

FAFSA Simplification: 4 Things College Advisors Should Know



A better FAFSA process means a better future for everyone: The *FAFSA Simplification Act* and the *FUTURE Act* will jointly guide the first sweeping redesign of the FAFSA system in over 40 years. FAFSA simplification will be implemented in phases; award year 2023–24 changes have started with full implementation of major provisions in the 2024–25 award year. View the full implementation timeline at financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/bfbf.

1. Federal Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) Form Updates

- Financial aid eligibility restrictions associated with certain drug convictions and failure to register for Selective Service, and their related FAFSA® questions, were removed.
- Demographic questions related to race, ethnicity, and gender will be added to the FAFSA form.
- The new Student Aid Index (SAI) will replace the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) in the calculation to determine eligibility for need-based federal student aid. The new formula will be *cost of attendance (COA) – SAI = financial need*. This change will increase the number of Federal Pell Grant award recipients—expanding federal aid access.
- The English and Spanish FAFSA forms will be updated with a tool for early estimation of aid.
- The FAFSA form resources will be translated to the 11 most common languages spoken by English learner students and their parents. Language-specific translation services and support will also be available from the Federal Student Aid Information Center.

2. FSA ID Needed to Apply

- Having an FSA ID is the only way for students and parents to view or correct information online or to access the online FAFSA form application with information prefilled from the previous year's form.
- Beginning in Award Year 2024–25, applicants will need an FSA ID to apply for federal student aid, so encourage students to create an FSA ID as early as possible at StudentAid.gov/fsa-id/create-account.

3. Federal Pell Grant Eligibility Changes

- New formulas will expand Pell Grant eligibility to more students and link eligibility to family size, household income, and their state's poverty level.
- Students who are incarcerated in federal or state penal institutions and other involuntary commitments will regain the ability to receive a Pell Grant.

4. Applicants Unable to Provide Parental Information

- There is aid available for students who cannot or are unable to provide parental information on their FAFSA form.
- Students who have circumstances that prevent them from providing parental information will benefit from a simplified application process that more efficiently determines their independent status.