Mixed-Status Families Updated Tips

There are a number of significant updates that were part of the major redesign of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) beginning in 2024-2025. One of those changes includes a new Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID account creation process for those without a Social Security Number.

Who are mixed-status families?
Mixed-status families are households with family members who have different citizenship or immigrant statuses. To apply for the FAFSA, dependent student applicants must be either a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen, even if their parents are undocumented. Dependent students who don't qualify for the FAFSA, but qualify for an AB 540 nonresident tuition exemption, may be eligible to complete the California Dream Act Application. Visit *dream.csac.ca.gov* for information.

How will mixed-status families be impacted by the FSA ID requirement?
In years prior to 2024-2025, parent and non-student contributors without a Social Security Number (SSN) could submit a FAFSA by mail and did not need to create an FSA ID. The new process allows contributors without SSNs to create an FSA ID and complete the FAFSA online.

Tips for Getting the FAFSA Submitted for Mixed Status Families:

1. Log in to https://studentaid.gov/.

2. If you have an existing draft of your FAFSA that you were previously unable to sign or submit, please click on the **Action Tab** on the upper right-hand corner, **DELETE** your current draft, and **START a new FAFSA application**.

3. Before starting, we suggest the following:

    a. Watch Federal Student Aid's short instructional videos on YouTube which have proven to be very helpful.

    b. Once you are ready to start, prepare the following documents: prior year tax forms of your parents, and your own tax forms if you worked and filed a tax return.

    c. It is important to allocate at least 30-40 minutes, wherein you can do the FAFSA application process without disruption to minimize error and complete the process without rushing.

    d. Collaborate and communicate with your parents who are going to sign the FAFSA form for 2024-2025.

    e. It is highly recommended that you start the FAFSA at a time that your parents (contributors) are available to access their email and phone where Federal Student Aid will send the **INVITATION and VERIFICATION CODE** to fill out their part and sign the forms.

f. These notifications will be sent through the email address or phone number of the person you indicated on the FAFSA for your contributors/parents. The parent must be able to sign the FAFSA and fill out their section and PROVIDE CONSENT and APPROVAL TO TRANSFER THEIR TAX INFORMATION FROM THE IRS (if applicable). Without the consent and signatures of all CONTRIBUTORS the FAFSA will not be considered complete.

g. You may first need to have a screenshot of how parent's account on StudentAid looks like. If you were not able to document this in the past, you may ask/help your parents to log into their account in order to review how their information, such their name, date of birth, and address were exactly written when they created their account.

h. One of the common reasons for parent issues with receiving the invitation to sign the FAFSA is due to the discrepancy in the Contributor information entered by student on the FAFSA versus the actual information on the parents' account. **Upper Case/lower case** in entering **NAMES and ADDRESS** matters. The FAFSA Application is very sensitive these minute details. Addresses discrepancies such as spelling out APARTMENT versus abbreviating APT, or PARKWAY versus PRKWAY, can cause a failure to match the information on file for the FAFSA contributor.

For more information please visit the following websites:

https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out

https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/fafsa-support/contributor-social-security-number

https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/fafsa-support/pro-tips

https://www.finaid.ucsb.edu/fafsa-simplification