CSAC

Better FAFSA / Better CADAA

Frequently Asked Questions for Mixed Status Families

Am I from a mixed status family?
A student who is eligible for federal financial aid but has a FAFSA contributor who does not have a Social Security Number is a student from a mixed [immigration] status family. This FAQ is for these students and their families.

Contents

FAQs about FAFSA

How do my parent(s) get a StudentAid.gov account (formerly FSA ID) if they do not have a social security number (SSN)?

Contributors who do not have an SSN will need to do alternate verification. Some contributors will be asked a series of multiple-choice questions about their identity. These questions include former addresses, employers, phone numbers, or banking relationships. If a contributor answers one of these questions incorrectly, they will need to submit documentation to verify their identity. Anyone who does not see the questions in the first place will also need to submit documentation to verify their identity.

Submitting documentation has three steps:

1. Get a case number, which is also called a MANVER number. MANVER stands for Manual Verification. Contributors who started the process before March 5 will need to contact FSA IC by calling 800-433-3243 or using the live chat feature on StudentAid.gov to get a MANVER number. Contributors who start the process now will receive a case number, or MANVER, automatically via email.
2. Sign a form called the attestation form. Submit that form and an acceptable form of identification to IDVerification@ed.gov.
3. The office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) will review your documents and verify the account and respond to the email with confirmation that the account is verified.

Acceptable identification includes a valid, unexpired US driver's license, state/city identification card, foreign passport, municipal identification card with a utility bill, community ID with a utility bill, or consular identification card/matricula consular with a utility bill. An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) is not required to obtain a StudentAid.gov account (formerly FSA ID), although it can be entered on the FAFSA form.

PLEASE NOTE: This process has been deeply frustrating for impacted communities. We strongly recommend impacted communities and those helping these communities sign up for our email listserv so CSAC can

communicate with you on better solutions to complete the FAFSA for families where a FAFSA contributor may not have a SSN.

Can my non-SSN contributor use an expired ID for the verification process?

No, the US Department of Education has been very clear that they will only accept unexpired identification for the verification process.

Can my non-SSN contributor use something other than a utility bill for identity verification?

The US Department of Education has only listed a utility bill as a document they are accepting for identity verification. Non-SSN contributors who do not have a utility bill should request information about what additional documentation to provide by contacting the Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) either by calling 800-433-3243 or by using the live chat feature on StudentAid.gov.

How long will it take for a non-SSN contributor's identity to be verified?

The US Department of Education stated that it can take up to 7-10 days once all documents are submitted. Some verification can take longer if the documents are incomplete or additional follow-up is needed.

Can my non-SSN contributor use a DACA SSN to get a StudentAid.gov account?

Yes. Contributors with a Work Only Social Security Card (also known as a DACA SSN) can use that number to create their StudentAid.gov account (formerly FSA ID) and be invited to fill out the FAFSA form.

Do my non-SSN contributors need to submit an attestation form?

Many non-SSN contributors will need to submit an attestation form as part of the alternative verification process. Some contributors will be asked questions to verify their identity but the majority of contributors will be asked to manually verify their identity by completing an attestation form and submitting acceptable identification. Acceptable identification includes a valid, unexpired US driver's license, state/city identification card, foreign passport, municipal identification card with a utility bill, community ID with a utility bill, or consular identification card/matricula consular with a utility bill. An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) is not required to obtain an FSA ID, although it can be entered on the FAFSA form.

Where do I download the signature page for my parent(s) to sign?

There is no signature page for the online FAFSA. Parents must sign the application electronically using a StudentAid.gov account (formerly FSA ID).

Will my (or my contributor's) information about the citizenship status be shared with other entities or agencies?

Both Federal Student Aid and CSAC have confirmed that any information provided on the FAFSA or CADAA is used strictly for federal and state financial aid purposes. Information regarding citizenship status will not be shared with individuals or entities outside of CSAC and will be strictly used for providing you with updates about your financial aid. CSAC has strict security and confidentiality policies and procedures in place to protect the integrity and confidentiality of student and contributor records. CSAC does not share any information which would indicate a student's (or contributor's) immigration status, either documented or undocumented. You can find more information about this here: [Better FAFSA for Mixed-Status Families: Top 10 Things to Know So You Can Prepare (ncan.org)](#) and [Who Is My "Parent" When I Fill Out the FAFSA® Form? (studentaid.gov).](#)

What can I do if I am unable to move forward with the FAFSA application due to non-SSN contributor issues?

Students who have non-SSN contributors and are struggling to complete the identity verification process or submit a FAFSA and are also first-time financial aid filers now have the option to complete the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) to apply for state and institutional aid at California schools.

FAQs about the New Option for CADAA for Mixed Status Families

Can I complete CADAA if I am still struggling to complete FAFSA?

Yes. In April 2024, CSAC opened the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) for students with non-SSN FAFSA contributors who have faced barriers to completing the FAFSA. First time applicants will now be able to complete the CADAA.

What if I have already done a FAFSA in previous years? Can I complete CADAA?

Not yet. CSAC is actively working to implement technical upgrades so that students who are renewing their financial aid application would be able to

access CADAA. We strongly recommend these students sign up for our email listserv. CSAC will use that email list to communicate with you as more solutions become available.

Can I start the CADAA if I have not yet started a FAFSA?

No, we strongly recommend students with non-SSN FAFSA contributors attempt to complete the FAFSA first. Students who are undocumented or are qualified immigrants should only complete CADAA.

What happens if I complete CADAA instead of FAFSA?

By completing the CADAA now, you secure your submission date to be eligible for state aid consideration. Once submitted, you'll receive your Student Aid Index (SAI) and get an estimated award package, which will give you a better understanding of the aid you can receive. Students who complete CADAA now will also need to complete the FAFSA later this year to obtain the most possible financial aid. Students and their non-SSN contributors should continue to pursue the StudentAid.gov account creation and identity verification process even if they choose to complete CADAA now in order to maximize their eligibility to all forms of aid. Students will also have to complete a record conversion process with CSAC once they complete the FAFSA.

Will I still need to complete FAFSA if I complete CADAA?

The decision is up to the student. Students who complete CADAA now have the option to complete the FAFSA later to access additional financial aid. Completing a CADAA now guarantees students a submission date that meets the state priority deadline for Cal Grant and Middle-Class Scholarship, as well as the ability to consider admissions offers with more information about their financial aid status. By completing the FAFSA later, the student will apply for federal aid including Pell Grant, work study, and federal student loans.

How do I convert my CADAA record to a FAFSA record?

After completing your FAFSA later, there will be a process for converting your CADAA record to a FAFSA record both with CSAC and with your college of attendance. More details about this process will be available soon.

Can I submit a paper FAFSA instead of the online form?

Students can complete a paper FAFSA and mail it in, but this option is not recommended. It takes significantly longer to complete, longer to process,

and makes corrections difficult. Paper FAFSA forms will not be processed until all electronic FAFSA applications have been completely processed, which is projected to happen mid-March 2024. Additionally, the paper form will still require that all applicants provide consent for FSA to access their federal tax information from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and to verify their identity. Students should try to complete their FAFSA electronically and only submit the paper form as a last resort. Students choosing to complete a paper FAFSA must postmark their application by the priority deadline to be considered for all possible state and federal aid. For the 2024-25 application, the California priority deadline is May 2, 2024.