FEDERAL STUDENT AID AT A GLANCE

2019–20

WHAT is federal student aid?

Federal student aid comes from the federal government—specifically, the U.S. Department of Education. It's money that helps a student pay for higher education expenses (i.e., college, career school, or graduate school expenses).

Federal student aid covers such expenses as tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and transportation.

There are three main categories of federal student aid: grants, work-study, and loans. Check with your school's financial aid office to find out which programs the school participates in.

WHO gets federal student aid?

Some of the most basic eligibility requirements for students are that you must

- demonstrate financial need (for most programs—to learn more about financial need, visit **StudentAid.gov/how-calculated**);
- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen;
- have a valid Social Security number;
- be registered with Selective Service, if you're a male (you must register between the ages of 18 and 25);
- be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible degree or certificate program;
- be enrolled at least half-time (for most programs);
- maintain satisfactory academic progress in college, career school, or graduate school; and
- show you're qualified to obtain a college or career school education by
  - having a high school diploma or a state-recognized equivalent (for example the General Educational Development [GED] certificate); or
  - completing a high school education in a home-school setting approved under state law; or
  - enrolling in an eligible career pathways program.

See the full list of eligibility requirements at **StudentAid.gov/eligibility**.

HOW do you apply for federal student aid?

1. **To apply for federal student aid, you need to complete the FAFSA® form at fafsa.gov.** The FAFSA form is available every Oct. 1 for the next school year. If you plan to attend college from July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020, submit a 2019–20 FAFSA form. Fill it out as soon as possible to meet school and state deadlines. Schools and states often use FAFSA information to award nonfederal aid, but their deadlines vary. Check with the schools that you're interested in for their deadlines, and find state and federal FAFSA deadlines at **StudentAid.gov/fafsa#deadlines**.
2. **Students and parents are required to use an FSA ID (a username and password combination) to sign their FAFSA form online and to access information about their financial aid on U.S. Department of Education websites.** Your FSA ID is used to confirm your identity and electronically sign your federal student aid documents. Your FSA ID has the same legal status as a written signature. Don't give your FSA ID to anyone or allow anyone to create an FSA ID for you. To create an FSA ID, visit **StudentAid.gov/fsaid**.
3. **After you apply, you'll receive a *Student Aid Report,* or SAR.** Your SAR contains the information reported on your FAFSA form and usually includes your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is a number (not a dollar amount) used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid. Review your SAR information to make sure it's correct. The school(s) you list on your FAFSA form will get your SAR data electronically.
4. **Contact the school(s) you might attend.** Make sure the financial aid office at each school you're interested in has all the information needed to determine your eligibility. If you're eligible, each school's financial aid office will send you an aid offer showing the amount and types of aid (from all sources) the school will offer you. You can compare the aid offers you received and see which school is the most affordable once financial aid is taken into account.

Completing and submitting the FAFSA form is free and quick, and it gives you access to the largest sources of financial aid to pay for college or career school—federal, state, and school sources. If you need a print-out of the FAFSA PDF, call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or 334-523-2691 (TTY for the deaf or hard of hearing 1-800-730-8913).

Federal **Student Aid**

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HAVE QUESTIONS?
Contact or visit the following:

- StudentAid.gov
- a college financial aid office
- **studentaid@ed.gov**
- 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) toll-free
- 1-800-730-8913 (toll-free TTY for the deaf or hard of hearing)

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Program and Type of Aid	Program Information	Annual Award Amount (subject to change)
Federal Pell Grant Grant: does not have to be repaid	For undergraduates with financial need who have not earned bachelor's or professional degrees. For details and updates, visit **StudentAid.gov/pell-grant**.	Amounts can change annually. For 2018–19 (July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019), the award amount is up to $6,095.
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) Grant: does not have to be repaid	For undergraduates with exceptional financial need; Federal Pell Grant recipients take priority; funds depend on availability at school. For details and updates, visit **StudentAid.gov/fseog**.	Up to $4,000.
Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Grant: does not have to be repaid unless converted to a Direct Unsubsidized Loan for failure to carry out teaching service obligation as promised	For undergraduate, postbaccalaureate, and graduate students who are completing or plan to complete course work needed to begin a career in teaching. To receive a TEACH Grant, a student must agree to teach for four years in a high-need field at an elementary school, secondary school, or educational service agency that serves low-income families. If a student doesn't complete the teaching service requirement, all TEACH Grants the student received will be converted to a Direct Unsubsidized Loan that must be repaid, with interest. For details and updates, visit **StudentAid.gov/teach**.	Up to $4,000.
Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant Grant: does not have to be repaid	For undergraduate students who are not Pell-eligible and whose parent or guardian died as a result of military service in Iraq or Afghanistan after the events of 9/11. For details and updates, visit **StudentAid.gov/iraq-afghanistan**.	The grant award can be equal to the maximum Federal Pell Grant amount (see above) but cannot exceed your cost of attending school.
Federal Work-Study Work-Study: money is earned through a job and doesn't have to be repaid	For undergraduate and graduate students; part-time jobs can be on campus or off campus. Money is earned while attending school. Your total work-study award depends on • when you apply, • your level of financial need, and • your school's funding level. For details and updates, visit **StudentAid.gov/workstudy**.	No annual minimum or maximum amounts.
Direct Subsidized Loan Loan: must be repaid with interest	For undergraduate students who have financial need; U.S. Department of Education generally pays interest while the student is in school and during certain other periods; a student must be enrolled at least half-time. Interest rates for new Direct Subsidized Loans can change every year. Loans made to undergraduate students during the 2018–19 award year have the rate fixed at 5.05% for the life of the loan.	Up to $5,500 depending on grade level and dependency status. For details and updates, visit **StudentAid.gov/sub-unsub**.
Direct Unsubsidized Loan Loan: must be repaid with interest	For undergraduate and graduate or professional students; the borrower is responsible for interest during all periods; a student must be enrolled at least half-time; financial need is not required. For undergraduate students: Interest rates for new Direct Unsubsidized Loans can change every year. Loans made to undergraduate students during the 2018–19 award year have the rate fixed at 5.05% for the life of the loan. For graduate or professional students: Interest rates for new Direct Unsubsidized Loans can change every year. Loans made to graduate or professional students during the 2018–19 award year have the rate fixed at 6.6% for the life of the loan.	Up to $20,500 (less any subsidized amounts received for same period), depending on grade level and dependency status. For details and updates, visit **StudentAid.gov/sub-unsub**.
Direct PLUS Loan Loan: must be repaid with interest	For parents of dependent undergraduate students and for graduate or professional students; the borrower is responsible for interest during all periods; a student must be enrolled at least half-time; financial need is not required; the borrower must not have an adverse credit history. Interest rates for new Direct PLUS Loans can change every year. Loans made during the 2018–19 award year have the rate fixed at 7.6% for the life of the loan.	Maximum amount is the cost of attendance minus any other financial aid received. For details and updates, visit **StudentAid.gov/plus**.

Note: The information in this document was compiled in summer 2018. For updates or additional information, visit **StudentAid.gov**.

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR MORE SOURCES OF FREE MONEY?

Try **StudentAid.gov/scholarships** for tips on where to look and for a link to a free online scholarship search.