their dependency status at the financial aid office.



Section 4: Event Handouts for Students and Families

Please visit our Utah College Application and Financial Aid Resources webpage for updated resources, handouts, and translations. For FAFSA Resources, scroll down to the dropdown listing “FAFSA Resources” at ushe.edu/utah-college-application-week.

- [StudentAid.Gov Account Setup](#)
- [Checklist to Complete the 2025-26 FAFSA](#)



StudentAid.Gov Account Setup

To create a Federal Student Aid account, visit: studentaid.gov/fsa-id



What's needed to create a StudentAid.Gov account?

Account usernames and passwords are required for the student and each parent:

1. **Name:** Full legal name as it appears on your Social Security card.
2. **Date of Birth**
3. **Social Security Number:** Required for those with an SSN. Not required for parents without one.
4. **Email:** Must be verified. Use a non-school email. Students will need access to this email throughout college.
5. **Mobile Phone/Authenticator App:** Optional to download but recommended for login, account recovery, and enhanced security.

Who NEEDS to create a StudentAid.Gov Account?

- ✓ **Students** seeking financial aid.
- ✓ **Biological or adoptive parents of dependent students** (with or without a Social Security Number).
If parents are divorced or separated, only the parent who provides the majority of financial support to the student will need a StudentAid.Gov Account. If that parent is remarried, the stepparent may need one, too.
- ✓ **Student's spouse**, if applicable.

Who should NOT create a StudentAid.Gov Account?

- ✗ **Parents who already have a StudentAid.Gov Account** (parents cannot create a new one).
- ✗ **Students without a Social Security Number.**
Cannot file the FAFSA. Please consult a school counselor or college adviser for alternative ways to pay for college, scholarship opportunities, and info on HB 144.
- ✗ **Grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians**
- ✗ **Siblings**
- ✗ **Aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.**

How do I know if my parents need to create an account? What if my parents aren't a part of my life?

If students can answer YES to any of the following questions, they do NOT need parental accounts.

- Will you be 24 years of age or older as of Jan 2025, OR are you married but not separated or divorced?
- Do you have a child or another dependent to whom you provide the majority of financial support?
- Are you currently on active duty, OR are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?
- At any time since you turned 13, were you an orphan, in foster care, or a ward of the court?
- Are or were you ever a legally emancipated minor, as determined by a court?
- Do you have a court-ordered legal guardian who is not your biological or adoptive parent?
- Are you unaccompanied AND either homeless OR self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?
- Do you have an unusual circumstance that prevents you from contacting your parent(s)? Ask for more details.

Important Warning

- The StudentAid.Gov website times out if you're inactive for a short period. You must complete the setup in one session or start over.

Experiencing issues or already have an account and can't log in?

- If you have trouble or can't access your account, call Federal Student Aid at 1-800-433-3243.

Finished?

- Don't forget to save your backup code!
- Processing your identity may take 1-3 business days. During this time, you won't be able to transfer IRS tax information to the FAFSA form.

Keep your account information handy for the FAFSA each year. Take a picture or keep it in your wallet.

StudentAid.Gov Account Info Card

Username: _____
Password: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____
Authenticator App: _____
Challenge Q&A – 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
Backup Code: _____

Checklist to Complete the 2025-26 FAFSA

Students will need:

- StudentAid.Gov account username and password
- Permanent mailing address
- Month/year the student became a resident of Utah
 - Residents have lived in Utah for 12 consecutive months or longer
 - Insert birthdate if born and raised in Utah
- ∨ Dependent students** must invite their parent(s) to their FAFSA form. To do so, students will need the following information:
 - Parent's legal first and last name
 - Parent's date of birth
 - Parent's Social Security Number (SSN) or, if there is no SSN, insert the mailing address
 - Parent's email
- Alien registration number or A#, if applicable
- 2023 federal tax forms, if applicable
- 2023 income forms, such as a W-2 form from your employer, if applicable
- ∨ Assets
 - Current total of student's cash, checking, or savings accounts
 - Net worth of student investments***
 - Net worth of student-owned businesses or investment farms, if applicable***

**Need guidance on creating a StudentAid.Gov account? Review our 'StudentAid.Gov account Setup' document for details.*



***Not sure if you are a dependent student? Use the QR code above and review the yellow portion of 'StudentAid.Gov account Setup' to see if you must provide parental information.*

****Net worth is the value of the investments, business, or investment farm minus any debts owed against them. Investments include stocks, bonds, mutual funds, 529 plans, secondary or rental properties, etc. Retirement investments are not reported on the FAFSA.*

Which parent will need a StudentAid.Gov account to consent and sign the FAFSA form?

- Only one parent is required to sign if married/remarried and filing taxes jointly.
- If married/remarried but filing taxes separately, BOTH parents must sign.
- Parents who are unmarried and living together BOTH must sign.
- In the case of divorced or separated parents, the ONE who provides more financial support to the student OR with higher income/assets must sign.
- If a parent has remarried, stepparent info is also needed (start from the top).
- A widowed parent, not remarried, requires the signature of the surviving parent.

Parent(s) will need:

- StudentAid.Gov account username and password
- Permanent mailing address
- Month/year the parent(s) became a resident of Utah
 - Residents have lived in Utah for 12 consecutive months or longer
- Parents may need their student's legal first and last name, date of birth, Social Security Number, and email
- Married/remarried parents will need their spouse's legal first and last name, date of birth, Social Security Number. If no SSN, insert their mailing address and email
- 2023 federal tax forms, 1040 form, and all schedules
- 2023 income forms, such as a W-2 form from your employer, if applicable
- ∨ Assets
 - Current total of cash, checking, or savings accounts
 - Net worth of all investments***
 - Net worth of parent-owned businesses or investment farms***
 - Amount of child support received in the past year for all children, if applicable



FSA ID – Su Clave para Ayuda Financiera

Para crear su cuenta de Federal Student Aid, visite studentaid.gov/fsa-id



¿Qué necesitará para crear un FSA ID? (uno para los estudiantes y uno para cada padre correspondiente)

1. **Nombre:** Proporcione su nombre completo legal, tal como aparece en su tarjeta de Seguro Social.
2. **Fecha de Nacimiento**
3. **Número de Seguro Social:** Requerido para aquellos con un número de Seguro Social; no es requerido para padres sin un seguro social.
4. **Correo electrónico:** Debe de obtener un correo electrónico verificado que no sea escolar (necesitará un correo electrónico que utilizará durante todo su estudio universitario).
5. **Teléfono móvil:** Es opcional, pero es recomendado para el inicio de sesión, recuperación de cuenta y seguridad mejorada.
6. **Aplicación de autenticación:** Es opcional, pero es recomendada para inicio de sesión, recuperación de cuenta y seguridad mejorada.
7. **Dirección postal:** Su dirección postal actual.

¿Quién NECESITA crear un FSA ID?

- ✓ **Estudiantes** que buscan ayuda financiera
- ✓ **Padres biológicos o adoptivos de estudiantes dependientes** (con o sin Números de Seguro Social)
Si los padres están divorciados o separados, solo el padre que proporciona la mayoría del apoyo financiero al estudiante necesitará un FSA ID. Si ese padre está casado de nuevo, el padrastro también puede necesitar uno.
- ✓ **El cónyuge del estudiante**, si corresponde

¿Quién NO debe crear un FSA ID?

- × **Padres que ya tienen un FSA ID**
(no pueden crear una cuenta de nuevo)
- × **Estudiantes sin un Número de Seguro Social**
No podrán presentar FAFSA. Por favor, consulten a un consejero escolar o asesor universitario para conocer alternativas de pago para la universidad, oportunidades de becas y HB 144.
- × **Abuelos, padres adoptivos, tutores legales**
- × **Hermanos o hermanas**
- × **Tíos, tías, primos, etc.**

¿Cómo sé si mi(s) padre(s) necesitan crear un FSA ID? ¿Y si mis padres no forman parte de mi vida?

Si el estudiante puede responder SÍ a alguna de las siguientes preguntas, NO necesitará el FSA ID de sus padres

- ¿Tendrá 24 años o más a partir de enero de 2024? ¿O está casado (pero no separado o divorciado)?
- ¿Tiene un hijo u otro dependiente para quien proporciona la mayoría del apoyo financiero?
- ¿Tiene un tutor legal ordenado por un tribunal que no es su padre biológico o adoptivo?
- ¿Estuvo en cuidado de crianza en algún momento después de los 13 años? ¿O estuvo bajo custodia del tribunal en algún momento después de los 13 años? ¿O tienes alguna circunstancia inusual que te impida ponerte en contacto con tu(s) padre(s)?
- ¿Es/era menor emancipado legalmente, según lo determine un tribunal? ¿O está sin hogar o en riesgo de estarlo?
- ¿Están sus padres actualmente encarcelados? ¿O han fallecido desde que tenía 13 años?
- ¿Está en servicio activo actualmente? ¿O es veterano de las fuerzas armadas de los EE. UU.?

* Aviso Importante*

- El sitio web del FSA ID se desconectará si está inactivo por un corto período. Debe completar la configuración en una sola sesión o tendrá que empezar de nuevo.

¿Tiene problemas?

¿Ya tiene una cuenta y no puede iniciar una sesión?

- Si tiene problemas o no puede acceder a su cuenta, llame a la Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes al 1-800-433-3243.

¿Terminó?

- ¡No olvide guardar su código de respaldo!
- El proceso de verificación de su identidad puede tardar de 1 a 3 días hábiles. Durante este tiempo, no podrá transferir información fiscal del IRS al formulario de FAFSA.

Recorte y guarde en su billetera o tome una foto para cuando llene FAFSA anualmente

Tarjeta de Información de la Cuenta FSA ID

Usuario: _____

Contraseña: _____

Correo electrónico: _____

Teléfono: _____

Aplicación de Autenticación: _____

P&R de Desafío - 1) _____ 2) _____

3) _____ 4) _____

Código de respaldo: _____



FAFSA Night

3 Steps for Students and Parents

- 1** Have your Federal Student Aid account username and password ready to get started. If you do not have an account login, both the student and parent (if applicable) must create one in order to complete the FAFSA form. You can create your account at studentaid.gov/fsa-id.
- 2** Fill out the 2025-26 FAFSA form at fafsa.gov.
- 3** Before you leave, make sure to fill out the FAFSA Scholarship survey for a chance to win a \$500 scholarship provided by the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE). Please use the QR Code or link below.
utah.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezmtlphgnzsNddDU



Questions? Ask a professional at the event, a school counselor, or contact the Utah System of Higher Education Student Support & Access Team:
fafsahelp@ushe.edu / 801-646-4562



FAFSA Night

3 Pasos para Estudiantes y Padres

- 1** Tenga listo su nombre de usuario y contraseña de su cuenta de Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes para comenzar. Si no tiene una cuenta, tanto el estudiante como el padre (si corresponde) tienen que crear una para completar el formulario FAFSA. Puede crear su cuenta en studentaid.gov/fsa-id.
- 2** Complete la FAFSA 2025-26 en fafsa.gov.
- 3** Complete la encuesta, de la FAFSA Scholarship para tener la oportunidad de ganar una beca de \$500 proporcionadas por el Sistema de Educación Superior de Utah (USHE). Por favor use el código QR o el enlace a continuación.
utah.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezmtlphgnzsNddDU.



¿Preguntas? Pregunte a un profesional en tu evento, a un consejero escolar de tu preparatoria, o ponte en contacto con el equipo de Acceso del Sistema de Educación Superior de Utah: fafsahelp@ushe.edu / 801-646-4562



FAFSA Night Scholarship

Complete the survey to win a \$500 scholarship.



Is My Parent a **CONTRIBUTOR** When I Fill Out My FAFSA® Form?

A **parent** means your legal (biological or adoptive) parent or a person that the state has determined to be your legal parent. A **stepparent** is considered a parent if they have adopted you. Stepparents that have not adopted you will be identified as a parent spouse.

Are your biological or adoptive parents married to each other?



Your parents' marital status is married (not separated), and both of your parents' information must be included on the FAFSA® form. If your parents did not file taxes jointly, then both of your parents are contributors. Their individual information, consent and approval, and signatures will be required on the FAFSA form. If your parents filed taxes jointly, only one parent is required as a contributor and will report information for both parents.

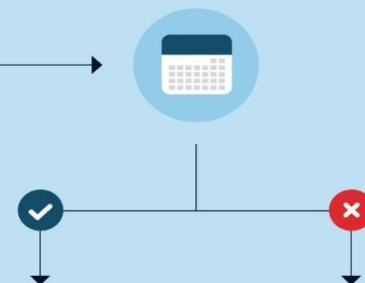
Note: Dependent students are required to report parent information on the FAFSA® form, and in most cases, a parent will be identified as a contributor for these students. All contributors are required to provide their information, signature, and consent and approval to have their federal tax information transferred directly from the IRS into the FAFSA form. Being a contributor on the FAFSA form does not mean an obligation to pay for the student's education.

Do your biological or adoptive parents live together?



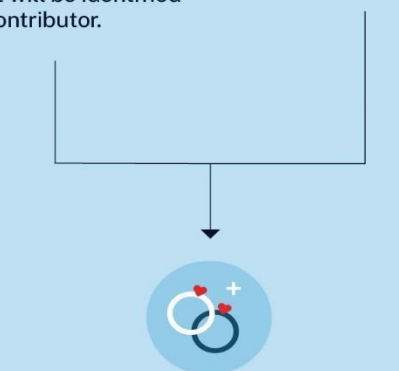
Your parents' marital status is unmarried (both legal parents living together), and both of your parents are contributors, even if they were never married, are divorced, or are separated. Their individual information, consent and approval, and signatures will be required on the FAFSA® form.

Did one parent provide more financial support than the other over the past 12 months?



The individual information, consent and approval, and signature of the parent who provided more financial support over the past 12 months will be required on the FAFSA® form, and this parent will be identified as a contributor.

The individual information, consent and approval, and signature of the parent who has the greater income or assets will be required on the FAFSA® form, and this parent will be identified as a contributor.



Has this parent married/remarried?



Your parent's marital status is married/remarried. Your stepparent will also be identified as a contributor on the FAFSA® form if they didn't file their taxes jointly with your parent.

Your parent's marital status is single (never married), separated, divorced, or widowed. An additional parent will not be identified as contributor.

Deferment and the FAFSA

Some students defer college to complete a humanitarian, religious, or military service after high school. Here are some options if you do not plan to start college immediately after high school graduation.

We recommend:

File the FAFSA during your senior year of high school, even if you aren't planning to attend college right away.

Why we recommend it:

- Filing your FAFSA as a senior makes the renewal process much easier when you decide to enroll in college.
- If you have time to fit a semester of college before you leave for your religious mission, military service, or humanitarian service, you may be eligible for financial aid.
- If your plans change suddenly (for example, due to an unexpected injury), you will be ready to attend college.
- Because of the important role the FAFSA can play in some scholarships (especially the [Utah Opportunity Scholarship](#)), you should file early to be considered for those awards. You may be able to defer your scholarships.

When you return from deferment:

If you complete the FAFSA (or create a StudentAid.Gov account), write down your information below and save it in a safe place when you return. When you return, this can help you avoid the complications of forgotten passwords, usernames, emails, and other information. We also recommend writing down your parent's account information as well.

FSA ID Username: _____

FSA ID Password: _____

Email Associated with Account: _____

Phone Number Associated with Account: _____

Challenge Question Answer 1: _____

Challenge Question Answer 2: _____

Challenge Question Answer 3: _____

Challenge Question Answer 4: _____



Aplazamiento y FAFSA

Algunos estudiantes aplazan la universidad para completar un servicio humanitario, religioso o militar después de la escuela secundaria. Si no planea comenzar la universidad inmediatamente después de la graduación de la escuela secundaria...

Lo que recomendamos:

Presente la FAFSA el otoño de su último año de secundaria incluso si no está planeando asistir a la universidad de inmediato.

Por qué lo recomendamos:

- La presentación de su FAFSA como un estudiante mayor hace que el proceso de renovación sea mucho más fácil cuando decide inscribirse en la universidad.
- Si tiene tiempo para un semestre de la universidad antes de su misión religiosa, servicio militar, o servicio humanitario, puede ser elegible para la ayuda financiera.
- Si sus planes cambian repentinamente (por ejemplo, debido a una lesión inesperada) estará listo para asistir a la universidad.
- Debido al importante papel que la FAFSA puede desempeñar en algunas becas (especialmente la beca [Utah Opportunity Scholarship](#)), debe presentar su solicitud temprano para ser considerado para esos premios. Tiene posibilidad de aplazar o diferir sus becas.

Cuando regrese del aplazamiento:

Si completa la FAFSA (o crea una cuenta en StudentAid.Gov) anote su información a continuación y guárdela en un lugar seguro para cuando regrese. Esto puede ayudarlo a evitar las complicaciones de contraseñas olvidadas, nombres de usuario, correos electrónicos y otra información cuando regrese. También le recomendamos que escriba la información de la cuenta de sus padres.

ID de FSA Nombre de usuario: _____

ID de FSA Contraseña: _____

Correo electrónico asociado con la cuenta: _____

Número de teléfono asociado con la cuenta: _____

Pregunta de desafío Respuesta 1: _____

Pregunta de desafío Respuesta 2: _____

Pregunta de desafío Respuesta 3: _____

Pregunta de desafío Respuesta 4: _____



Section 5:

Post-Event & Follow-Up

Following Up After Filing the FAFSA

After the FAFSA event, we advise teams to review their attendance sheets and follow up with any students who didn't complete their FAFSA. Students who did finish their FAFSA can still be contacted about next steps for financial aid.

Things to note:

1. Processing times and next steps—

After students submit their FAFSA, instruct them to follow up with their college(s) to ensure ALL the required paperwork is submitted. Timing is an important factor when students contact the college. Digitally signed FAFSA applications take 3-5 business days to process. On the other hand, paper FAFSA applications take much longer to process, anywhere from five to ten weeks or more. Because of this, students with paper applications may not be able to follow up with colleges for several weeks. After processing the FAFSA, some colleges don't contact students directly, so we recommend students follow up.


2. Access to information—

When students complete the FAFSA, they have access to their submission date and can view processing times to see when info is sent to colleges. They can also see their FAFSA Submission Summary. This is a helpful tool that provides a big-picture look at their potential financial aid. Counselors can use this document as a guide to review the FAFSA submission, eligibility, and next steps with students and families. There are four tabs included in this document:

- The first tab is the “Eligibility Overview,” which reviews Pell Grant, Student Loans, Work-Study eligibility, and the Student Aid Index (SAI).
 - The SAI can go as low as -1,500. Remind students that this is an estimate for eligibility. Students will receive a financial aid offer from institution(s) that includes exact amounts and types of aid being offered.
- The second tab, “FAFSA Form Answers,” is where students can review their responses for accuracy, and make corrections.
- The third tab is “School Information,” where students can review the college(s) they selected on their FAFSA.
- Finally, there are “Next Steps” where students can resolve errors and check if they've been selected for verification or view other important actions.



FAFSA[®] FORM 2024–25 FAFSA Submission Summary

Student  Raya TranApplication Received
Sept. 10, 2024Application Processed
Sept. 12, 2024Data Release Number 
2572Viewing: **Submission 1** [Eligibility Overview](#)[FAFSA Form Answers](#)[School Information](#)[Next Steps](#)

3. Celebrate Your Success—But Keep the Momentum Going!

Congratulations on successfully completing the event and helping students take an important step toward securing financial aid! While the event may be over, your efforts don't have to stop here. We encourage all FAFSA Site Coordinators to continue supporting students by scheduling FAFSA completion meetings, organizing additional FAFSA events, and regularly monitoring your school's FAFSA data. Remember, FAFSA completion is not a one-time event but a year-long commitment.

To help sustain your efforts, be sure to explore our website for additional resources and check out the FAFSA data information below.

Tracking FAFSA Completion Data

There are several resources available to college access professionals to track FAFSA completion at your school, in the state, and across the country:

- [NCAN's FAFSA Tracker](#) is a common source for FAFSA completion information. View the national data trends on the home page or see state level information on the "state profile" tab. View the FAFSA completion percentage at your high school on the "high school lookup tab."
- [Federal Student Aid](#) also provides FAFSA completion data by state and high school. These reports inform the NCAN tracker.



UTAH SYSTEM OF
HIGHER EDUCATION