

Tips for completing the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*

The following list of tips is meant to make the application process easier for you and your parents. The most important thing to remember is that help is available by calling 1-800-4FedAid, Monday-Friday between 8 am and 8 pm EST. If you have additional questions about this application or about financial aid in general, your local financial aid office can assist you.

- **NEW:** Beginning in 2008-2009, you will complete your FAFSA online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. It is recommended you and your parents first request a PIN (Personal Identification Number) at <http://www.pin.ed.gov> before applying electronically. A PIN is required to use as your electronic signature when applying online, or you can choose to print a paper signature page and mail it to the federal processor.
- **FAFSA On The Web Worksheets** are available from your college's financial aid office or most high schools. They can also be printed from the FAFSA website. This worksheet can be used to complete your FAFSA information before applying online. It is recommended that you complete the *FAFSA On The Web Worksheet* before going to the FAFSA website to complete your information online. This will speed up the online application process.
- If you prefer to complete a paper FAFSA and want to mail your application through regular postal mail, paper applications are available if you call 800-4FedAid and ask to have one mailed to your home. If you're hearing impaired, call TTY 1-800-730-8913.

Since FAFSAs are available each academic year, there may be two FAFSAs active at the time you are applying. **Make sure you're completing a FAFSA for the correct school year.**

- Make sure you know your school's FAFSA priority filing deadline. Deadlines are extremely important at some schools, because some aid is based on applying before the deadline. If you're unsure of your school's deadline, be sure to contact them. (You may not apply before January 1st of each school year.)
- Your parents will need to provide information and sign the form if you are under 24 years of age, an undergraduate, not married, not an orphan or ward of the court, don't have children or dependents whom you provide more than one-half support, and not a veteran. (See the FAFSA instructions for further details.)
- You will need the following items: *FAFSA On The Web Worksheet* (obtained from your college or high school, or printed off the FAFSA website), and your tax return and W-2 from the previous year. (If your parents are required to fill out their information, you'll need their tax return and W-2 also.) If you or your parents have not filed your tax returns by the time you apply, you may use an estimate and update it with the correct figures later. You'll also need the school codes of the schools you wish to attend. For a list of school codes, go to <http://www.finaid.org/fafsa/tiv.phtml>.
- The instructions will lead you through all the questions. When you complete your FAFSA online, the risk of errors is reduced and there are built-in edits to make sure you don't leave a required item blank.
- If you or your family have unusual circumstances not addressed on the application (such as loss of employment or major medical expenses), contact your financial aid office.
- Once you have applied online, print a copy of the confirmation page. Don't forget to sign your application, either with your PIN (online) or by printing and mailing a signature page! If you were required to provide parents' information, at least one parent must also sign.
- You should receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) from the federal processor as confirmation that your FAFSA was processed. You will either receive an email with a link to your SAR. A paper SAR will be mailed to you if your email address is invalid or you don't provide one. You may use your SAR to update any items from your original FAFSA. If you don't receive a Student Aid Report, call 1-800-4FedAid.

Don't forget that help is available! If you need help please don't hesitate to ask.