

FEDERAL UPDATE



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VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

MOST RECENT FEDERAL UPDATES

- ONLINE - September 25, 2024
 - https://fsatraining.ed.gov/pluginfile.php/188652/mod_page/content/39/Federal%20Update%20Sept.%202024%20FINAL.pdf
 - Michelle Johnson, Training Officer
 - Q&A from various ED professionals, including Melanie Storey
 - Access at fsatraining.ed.gov, from the Menu on the right, click on Recorded Webinars and Training/Webinars and Training Videos, September 25: Federal Update, must log in
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- IN PERSON – February 18, 2025
 - David Bartnicki, Senior Program Specialist, and Aaron Lemon-Strauss, Executive Director, FAFSA Program



**Bartnicki
Family
(minus
Dave)**

COBB COUNTY

SHERIFF'S OFFICE



LUKE



ADAM



ETHAN

**RELAXATION,
WHICH HAS NOT
BEEN THE LIFE OF
A FED FOR THE
PAST YEAR.**



2024-2025 AND 2025-2026 FAFSA ISSUE ALERTS

- Issue Alerts found [here](#)
- FAFSA Form – 8 issues with workarounds
- FAFSA Submission Summary – 1 issue with workaround
- FAFSA Corrections – 8 issues with workarounds

2024-2025 AND FORWARD FAFSA QUESTION CHANGE

- <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2025-02-18/implementation-updated-fafsa-question-11>
- Question 11 – two responses: Male, Female
- If already submitted and no corrections, no action needed
- If corrections needed and answer “non-binary” or “prefer not to answer”, student will be required to respond; institution not required to respond

2024-2025 AND 2025-2026 FAFSA CORRECTIONS

- Batch Corrections began on Thursday, February 27, at 12:01 p.m. EST
- Individual for schools – FAFSA Partner Portal
 - 2 separate links for the FPP by award year
- FAFSA Frequently Asked Questions
 - General, Applications, ISIRs, SSN Issues, Verification, Corrections

2024-2025 ACCESS AND USE OF FTI

- GENERAL-23-34
- FTI expanded to include other intermediate values
- Includes student total income, parent total income
- Derived FTI values require the CUI labeling requirements
- Requires consent
- Still can give a student a copy of the ISIR (paper or password-protected)

2025-2026 VERIFICATION UPDATES

- GEN-24-10: Federal Register published 9/4/24
- Largely unchanged from 24-25
- Focused on identity fraud
- Individuals who are victims of IRS tax-related identify theft – TRDBV change to 4674C letter
- Entering V4 and V5 results in FPP – not yet available; can pay if resolved; delayed until after the release of 2026-2027 application (October 1, 2025); reminder to report identity theft or fraud cases to the OIG

AHSI250P

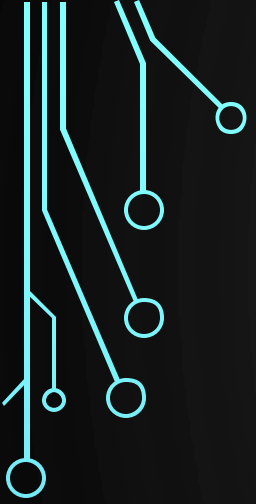
- GENERAL-24-84
- List of students who should undergo V4/V5
- Started in Mid-July
- Verify all Students on list
- Cumulative List
- Every two weeks
- On February 23, ED resumed flagging applicants for fraud and new ISIRs
- Reporting V4/V5 will be available after the release of the 26-27 application

UPDATED GUIDANCE FOR ACCESSING POST-SCREENING FILES

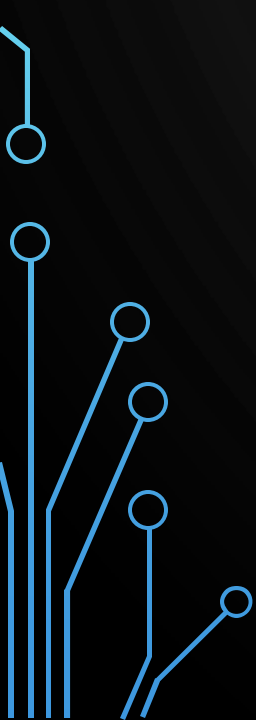
- Updated March 28; [APP-25-06](#)
- An updated set of NSLDS eligibility changes files was posted to the TG mailbox
- Contains files with Reason Code 01, or students who entered default on a Title IV loan previously NOT in default
- Use the manual file – AHNP25OP
- File also sent on March 3

GUIDANCE ON DATASHARING


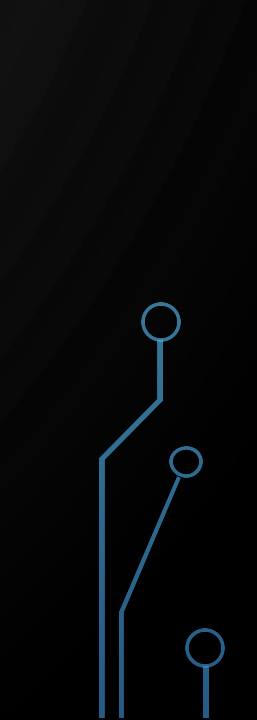
- **Dec. 20, 2024 EA:** [\(GENERAL-24-149\) Guidance on Consent for FAFSA Data Sharing and Automatic IDR Certification](#)
- **Nov. 7, 2024 EA:** [\(GENERAL-24-129\) Guidance for State Grant Agencies and Institutions of Higher Education on the Access, Disclosure, and Use of FAFSA Data for the Application, Award, and Administration of Student Aid Programs](#)



OTHER THINGS TO KNOW IN 24-25/25- 26



Use of Negative SAI in SEOG Selection Criteria

- GEN-24-05
 - Update your policies
 - Two options for SEOG selection:
 - Treat all negative SAIs (down to -1500) as 0 in selection criteria
 - Use the negative SAIs to identify the students with the most need in selection criteria
- 
- 

REGULATORY PROCESS



PUBLIC HEARINGS

- Inform community of intent to regulate and topics
- Conduct public hearing(s)
- Request nominations for non-federal negotiators



NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING

- Negotiating Committee meets
- ED provides draft amendatory text for discussion
- Final consensus vote on last day of negotiations



PROPOSED REGULATIONS

- Publish Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register
- Request for comments submitted through regulations.gov



FINAL REGULATIONS

- Review, redact, summarize, and respond to public comments
- Publish Final Rule/regulations (FR) in the Federal Register



MASTER CALENDAR

- Final regulations published by Nov 1 are effective the following July 1
- Early implementation at Secretary's discretion

PROGRAM INTEGRITY AND INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY: DISTANCE EDUCATION AND RETURN OF TITLE IV, HEA FUNDS

- 90 FR 470
- Final Regulations effective 7/1/2026
- Early implementation as of February 3, 2025

R2T4

- *New withdrawal exemption*
- *Incarcerated students on LOAs in term-based settings in eligible prison education programs do not have to return they left off*
- Codified longstanding 14-day requirement to identify withdrawn students for schools required to take attendance
- Module is part of a payment period used in the denominator of the R2T4 calculation only when a student begins attendance in a module
- Consistent approach in determining scheduled clock hours

New withdrawal exemption

- A student is treated as never having begun attendance
- The institution returns all title IV assistance disbursed to the student for that payment period or period of enrollment
- The institution refunds all institutional charges to the student for the payment period or period of enrollment
- The institution writes off or cancels any payment period or period of enrollment balance owed to the institution
- EXEMPT FROM R2T4 Calculation

Distance Education

- **Creation of distance education course definition**
- **Schools report student enrollment in distance education or correspondence courses using Department procedures, as established by the Secretary – July 1, 2027**

Federal TRIO Programs

- **Technical changes to TRIO program reflecting Republic of Palau is a member of the Freely Associated States**

SAVE PLAN COURT ACTIONS

- [Studentaid.gov/saveaction](https://studentaid.gov/saveaction)
- The Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE) Plan is under an injunction (2/18/25) by a federal court. ED is currently prohibited from using the SAVE formula to:
 - Calculate monthly payments
 - Forgive loans after the required number of payments under the SAVE, Pay As You Earn (PAYE), and Income-Contingent Repayment (ICR) Plans

UPDATES ON REPAYMENT

- As of March 26, the online IDR application is once again available for IBR, PAYE and ICR
- The online consolidation loan application is available again
- Servicers will begin processing applications “in the near future”
- Watch the page!

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, ADMINISTRATIVE CAPABILITY, CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES, ABILITY TO BENEFIT (ATB)

Federal Student Aid
An OFFICE of the U.S. DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

Final Regulations Effective July 1, 2024

[88 FR 74568](#)



FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Triggers for lack of financial responsibility
- Changes in Ownership



ADMINISTRATIVE CAPABILITY

- New conditions
- Financial aid communications
- Career services
- HS diploma validation



CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

- Provisional certification
- Additional PPA signers
- Distance education
- Transcript withholding



ABILITY TO BENEFIT (ATB)

- Eligible career pathway programs
- Documentation
- Verification
- State process requirements

Resources: [DCL GEN-24-07](#) and [OPE Q & As](#)

LIMITING EXCESSIVE GE PROGRAM LENGTH

- [34 CFR 668.14\(b\)\(26\)\(ii\)](#)
- Limits the number of hours for new entrants in a GE program to the greater of the required minimum number of clock hours, credit hours, or the equivalent required for training in the recognized occupation for which the program prepares students
- Program length is determined in the State where the institution is located or in another State, if the institution certifies that certain criteria applies
- *Note: On June 21, 2024, the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas, granted the plaintiff's motion for a preliminary injunction preventing ED from enforcing this change. Therefore, until further notice institutions must continue to comply with the maximum program length requirements under 34 CFR 668.14 (b)(26) that were in effect prior to July 1, 2024.*
- [GENERAL 24-83](#)



PROGRAMMATIC ACCREDITATION, STATE LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION

- **34 CFR 668.14(b)(32)(i) and (ii); 34 CFR 668.43(a)(5)**
- Requires all programs that prepare students for occupations requiring programmatic accreditation or State licensure to meet requirements for all new entrants upon the effective date of the regulations
- For distance education or correspondence students, the program must meet the requirements for licensure or certification in the State where the student is located at the time of initial enrollment or in the State the student attests they intend to seek employment
- Updates were also made to 34 CFR 668.43(a)(5) to require all programs leading to licensure or certification to list all States where the institution has determined that the program does and does not meet such requirements

TRANSCRIPT WITHHOLDING

- 34 CFR 668.14(b)(33) and 34 CFR 668.14(b)(34)
- Prevents institutions from taking any negative action against a student for balances owed by the student that resulted from an error in the institution's administration of the title IV, HEA programs, or any fraud or misconduct by the institution or its personnel
- Requires an institution to provide an official transcript that includes all the credit or clock hours for payment periods –
 - In which the student received title IV, HEA funds; and
 - For which all institutional charges were paid or included in an agreement to pay at the time the request is made



FINANCIAL AID COUNSELING 668.16(H)

- [34 CFR 668.16\(h\)](#)
- Requires institutions to provide “clear and accurate” financial aid counseling and communications to enrolled students to include:
 - Institution’s cost of attendance, including individual components
 - Total amounts that will be owed to the institution
 - Sources and amounts of each type of aid, separated by type
 - The institution’s net price
 - Instructions and deadlines for accepting, declining, or adjusting award amounts
 - Advising students and families to accept the most beneficial types of financial assistance available to them

CLINICAL OR EXTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

34 CFR 668.16(r)

- Requires that an institution provide students with geographically accessible clinical or externship opportunities when such externship or clinical experience is required for completion of the academic credential or licensure in a recognized occupation
- Externship must be related to the credential and/or license being sought
- Must be provided within 45 days of the completion of regular coursework



¹⁶ Federal Student Aid Updates and Reminders

2025-26 FEDERAL PELL GRANT AWARDS

- Pell Grant Minimum remains at \$740, and Maximum remains at \$7,395

Jan. 31, 2025

- DCL: (GEN-25-02) 2025-26 Federal Pell Grant Maximum and Minimum Award Amounts

INFORMATION ON SNAP BENEFITS FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

- Jan. 16, 2025 EA: [\(GENERAL-25-08\) SNAP Benefits for Eligible Students](#)
- Cannot receive SNAP if you receive the majority of your meals through a meal plan
- Students enrolled half-time in school may be eligible for SNAP if they meet eligibility requirements:
 - Work 20+ hours a week.
 - Participate in a state or Federal work-study program.
 - Have a physical or mental disability or condition that prevents them from working.
 - Care for a young dependent child.
 - Receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
 - Participate in an on-the-job training program.
 - Are under age 18 or are over 49.
 - Are enrolled in college through certain employment & training programs, such as SNAP E&T, Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act, and others.

FVT/GE

- Extension until September 30, 2025
- Feb. 14, 2025 EA: (GE-25-02) Extension of FVT and GE Completer Lists and Debt Reporting

ABILITY TO BENEFIT

June 12, 2024 DCL: (GEN-24-08) - ATB State Process and Eligible Career Pathway Programs

- Students without a high school diploma or recognized equivalent of a high school diploma may be eligible through an “eligible career pathway program” or ECPP
- Describes requirements for state process
- Institutions must document that each ATB ECPP offered by the institution meets the eligibility requirements

AMERICAN INDIAN BORN IN CANADA

January 15, 2025 EA: [GENERAL-25-06](#) – [Student eligibility documents](#)

- 24-25 Handbook updated
- Acceptable documentation for American Indians born in Canada
- Received aid in 23-24 or any prior year – no need to require additional immigration documentation where the documents have not expired
- Students receiving no aid in 23-24, or seeking to establish eligibility in 24-25 may submit I-551 PRC with code S13; unexpired temporary I-551 stamp with the code S13 in a Canadian passport; or unexpired temporary I-551 stamp with the code S13 on an I-94

COST OF ATTENDANCE

- December 17, 2024 EA: (GENERAL-24-145) – Schools must make COA readily available to Students
- EA comes about secret shopping conducted
 - Admissions representatives declined to provide cost over the phone (contingent upon visit)
 - Required prospective student to provide personally identifying information, including name, date of birth, and contact info
- Make readily available to enrolled and prospective students
 - Tuition and fees
 - Estimate of costs for books and supplies
 - Estimates of typical charges for room and board
 - Estimates of transportation costs
 - Any additional Costs

FSA WEBINARS

- **fsatraining.ed.gov – Upcoming Webinars**
- **Federal Update**
 - **Wednesday, April 30, 2025**
 - **1-2:30 ET**

2026-2027 DRAFT FAFSA

- **APP-25-04**
- Comments submitted by 4/7/25
- NASFAA submitted their comments

FAFSA 26-27 Reg. en 2025-01-28 Do not submit

FAFSA® Form July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027
Free Application for Federal Student Aid Federal Student Aid
U.S. OFFICE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Use this form to apply free for federal and state student grants, work-study, and loans. Or apply free online at fafsa.gov.

Apply by the Deadlines

For federal aid, submit your application as early as possible, but no earlier than **October 1, 2025**. We must receive your application no later than **June 30, 2027**. Your college must have your correct, complete information by your last day of enrollment in the 2026–27 school year.

For state or college aid, the deadline may be as early as October 1, 2025, and you may need to complete additional forms. Check with your high school counselor or a financial aid administrator at your college. See the state deadlines on page 2. If you are applying close to a deadline, we recommend you submit your FAFSA form online at fafsa.gov. It's the fastest and easiest way to apply for aid.

Fill Out the FAFSA® Form

The FAFSA form has five sections: Student, Student Spouse, Parent, Parent Spouse or Partner, and Preparer. To determine who needs to provide their information, consult "Who must provide information on the FAFSA form?", on page 3.

You may fill the answer fields electronically and then print the form, or print the form first and complete it by hand. If you complete the form by hand, use dark ink and write clearly, as shown below. A computer will process this form, therefore:

- Fill in both circle and square answer fields completely.
- For circle answer fields, choose only one response; for square answer fields, choose all that apply.
- Print in BLOCK CAPITAL letters and skip a box between words; for multi-line responses, wrap any incomplete words onto next line.
- Report dollar amounts such as \$12,356.41 without cents; if negative, completely fill the circle (C) before the answer box.

Correct ● ■ Incorrect ○ ☒ ☒ ☒

1 4 1 6 P L U M S
T A P T 4

1 2 3 5 6

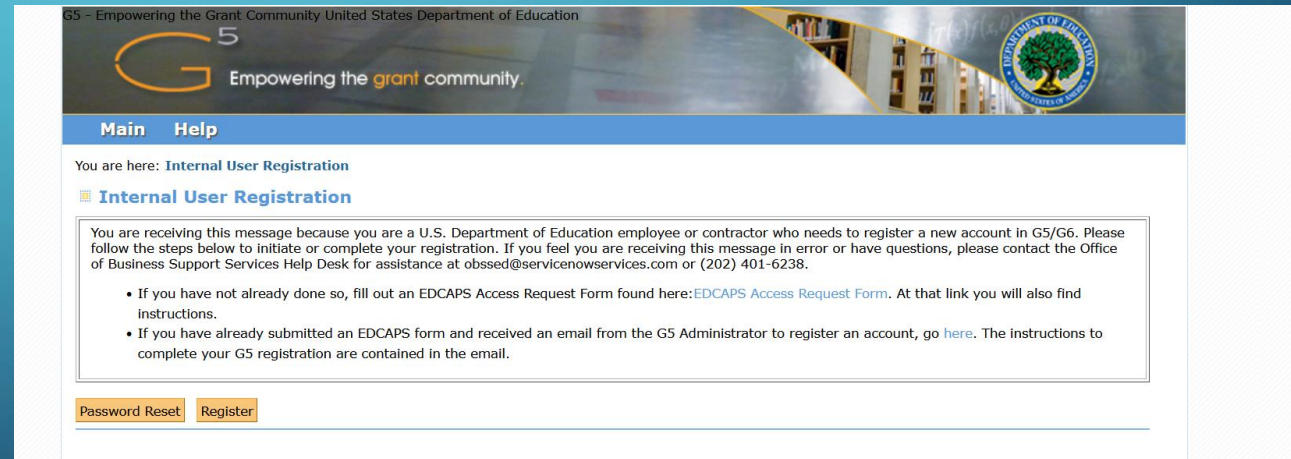
Refer to the notes on pages 21–22 as instructed.

For help in filling out the FAFSA form, go to StudentAid.gov/fafsa/help or call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243). If you need assistance in another language, visit StudentAid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out/request-interpreter.

2026-27 FAFSA® Form

G6 – G5

- G6 reverted back to G5
- Access at G5.gov



REDUCTION IN FORCE – MARCH 14, 2025 LETTER

- GENERAL-25-16 and GENERAL-25-14
- Regional offices affected by RIF
- Transferred to other offices and experts
- Centrally responding to all questions related to the E-App and general school eligibility inquiries
- CaseTeams@ed.gov
- 1-800-848-0978
- Policy questions – <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/help-center>

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR FAAS

- [2024-25 FSA Handbook](#) (all volumes and appendixes)
- 2025-26 FSA Handbook, [Application and Verification Guide](#) (*published Dec. 2024*)
- 2025-26 FSA Handbook, Vol. 3– Calculating Awards and Packaging (*anticipated Feb. 2025*)
- 2025-26 FSA Handbook, Vol. 8– The Direct Loan Program (*anticipated Feb. 2025*)
- 2025-26 FAFSA Renewal Email Campaign (*anticipated late Mar. 2025*)
- [OPE Q & As](#) (90/10, program integrity, PEPs, FAFSA Simplification, etc.)
- On-demand trainings on the [FSA Training Center](#):
 - Learning Track – Aid Application Process
 - *Includes 2025-26 updates on the topics of: FAFSA Process, Student Eligibility, and Verification*
 - FAFSA Partner Portal – FPP Overview and Applicant View + Making Corrections in FPP
 - Wednesday Webinar Series – 2025-26 ISIR: What to Expect

UPDATED STUDENTAID.GOV RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

- [FAFSA® Help Center](#)
 - Best place to point students and families to access self-help articles with tips and common FAQs to assist them before, during, and after completing the FAFSA form
- [FAFSA Application Deadlines](#)
 - Updated with 2025-26 federal and state application deadlines
- [FAFSA Help Center: FAFSA Troubleshooting](#)
 - Featured Articles related to common questions and sticky issues for filling out the FAFSA form
- [FAFSA Help Center: Account Username and Password](#)
 - Articles that address common questions for creating and managing a StudentAid.gov account

THE BOUTELL BOYS (AND GIRL) IN MAY IN DISNEY



CROUTON HELPING ME WORK ON MY SLIDES



Ending with a little music.... Livin' on a Prayer



THANK YOU FOR ASKING ME TO PRESENT, NCASFAA! QUESTIONS?

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