Ways to Pay for College

Basics of Financial Aid and the FAFSA

ANNE ARUNDEL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

What is Financial Aid ?

Financial Aid consists of funds provided to students and families to help pay for postsecondary education

Types of Financial Aid

- **Gift Aid (the good stuff)**

  - Scholarships and Grants.

  (Does not need to be paid back)

Self Help Aid

  - Student Loans, Work Study, and awards that require a commitment after graduation.

  (Has to be paid back or earned)

Sources of Financial Aid

1. **Federal Aid –** Complete the *FAFSA*
2. **State Aid –** Complete the *FAFSA* by March 1st
3. **Institutional Aid –** Complete the *FAFSA* and know Institutional deadlines and procedures
4. **Outside Aid -** FAFSA may or may not be needed

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)

www.StudentAid.gov

- Collects demographic and financial information
- Information used to calculate the Student Aid Index (SAI)
- Colleges use SAI to establish financial need and offer financial aid
- Available in English and Spanish
- The FAFSA typically opens October 1st, of the year prior to the academic award year
- May be filed at any time during an academic year. (Colleges may set FAFSA priority dates)
- Students must apply every school year

FAFSA Eligibility Criteria

- You must be a U.S. citizen or *eligible non-citizen*.
  https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility
- You must have a high school diploma, GED or completed a homeschool program approved under state law.
- You must be enrolled in an eligible degree or certificate program at the college you plan to attend.

Be Prepared - Create your FSA ID

- Student and contributors must create own FSA ID’s
- Know SSN for Student and Contributors (Parent, Spouse, etc.)
- Will be used throughout financial aid process and subsequent school years.

Create an Account

Whether you’re a student, parent, or borrower, you’ll need to create your own account to apply for, receive, and manage your federal student aid.

Get Started

Already have an account? Log In

What You Can Do With Your Account

You must have an account to do the following:

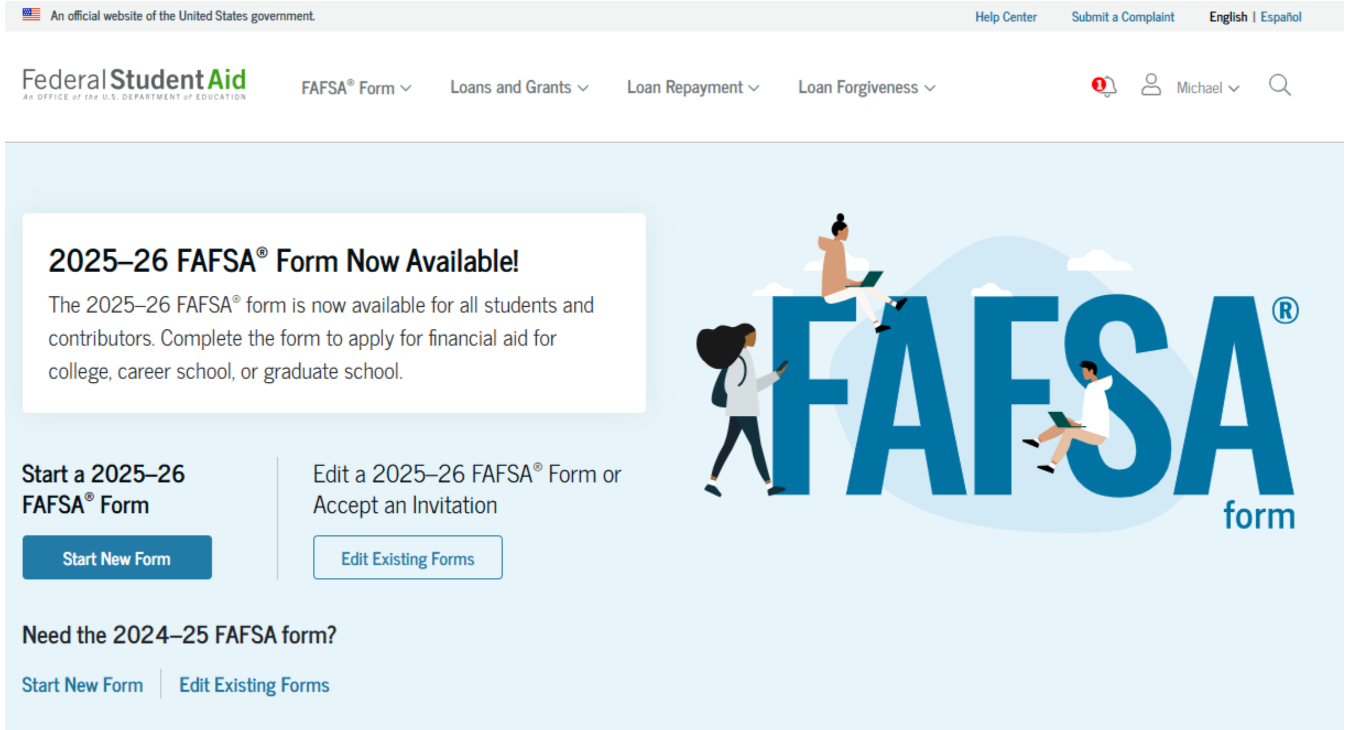
- Fill out the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®) form online
- Complete other online forms (such as the *Master Promissory Note*) required to receive aid
- Review the federal student aid you’ve received

What You’ll Need

- Your Social Security number (if applicable)
- Your own email address

The FAFSA – Getting Started

- Go to Studentaid.gov
- Choose FAFSA Form
- Select "Start New Form"
- The Student logs in first
- **Provide consent**

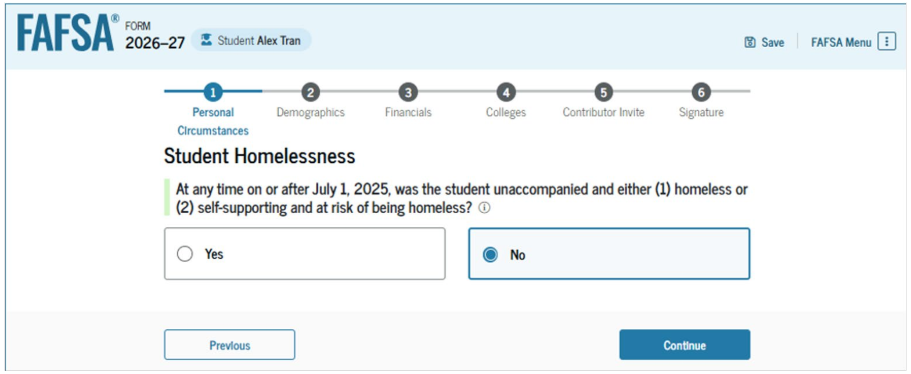


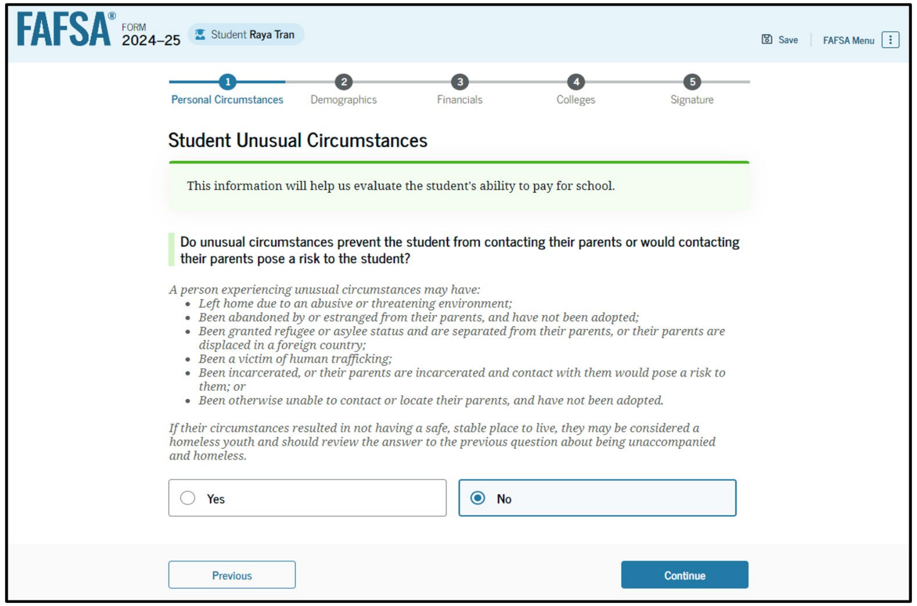
FAFSA Steps Outline

- **Get Started**
  - Go to StudentAid.gov
- **Be Prepared**
  - Create an FSA ID and password
  - All FAFSA contributors (e.g., parents, spouse) will need their own FSA ID and password
- **Complete the Student Section**
  - Answer questions for your portion of the FAFSA
- **Invite Contributors**
  - A parent, stepparent, or spouse may need to provide information
  - They will need an FSA ID and password too
- **Consent to Use IRS Data**
  - All contributors must consent to link their info to the IRS
  - Failure to consent = FAFSA will be rejected
- **Review and Submit Your FAFSA**
  - Indicate which schools should receive your FAFSA
  - Double-check all information is accurate
  - Submit the form

Dependent Student Other and Unusual Circumstances

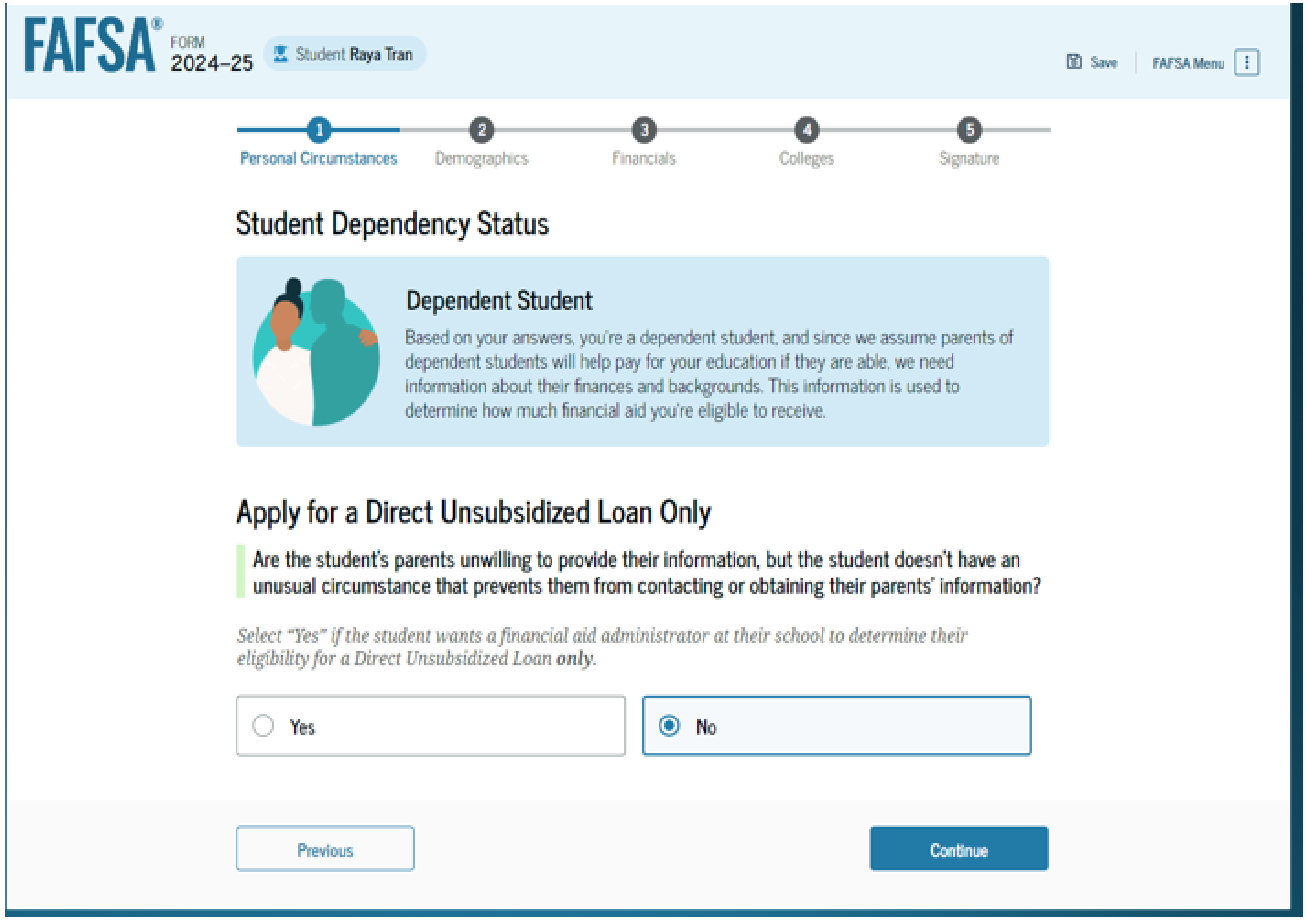
- Student is given option to indicate if they are homeless, in danger of being homeless, or affected by other circumstances that prevent contact with their parent(s).
- Will be given *conditional* independent status
- Student ***will have to provide documentation*** to institution to keep independent status





Parent unwilling or unable to provide information

- If a dependent student's parents are unwilling or unable (taxes not filed), financial need cannot be determined.
- The student will ***only be eligible to receive direct unsubsidized loans*** and no other financial aid.
- Answer "No" to this question unless the situation specifically applies to you.

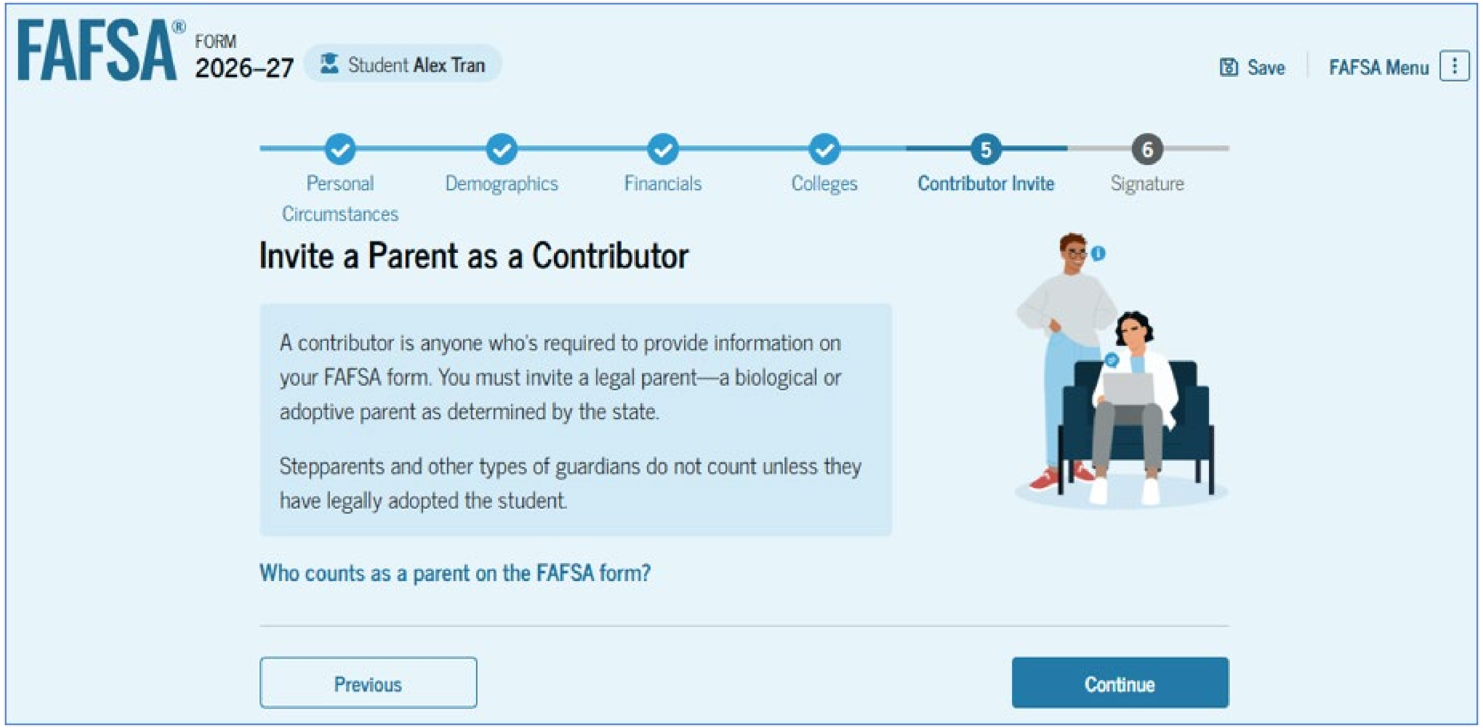


Who is Considered the Parent Contributor

- **Never Married**
  - Report the parent who provided more financial support in the past 12 months.
  - If both parents provided equal support, report info for the parent with greater income and assets.
- **Unmarried & Both Legal Parents Live Together**
  - Report both legal parents.
- **Married (biological/adoptive parents together)**
  - Report information for both parents.
- **Remarried (after being widowed or divorced)**
  - Report the parent and the stepparent (i.e. the one who remarried).
- **Divorced or Separated**
  - Report information for the parent who provided more financial support during the prior 12 months.
  - If equal support, then for the parent with greater income & assets.

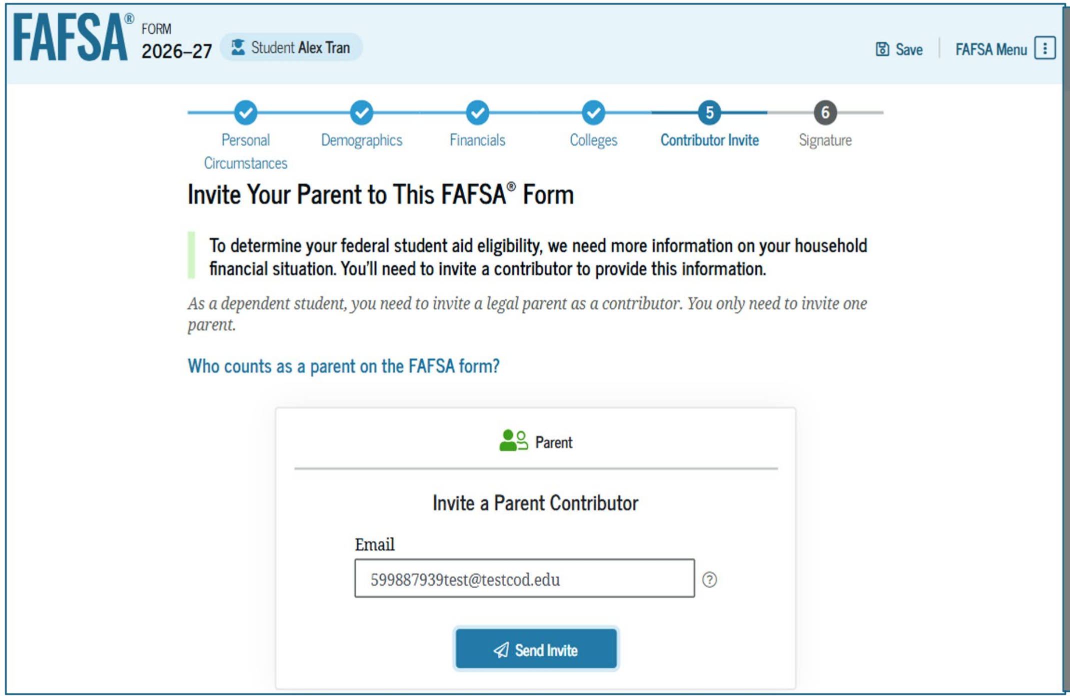
Dependent Student Invites Contributor

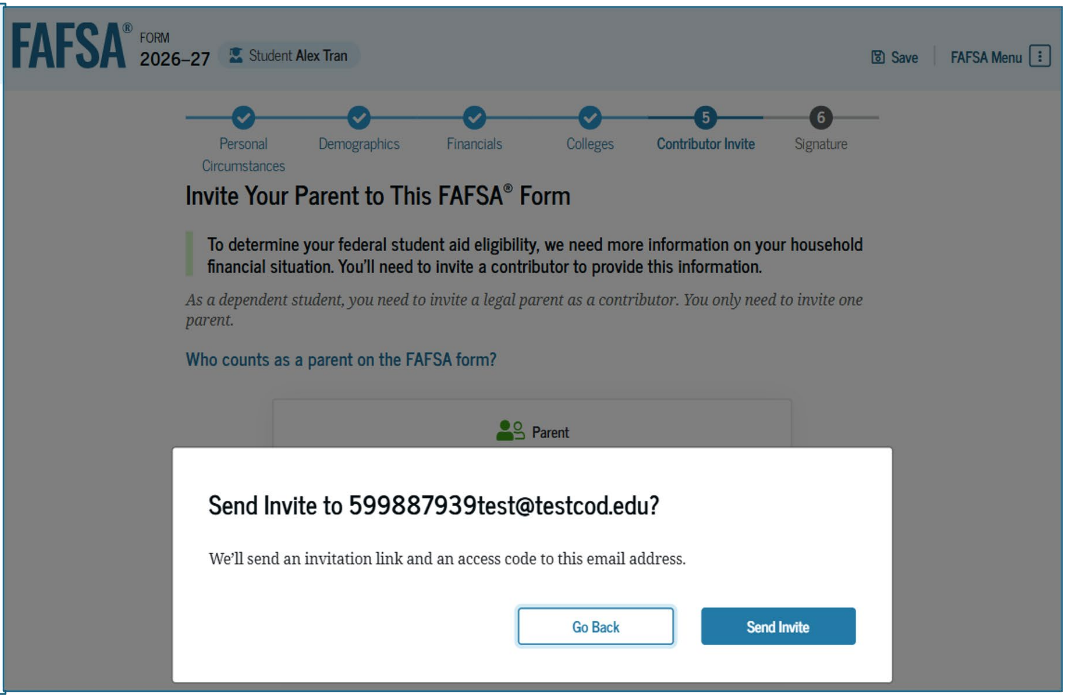
This is the first page in the "Invite a Parent as a Contributor" section, which is the last student section to require information. It provides an overview of the section.



Dependent Student: Invite Contributor (Continued 1 of 2)

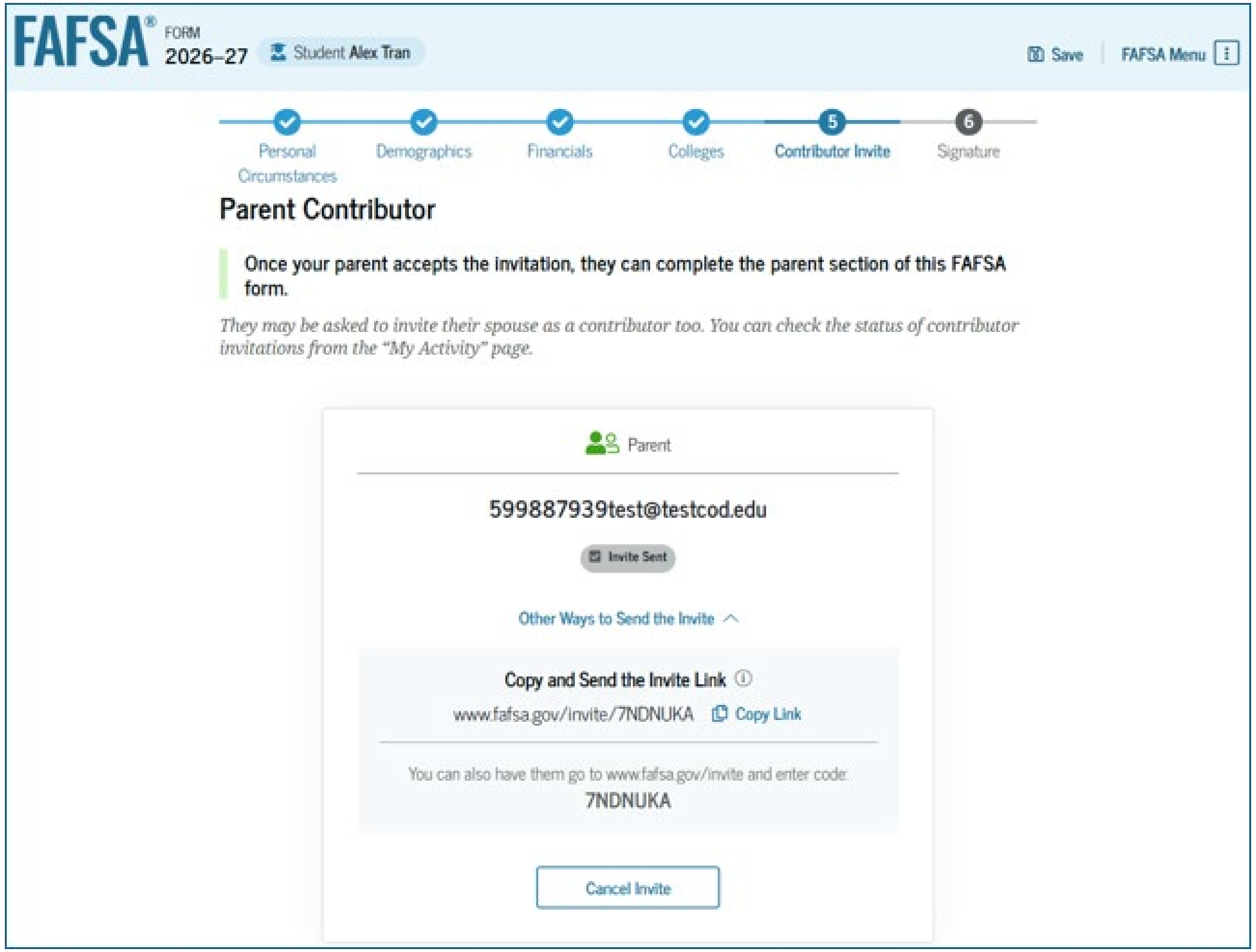
The student is asked to enter their parent’s email address to invite the parent to the FAFSA® form. After entering the email address, the student selects "Send Invite." A pop-up window appears, and the student confirms their parent’s email address by selecting "Send Invite."





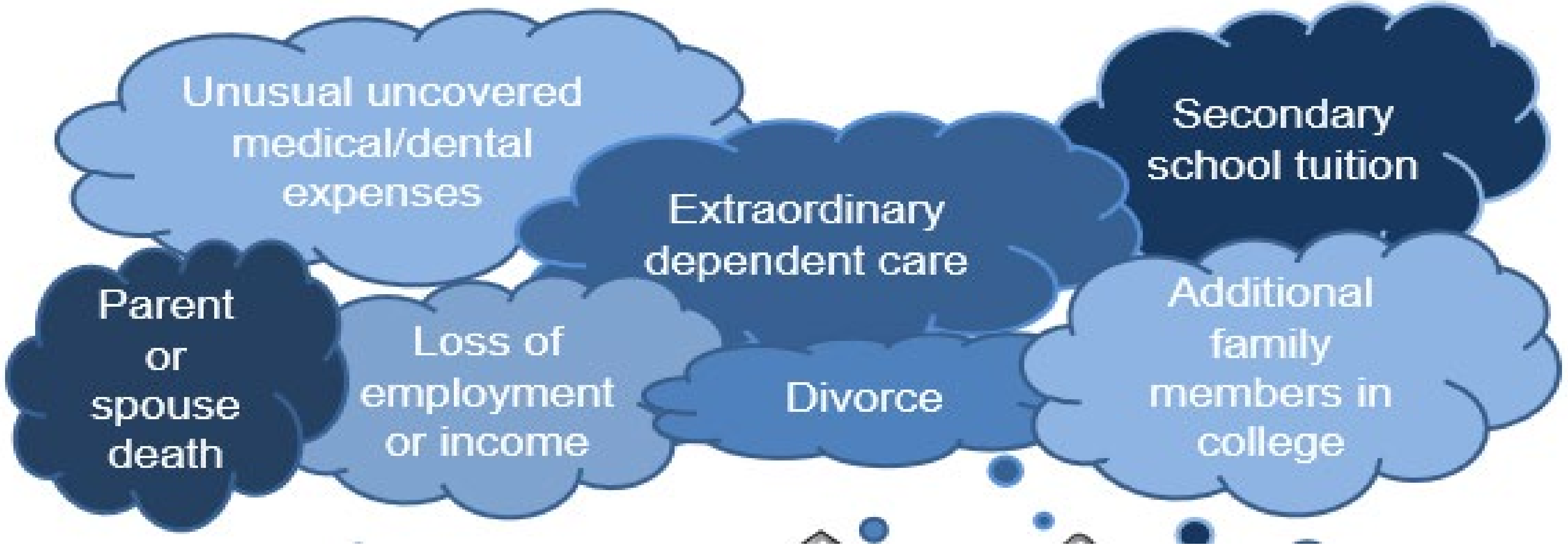
Dependent Student: Invite Contributor (Continued 2 of 2)

This page confirms the student's parent will receive an email inviting them to the student's FAFSA® form. The parent can access the form by accepting the invitation in the email. On this page, the student is also provided an invitation link and invitation code that can be shared directly with the parent.



Dependent Student **Special Circumstances**

- Different from unusual circumstances and will not change dependency status
- Unique conditions exist that cannot be documented with the FAFSA, or circumstances have changed since filing
- Student should contact institution's financial aid office for more information
- Decisions are final and cannot be appealed to U.S. Department of Education



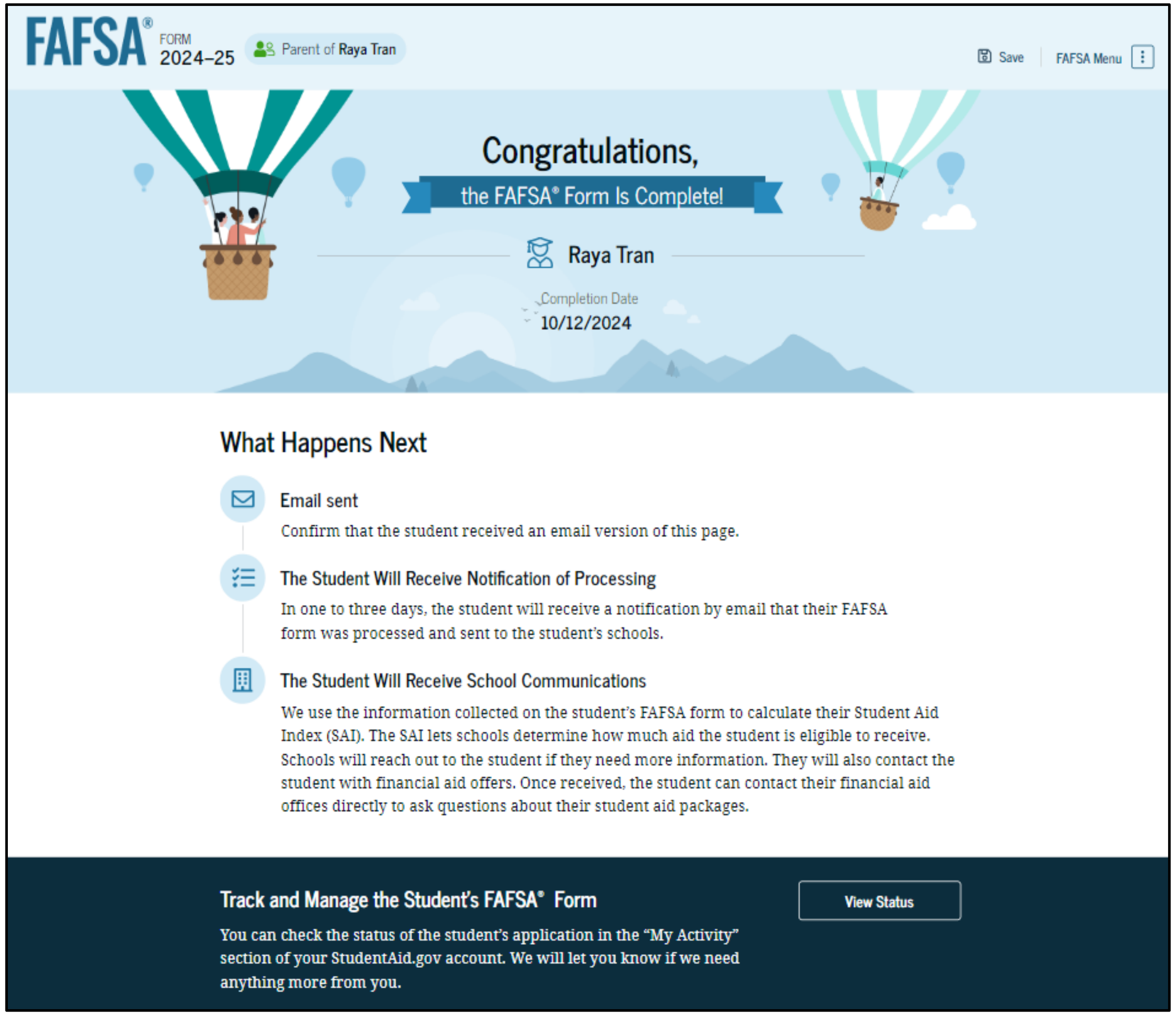
Dependent Student FAFSA® Initial Confirmation

Upon submitting the student's FAFSA® form, the parent is presented an abbreviated confirmation page.

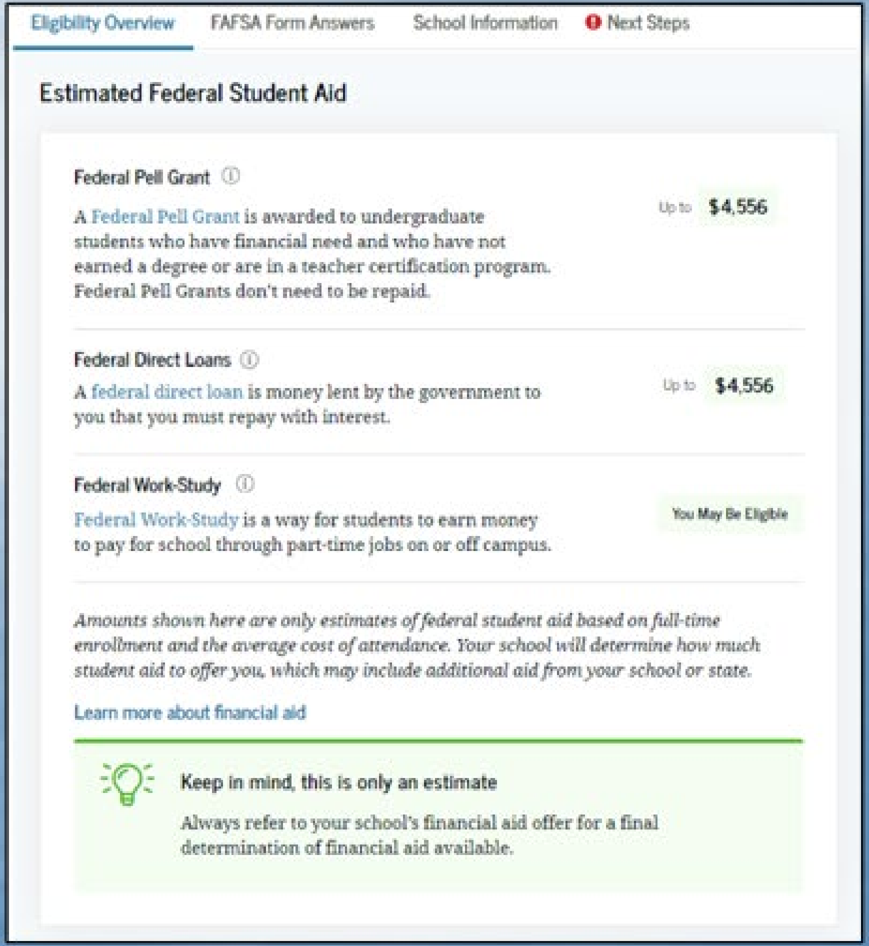
This page displays information about tracking the student's FAFSA form and next steps.

The student will receive an email with the full, detailed confirmation.

With the student and parent sections completed and signed, the FAFSA form is now considered complete and submitted for processing.



Confirmations after completion of FAFSA



Eligibility Overview | FAFSA Form Answers | School Information | Next Steps

Estimated Federal Student Aid

Federal Pell Grant

A Federal Pell Grant is awarded to undergraduate students who have financial need and who have not earned a degree or are in a teacher certification program. Federal Pell Grants don't need to be repaid.

Up to $4,556

Federal Direct Loans

A federal direct loan is money lent by the government to you that you must repay with interest.

Up to $4,556

Federal Work-Study

Federal Work-Study is a way for students to earn money to pay for school through part-time jobs on or off campus.

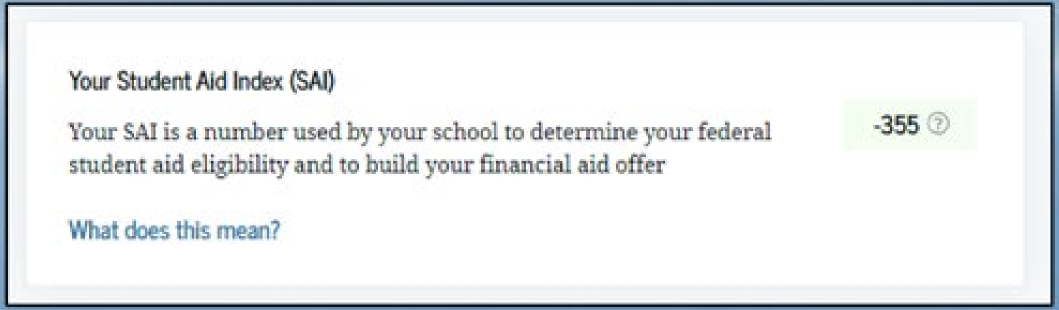
You May Be Eligible

Amounts shown here are only estimates of federal student aid based on full-time enrollment and the average cost of attendance. Your school will determine how much student aid to offer you, which may include additional aid from your school or state.

Learn more about financial aid

Keep in mind, this is only an estimate

Always refer to your school's financial aid offer for a final determination of financial aid available.

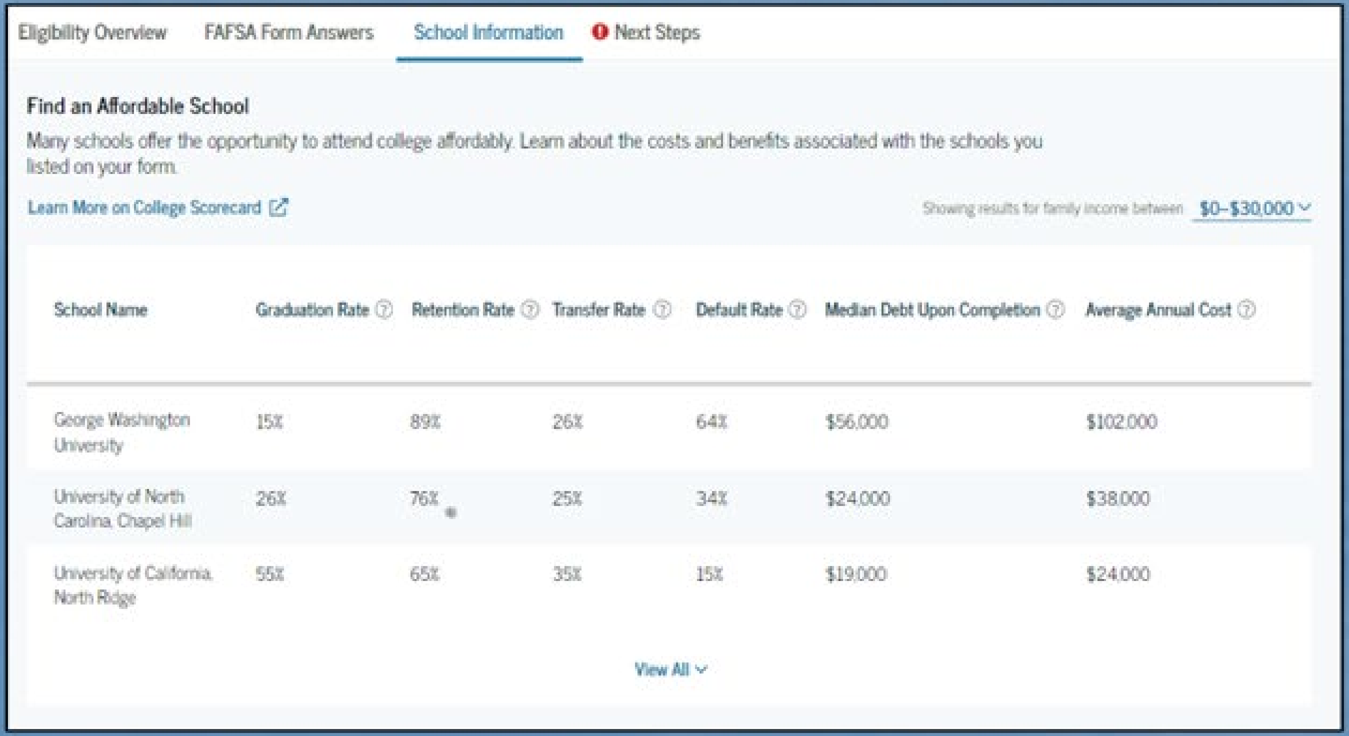


Your Student Aid Index (SAI)

Your SAI is a number used by your school to determine your federal student aid eligibility and to build your financial aid offer

-355

What does this mean?



Eligibility Overview | FAFSA Form Answers | School Information | Next Steps

Find an Affordable School

Many schools offer the opportunity to attend college affordably. Learn about the costs and benefits associated with the schools you listed on your form.

Learn More on College Scorecard

Showing results for family income between $0–$30,000

School Name	Graduation Rate	Retention Rate	Transfer Rate	Default Rate	Median Debt Upon Completion	Average Annual Cost
George Washington University	15%	89%	26%	64%	$56,000	$102,000
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	26%	76%	25%	34%	$24,000	$38,000
University of California, North Ridge	55%	65%	35%	15%	$19,000	$24,000

View All

Maryland State Financial Aid

- Maryland state financial aid is administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC).

Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) awards over $100 million in need-based grants and merit scholarships through the state's 22 programs each year.

- **Complete the FAFSA by March 1st every year.**
- **Create an MDCAPS account at** www.mhec.state.md.us

Maryland College Aid Processing System (MDCAPS) site

mdcaps.mhec.state.md.us

- MHEC will invite you to join MDCAPS once their office receives your FAFSA application.


Maryland

Maryland Higher Education Commission
STUDENT SUCCESS WITH LESS DEBT

MDCAPS
MARYLAND COLLEGE AID PROCESSING SYSTEM

Help

Welcome to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), Maryland College Aid Processing System (MDCAPS) site!

MHEC is a Maryland state government agency and the State of Maryland's higher education coordinating board. It is responsible for establishing statewide policies for Maryland public and private colleges and universities, as well as for-profit career schools. MHEC also administers State financial aid programs that impact students on a statewide basis. For more information about the various scholarship, grant, and loan repayment programs available through MHEC, click to the following link: https://mhec.state.md.us/preparing/Pages/FinancialAid/descriptions.aspx

MDCAPS is MHEC's comprehensive financial aid system that allows us to process State scholarship applications. To use MDCAPS, you must first create a student login profile by:

1. Creating a MDCAPS student log-in. This will create your student account.
2. Click the link in the new activation email you will receive after creating your account
3. Check your spam filter if you do not see the activation email in your inbox

Important: To prevent MHEC emails from going to your spam folder, simply update your email settings to accept emails from the following email address: "donotreply@maryland.gov"

Once you have completed steps 1, 2, and 3, you are ready for your first login.

If you have already created an account, simply enter your User Name and Password to access your account.

If you are still having login problems, please contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance by email at osfamail.mhec@maryland.gov.

User Name:
Password:

Login

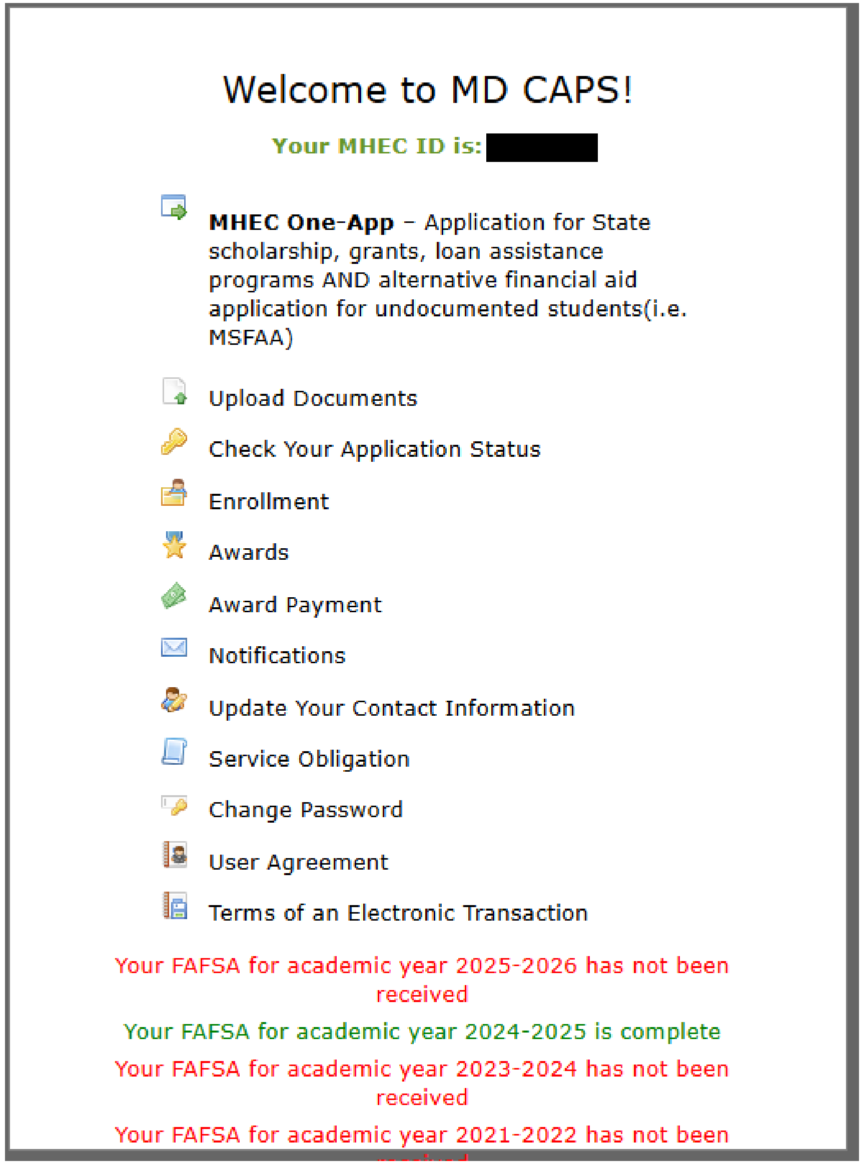
Create a Student Login
Forgot your username or password?

To return to the main page of the MHEC web site, click here.

Note: This site requires the use of JavaScript and Cookies. Please be sure to enable JavaScript and Cookies in your web browser in order to access the full functionality of the site.

MDCAPS homepage

- MD CAPS is where students can accept and view MD State awards, as well as upload requested documents and access the MHEC One App to see if there are other State awards available to them.
- The MHEC One App is also where applicants who are ineligible to receive federal aid can complete the MSFAA (Md State Financial Aid Application)
- This allows qualified children of undocumented immigrants who qualify for in-state tuition (Maryland Dream Act) to receive Maryland grants and scholarships.
- Opens at the same time as the FAFSA
- Must apply yearly


Welcome to MD CAPS!

Your MHEC ID is: [redacted]

MHEC One-App – Application for State scholarship, grants, loan assistance programs AND alternative financial aid application for undocumented students(i.e. MSFAA)

Upload Documents

Check Your Application Status

Enrollment

Awards

Award Payment

Notifications

Update Your Contact Information

Service Obligation

Change Password

User Agreement

Terms of an Electronic Transaction

Your FAFSA for academic year 2025-2026 has not been received

Your FAFSA for academic year 2024-2025 is complete

Your FAFSA for academic year 2023-2024 has not been received

Your FAFSA for academic year 2021-2022 has not been

MD State Financial Aid Programs

- Guaranteed Access Grant – Up to $20,000
- Educational Assistance Grant – Up to $3000
- Senatorial Scholarships - $400 - $12,000
- Delegate Scholarships - $200 - $12,000
- 2+2 Transfer Scholarship
- Edward Conroy Scholarship
- Richard W. Collins III Leadership Scholarship
- Teaching Fellows for Maryland Scholarship
- Teacher Human Services Scholarship
- Maryland Police Officer Scholarship Program
- Workforce Shortage Student Assistance Grant
- Maryland Part-Time Grant
- And many more…

MHEC Contact Information

- Questions about your financial aid application or awards, or problems logging onto your MDCAPS account:

Email - osfamil.mhec@maryland.gov

- Visit the QR code to request a virtual meeting with a Financial Aid Specialist from the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA).

Institutional Aid

- Visit your school's website or contact your college's financial aid office for information regarding scholarship opportunities… **NOW**.

- Some schools require additional applications like the CSS profile for institutional aid.

- Apply early and be aware of deadlines, many are fast approaching.

- *Some scholarships are awarded in the school application process.*

AACC Scholarships

- The AACC Foundation has over 200 scholarships, and awards nearly $2,000,000 annually.
- Complete one application to be considered for any AACC Foundation scholarship.
- Scholarships for Continuing Education programs are also avaiable

www.aacc.edu/scholarships

Third-Party Scholarships

Start looking and applying for outside scholarships as soon as October… (the earlier you apply, the less the competition) and watch the deadlines.

- **Use as many resources as you can find:**
  - **High School Counselors (NAVIANCE)**
  - **Free scholarship searches are available at studentaid.gov/scholarships**
  - **U.S. Department of Labor's FREE scholarship search tool. (CareerOneStop)**
  - **Review for legitimate scholarship search sites**
  - **NEVER PAY FOR SCHOLARSHIP SERVICES**
- Line up letters of recommendation and take time to create 2-3 really good essays (once done most essay questions are basically the same and you can copy & paste).
- Reach out to community groups and organizations you are affiliated with, as well as employers and local businesses

Free Scholarship Search Services

- U.S. Department of Labor - Scholarship Search
- College Board Big Future Scholarship Search
- College Express
- Fast Web
- Finaid.org - Scholarships
- Money Geek
- Scholarships.com
- Scholarship America
- UNIGO

****All of these services are free, but they are funded by advertising. (*AACC does not endorse any of these products or services.)***

Other Resources

- 529 Plans
- Employers – student and parents
- AmeriCorps
- Local Civic organizations (FWD. Moose, American legion)
- Places of Worship
- Friends /Family and Leveraging Personal Networks and Connections
- Alumni Networks: Exploring Scholarships or Mentorship Programs
- Community Leaders and Influencers: Building Relationships for Support
- Work-study, Internships with Stipends: Combining Work and Learning

Do not limit yourself!!!!!

Student Loans

Federal Loans

- Administered by the Department of Education (Small Business Administration)
- Must Complete the FAFSA
- Have annual limits
- May be eligible for loan forgiveness or discharge
- Repaid to loan servicers

Subsidized Loans

- Need-based
- Do not accrue interest until after student out of school

Unsubsidized Loans

- Not needed-based
- Accrues interest after funds disperse

Private Loans

- Offered by third-parties
- No FAFSA required
- Have Higher loan limits
- Repaid to lender (loans can be transferred to other banks or servicers)
- Credit based (will need credit check, and/or co-signer)
- Typically not eligible for forgiveness
- Can have more competitive interest rates and other incentives

Financial Aid Resources

AACC Financial Aid Office

Contact us! If you are interested in attending AACC or have general questions about financial aid.

AACC Financial Aid Office
finaid@aacc.edu
410-777-2203
SSVC 160

- **Federal Student Aid (FSA) Channels**
- **YouTube:** @FederalStudentAid
- **Instagram:** @FederalStudentAid
- **X:** @FAFSA

- **Federal Student Aid (FSA) Information Center**
- **Live Chat:** https://studentaid.gov/help-center/contact
- **Email:** https://studentaid.gov/help-center/contact
- **1-800-433-3243**

How do I Apply?

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

www.StudentAid.gov

AACC Federal School Code: **002058**

Be sure to complete the FAFSA for the correct school year.

AACC Scholarships

www.aacc.edu/scholarships

Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)

www.mhec.state.md.us