

Completing the FAFSA

PART ONE: Mentor Preparation

FAFSA stands for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This form needs to be completed by your student and their parent or guardian if they are filing as a dependent to get any financial aid from the federal government to help pay for college.

As a mentor, you can best support your student by helping them to research the FAFSA online and to gather information that they can share with their parents. Conducting research in advance of completing the FAFSA will help your student and their family know what to expect. This will, hopefully, streamline the process and make it less stressful.

If possible, you should connect with your mentee prior to this activity. Many students will be the first generation in their family to go to college, so this will be an entirely new experience for them. Others, however, may have some experience with the FAFSA, so be sure to explore your mentee's understanding of the process. Ask them to check-in with their parents or guardians to see if their parents or guardians have any specific questions. This will allow you to know where to focus your research.

Booklets, brochures, videos and images can be found here:

<https://studentaid.gov/resources>

During the activity you will be redirected to specific worksheets on eligibility, dependency, and information needed to complete the FAFSA from the site above. Review these in advance and direct any questions to staff for any clarification that you might need before touching base with your mentee.

Eligibility

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/eligibility/basic-criteria#criteria>

Dependency

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/dependency>

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/fafsa-dependency.pdf>

Information needed

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/parent-info>

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/fafsa-dependency.pdf>

For this activity, you do not need to have all of the answers! It's important to model strong research and help-seeking skills. Don't be afraid to tell you mentee that you don't have an answer. Encourage them to help you brainstorm! Where can they get the answers that they need? Is there a resource at their school where they can get additional answers, such as a family FAFSA night? Or perhaps you and your mentee could practice drafting an email to a guidance counselor! Developing your mentee's ability to problem solve and to tap into their network is more valuable then providing them with all of the answers!

If you time, we recommend grabbing some popcorn with your mentee and checking out the various webinars available at the bottom of the site!



PART TWO: Getting Ready to File Your FAFSA

FAFSA stands for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This form needs to be completed by you and your parent or guardian if you are filing as a dependent to get any financial aid from the federal government to help pay for college.

Take a moment to reflect! What questions might you have about the FAFSA? What questions might your family have about the FAFSA? Use the space below to record any specific questions.

With your mentor, explore your responses to the questions below. Knowing the answers to the following questions will provide you with the basic knowledge needed to get the FAFSA started!

Are you eligible to file the FAFSA and receive federal student aid?

(Review the eligibility criteria to determine if you are eligible. If you are not eligible for federal aid, talk to your PC about other options to pay for college.)

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/eligibility/basic-criteria#criteria>

Will you file the FAFSA as a dependent or independent student?

(Look at the dependency worksheet to determine how you'll file your FAFSA.)

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/dependency>

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/fafsa-dependency.pdf>

Whose information do you need to include on your FAFSA?

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/parent-info>

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/fafsa-dependency.pdf>



Review the info you'll need to file your FAFSA. Discuss with your parent and compile all of the required documents.

Your Info

- FSA ID
- Email
- Social Security Number
(or alien registration number)
- 2018 Federal tax return
(only if you had a job)

Parent Info *(if dependent)*

- FSA ID
- Email
- Social Security Number
(Parents can sign your FAFSA without a social security number.)
- 2018 Federal tax return
(if applicable)
- Records of any other untaxed income received in 2018
(like child support or disability benefits)

Revisit the questions that you listed above! Did your research answer these questions? If not, take some time to do additional research or to identify where you can get these questions answered!