



# FAFSA | Mixed-Status Families and FSA IDs

To complete the Free Application for Financial Aid (FAFSA), all contributors—student applicant, parent(s) of dependent students, spouse of independent student—must first create an FSA ID account. Contributors without a Social Security number (SSN) can create an FSA ID account by answering a series of knowledge-based questions to verify their identity.

**Note:** *Every student and family has different circumstances and considerations that factor into how you pursue financial aid. The 2025-26 California Dream Act Application is open for students from mixed-status families who may have data privacy concerns or encounter challenges completing the 2025-26 FAFSA. We strongly recommend that you and your family hold discussions to determine the best pathway forward for your situation.*

## Who are mixed-status families?

Mixed-status families are households with family members who have different citizenship or immigrant statuses. To be eligible to submit the FAFSA, dependent student applicants must be either a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen, even if their parents are undocumented. Dependent students who don't qualify to submit the FAFSA, but qualify for an AB 540 nonresident tuition exemption, may be eligible to complete the California Dream Act Application. Visit [dream.csac.ca.gov](https://dream.csac.ca.gov) for information.

## How will mixed-status families be impacted by the FSA ID requirement?

In previous years, parent and non-student [contributors](#) without a Social Security Number (SSN) could submit a FAFSA by mail and did not need to create an FSA ID. Now, the process allows contributors without SSNs to create an FSA ID and complete the FAFSA online.

## How can contributors create an FSA ID without a Social Security Number?

Federal Student Aid (FSA) accounts are created at [StudentAid.gov](https://StudentAid.gov). When [creating an account](#) without an SSN, the contributor will be asked to answer a few knowledge-based questions to verify their identity. Once all answers are submitted, the account is created, and a confirmation screen will appear indicating the identity verification status. If the account is verified, the contributor can begin the FAFSA immediately. If the account is created but not verified, the contributor will have limited functionality (no additional steps will be needed).

*Please note: Email addresses and mobile phone numbers can only be associated with one FSA ID. Additionally, it is recommended to refrain from using abbreviations when entering home addresses. For example, "St" and "Ave" should be "Street" and "Avenue."*

## The Paper FAFSA Form

A paper FAFSA can still be completed and acquiring an FSA ID is **not required** for this option. Like the online FAFSA, all contributors must provide consent for Federal Student Aid (FSA) to access Federal Tax Information (FTI) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), regardless of tax filing status. All contributors will still need to answer questions about income and assets.

The [paper FAFSA](#) can be accessed, in English and Spanish, at [StudentAid.gov](https://StudentAid.gov).

Please note that the FAFSA provides a space for contributors to report their Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), however it is **not required**.

## What can you do now to prepare?

- **Create an email account.**  
An email address unique to each contributor is needed to create an FSA ID account and to complete the FAFSA. If you or your contributor(s) do not have a unique email account, create one before beginning the FSA ID and FAFSA process.
- **Sign up for an FSA ID now.**  
It can take several days for an FSA ID to be created after all information has been submitted and verified. If a contributor has to submit documentation to verify their identity, this can prolong the process even further.
- **Gather income and asset information** from two years prior (e.g., the 2025-26 FAFSA requires 2023 income and asset information) to complete the financial sections of the FAFSA.

*For additional support, please contact UC Berkeley's Undocumented Student Program at [undocu.berkeley.edu](https://undocu.berkeley.edu).*