

UC SANTA BARBARA

Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships

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The **2025-2026 FAFSA and CADAA** are now open!

The 2025-2026 financial aid application cycle officially began on December 2, 2024. We understand that students and their families may have concerns about privacy when completing financial aid applications. As a California student, here's what you need to know about each application and what they offer:

2025-2026 Financial Aid Applications and Aid Eligibility

	CA Dream Act Application (CADAA)	Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
Who owns the data you submit in the application?	California Student Aid Commission	Federal Student Aid, Department of Education
Who can file?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undocumented students • DACA recipients (valid or expired) • U-Visa holders • TPS holders • Mixed-status families (Students who are U.S. citizens or Permanent Residents with undocumented family members) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S Citizens • Eligible noncitizens • Mixed-status families
What aid can I receive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cal Grant • Middle Class Scholarship • UC Grant • Other State/University Gift Aid 	Same as CADAA plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pell Grant • Other federal grants • Federal Student Loans

On the federal side, FAFSA data is limited to use for financial aid purposes under current law. The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) has reaffirmed its commitment to protecting student data. They assure students that [information provided on the CADAA](#) is **not** shared with federal immigration authorities.

Which application should I file? When should I file?

Students from mixed-status families can complete a FAFSA to be evaluated for all federal, state, and UC-funded aid. However, we acknowledge the concerns you and your family may have regarding

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information protection. Students from mixed-status families that complete a CADAA will be evaluated for all state and UC-funded aid.

If you are part of a mixed-status family, it's important to consider the potential risks and benefits of completing the FAFSA. While the Higher Education Act prohibits the use of FAFSA data for immigration enforcement, we understand your concerns about privacy. We have listed some factors to consider when weighing the potential privacy risk of completing a FAFSA.

Factors to consider:

- ✓ **Federal Tax Returns:** If an undocumented family member has filed federal taxes, then the federal government has access to their information.
- ✓ **Previous FAFSA Submissions:** Past FAFSA submissions may be accessible to federal authorities.
- ✓ **Immigration History:** Any history of deportation or DACA applications contain data that can be used to identify undocumented immigrants.

Should your family have submitted this information in the past, it may continue to be accessible to those same government agencies. Submission of a FAFSA in this case, may not increase the information that is already accessible to the federal government. However, if your family has not had any data exchanged in these or other spaces, then submission of a FAFSA may present new information on the status of your family.

Every student and family has different circumstances and considerations that factor into how you will pursue financial aid. We strongly recommend that you and your family hold these discussions to determine the best pathway forward for your situation.

For more information and to start your application, visit:

[UC Tuition and Financial Aid](#)

[FAFSA](#)

[CADAA](#)