10 IMPORTANT CHANGES COMING WITH THE 2024-2025 FAFSA

The most important application you will fill out for college is the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. All federal financial aid programs, most programs offered by the State of West Virginia, and many programs offered by colleges require you to submit the FAFSA. The 2024–2025 FAFSA includes unprecedented changes to how students and families apply for federal student aid and how we determine eligibility, giving students a better and simpler experience with the FAFSA form. Improvements include a direct data exchange with the IRS for income data elements, new rules to determine which parent(s) to include, and a single consolidated portal for all FAFSA help resources.

The 2024-2025 FAFSA will be delayed.
In previous years, the FAFSA became available on October 1. However, the 2024-2025 FAFSA will not be released until December; the exact date is not yet known.

Goodbye, EFC.
The Student Aid Index (SAI) will replace the Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

Everyone entering information on the FAFSA will need an FSA ID.
Everyone who will be providing information on the FAFSA will need an FSA ID to access the form. This year, people without a Social Security Number (SSN) will be able to obtain an FSA ID.

FSA ID will need to be matched with the Social Security Administration prior to use.
FSA ID information has always been matched against Social Security Administration records. Starting with the 2024-2025 FAFSA, an FSA ID will need to be created and matched with the SSA before it can be used to start or access a FAFSA. The matching process will take 1-3 days. We suggest creating an FSA ID at studentaid.gov before the FAFSA becomes available.

FSA ID two-step verification will be required for all.
Everyone who attempts to use their FSA ID to access a 2024-2025 FAFSA will go through a two-step verification process. It will no longer be possible to log into a FAFSA using student demographic information. When setting up an FSA ID, individuals should take advantage of every type of verification available so completing the two-step verification will be easier.

The FAFSA will be a roles-based form.
Individuals providing information on the FAFSA will see only questions related to their role. When a student logs in, they will see only questions they need to answer as a student. For dependent students, a parent will need to log in to see the questions related to their role as a parent. Whoever starts the FAFSA first will need to identify the "contributors". It will be critical that contributor information match the information on the contributor's Social Security card to prevent issues logging into the FAFSA.

Number of household members in college will have no impact on federal financial aid eligibility.
The SAI formula will no longer be divided by the number of household members in college. Students with multiple siblings in college may see a change in their SAI even with no change in income.

Asset exemptions are changing.
Families who receive federally means-tested benefits will not be required to provide asset information. Only families with an adjusted gross income greater than $60,000 or those who filed certain tax return schedules will be required to provide asset information. For those required to provide asset information, there will no longer be an exemption for reporting a small family-owned business or family farm value, though primary residence and retirement plan exemptions do still exist.

Pell Grant eligibility will be expanded.
Pell Grant eligibility will continue to be calculated based on the SAI but will also be determined using Federal Poverty Tables, which take into account the family make-up, size, and income. Poverty table guidelines will be used to determine eligibility for maximum and minimum Pell Grants.

Pell Grant eligibility will be more transparent.
Because one pathway to determining Pell Grant eligibility will be based on the poverty tables, it will be possible to establish whether a student is eligible for a minimum or maximum Pell Grant even before a FAFSA has been filed. Federal Student Aid (FSA) will be releasing a new resource called the Pell Lookup Table, which will allow students and others to determine minimum or maximum Pell Grant eligibility based on their family make-up, household size, and adjusted gross income.