



# Ready to File the FAFSA? Here's What You'll Need

Filing for financial aid is less stressful when you are prepared. Use the checklists below to help you fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).\*



**HELPFUL  
TIPS**

### When should I file the FAFSA?

Each college has a priority deadline for the FAFSA. You should file the FAFSA before the priority deadline. If you are applying to multiple schools, file by the earliest deadline.

### Using 2015 tax information and the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to file.

If your taxes can be completed prior to the priority deadline, you should wait to file and use your 2015 taxes. Ideally you should wait 2-3 weeks after submitting your taxes so the IRS Data Retrieval Tool within the FAFSA application can be used to automatically pull your tax information into your FAFSA application.

**Questions?** Call (877) 272-4692 or email [ICAN@ICANSucceed.org](mailto:ICAN@ICANSucceed.org).

### Student:

- Social Security number, driver's license number and date of birth.
- 2015 federal and state tax returns (or 2014 if you haven't filed yet).
- W-2 forms and/or other records of income earned in 2015 (or your last pay stub from 2015 if you haven't filed yet).
- As of today, what is the balance of checking, savings, and investment accounts?\*
- Records of untaxed income received in 2015 (e.g., veterans benefits, etc.).
- 2015 business and farm records.
- Alien registration number, if not a U.S. citizen.
- As of today, are you married? If married, what is the date of marriage? If divorced or separated, what is the date of divorce or separation?
- Child support paid and/or received.
- A federal student aid identification (FSA ID) username and password.\*\*

### Parent(s):

- Social Security numbers and dates of birth.
- 2015 federal and state tax returns (or 2014 if you haven't filed yet).
- W-2 forms and/or other records of income earned in 2015 (or your last pay stub from 2015 if you haven't filed yet).
- As of today, what is the balance of checking, savings, and investment accounts?\*
- Records of untaxed income received in 2015 (e.g., veterans benefits, etc.).
- 2015 business and farm records.
- As of today, are you married? If married, what is the date of marriage? If divorced or separated, what is the date of divorce or separation?
- Alien registration number, if not a U.S. citizen.
- Child support paid and/or received.
- A federal student aid identification (FSA ID) username and password.\*\*

### \*\* Federal Student Aid ID

The traditional PIN number has been replaced by the Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID.) The FSA ID is a username and password that will confirm your identity when accessing your financial aid information. If you and your parent(s) each want to electronically sign the FAFSA, you each need to have an FSA ID. The FAFSA requires the student and ONE parent to each sign the FAFSA with an FSA ID. To learn about setting up an FSA ID, go to [www.icansucceed.org/fsaid](http://www.icansucceed.org/fsaid).

If you would like FAFSA Completion assistance from an ICAN Center, it is highly recommended that you setup your FSA ID prior to your appointment. If you need assistance, arrive 30 minutes in advance of your appointment.

\* See backside for applicable investment and asset accounts.

# FAFSA Filing Tips & Helpful Hints?

## Are You Independent?\*

- Were you born before January 1, 1993?
- As of today, are you married? (Answer "Yes" if you are separated but not divorced)
- At the beginning of the 2016-17 school year, will you be working on a graduate program?
- Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training or are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?
- Do you have children or dependents who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017?
- At any time since you turned 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?
- As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor or in a legal guardianship?
- At any time on or after July 1, 2015, were you homeless or at risk of being homeless?

## Who is Considered a Parent on the FAFSA?

- If your parent is widowed or single, answer the questions about that parent.
- If your widowed parent is remarried as of today, answer the questions about that parent and your stepparent.
- If your parents are divorced or separated, answer the questions about the parent you lived with more during the past 12 months. (If you did not live with one parent more than the other, give answers about the parent who provided more financial support during the past 12 months, or during the most recent year that you actually received support from a parent.) If this parent is remarried as of today, answer the questions about that parent and your stepparent.

## Businesses & Investment Farms

Includes:

- Market value of land, buildings, machinery, equipment, inventory, etc.
- Debt means only those debts for which the business or investment farm was used as collateral.

Business Value does NOT include:

- Value of business if family owns and controls more than 50% of the business and has fewer than 100 full-time employees
- Your family includes persons directly related to you such as a parent, sibling or cousin, or persons who are or were related to you by marriage such as a spouse, stepparent or sister-in-law.

Investment Farm Value does NOT include:

- Value of family farm that you (your spouse and/or your parents) live on and operate.

## Investments Include:

- Real Estate (not the home you live in)
- Trust funds
- UGMA/UTMA accounts
- Money Market Funds
- Mutual Funds
- Certificates of Deposit
- Stocks
- Stock Options
- Bonds
- Other Securities
- Installment & Land Sales
- Commodities
- Educational Savings Accounts including 529 plans, Coverdell and Educational IRAs. (List as parent asset.)

## Do Not Include:

- The home you live in
- Life Insurance Values
- Retirement Accounts
- Pension Funds
- Annuities
- ROTH IRAs
- Keogh Plans
- Cash, Savings or Checking Already Reported
- UTMA/UGMA accounts for which you are a custodian, but not the owner.

## W-2 Box 12 a-d

- Question 94 - Untaxed Income  
a. Payments to tax-deferred pension & retirement savings plans include amounts reported on the W-2, Box 12.
- Report codes D, E, F, G, H, & S

\* Please refer to the 2016-17 FAFSA guide for a more detailed explanation.