

## What will I need to fill out the FAFSA?

**FAFSA website:** [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov)  
**FSA ID website:** <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id>  
**FSA helpline:** 1-800-433-3243

### What is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)?

To apply for federal student aid, such as federal grants, work-study, and loans, you need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). Completing and submitting the FAFSA is free and easier than ever, and it gives you access to the largest source of financial aid to pay for college or career school.

To complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®), you will need:

- Student's social security number and a household parent's social security number and birth date (if dependent)
- Student's driver's license number
- Your Alien Registration Number (if you are not a U.S. citizen)
- Your federal income tax returns, W-2s, and other records of money earned for all members of the student's household (student, spouse and parents if dependent). *Note:* You may be able to transfer your federal tax return information into your FAFSA.
- Bank statements and records of investments (if applicable)
- Untaxed income received in the household (child support, veteran's benefits, social security, etc.) if applicable)
- Information on any investments or assets (not including the home)
- An FSA ID to sign electronically. FSA IDs are used to log in to certain U.S. Department of Education (ED) websites, complete the FAFSA, accept student loans and more. It is best if both parents of a dependent student create an FSA ID. (<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id>)

Complete and submit the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) each year after October 1st to have eligibility determined for federal, state and some types of institutional financial aid. Apply at: [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov).

## **Common Questions:**

- **What is North Central State College's Federal School Code for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)**  
NC State's Federal school code is 005313.
- **Why does the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) use tax information from 2 years ago?**  
Use of the prior-prior year allows the FAFSA to be based on federal income tax returns that have already been filed, as opposed to estimating income and tax information.
- **What else is needed besides completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)?**  
North Central State College will also need either a Final High School Transcript (showing date of graduation) or GED certificate – required to receive aid; submit to the College's ADMISSIONS office. If you are still in high school, submit your transcript as soon as you graduate.

Watch for response by email, confirming that your FAFSA form was processed. Double-check that your info is correct by logging on at the FAFSA site and reviewing your data. Correct any mistakes and submit the corrected info.

Watch for emails or letters from the schools you are considering on your next steps. Give the schools any additional paperwork they ask for. Meet all deadlines or you could miss out on aid!

- **Do I have to complete the Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) every year?**  
Applying for aid is a *yearly* process because aid eligibility runs out at the end of each aid year. (The financial aid year starts with fall semester and ends with summer term.)
- **What is the definition of an independent student?**  
To be considered an independent student for financial aid consideration, you must be able to answer "yes" to one of the seven questions in Step Three on the FAFSA. If you cannot answer "yes" to one of these questions, you are considered a dependent student and must include parental information on the form. However, if you feel you have extenuating circumstances and should be considered an independent student, you must file an appeal with the financial aid office. At NC State, the following situations are NOT usually considered to be valid reasons for independent student status:
  - You do not reside with your parents, or you support yourself
  - Your parents refuse to pay for your college education
  - Your parents are not financially able to pay for your education
  - You were married after you applied for financial aid
  - You do not want your parents' help and have decided to pay for your own college education.
- **Who is my parent according to the FAFSA® form?**  
If you need to report parent information, here are some guidelines to help you:
  - If your legal parents (your biological and/or adoptive parents, or parents as determined by the state [e.g., a parent listed on your birth certificate]) are married to each other, answer the questions about both of them, regardless of whether your parents are of the same or opposite sex.

- If your legal parents are not married to each other and live together, answer the questions about both of them, regardless of whether your parents are of the same or opposite sex.
- If your legal parent is widowed or was never married, answer the questions about that parent.

### **What if my parents are divorced or separated?**

In this case, how you fill out the [FAFSA form](#) depends on whether your parents live together or not.

Keep the following in mind as you read this section:

- For FAFSA purposes, your married parents are separated if they are considered legally separated by a state, or if they are legally married but have chosen to live separate lives, including living in separate households, as though they were not married.
- When two married persons live as a married couple but are separated by physical distance (or have separate households), they are considered married for FAFSA purposes.

### **Divorced or Separated Parents Who Do Not Live Together**

If your parents are legally divorced or separated, you'll fill out the FAFSA with the parent who has provided you with the most financial support over the last 12 months. This may be the parent you live with the most, but that's not always the case. If the parent who is filling out the FAFSA with you has remarried, you need to include your stepparent's information too.

### **Divorced or Separated Parents Who Live Together**

If your **divorced** parents live together, you'll indicate their marital status as "Unmarried and both legal parents living together," and you will answer questions about both of them on the FAFSA form.

If your **separated** parents live together, you'll indicate their marital status as "Married or remarried" (NOT "Divorced or separated"), and you will answer questions about both of them on the FAFSA form.

### **What if I have a stepparent?**

If you have a stepparent who is married to the legal parent whose information you're reporting, you must provide information about that stepparent as well.

**EXCEPTION:** The FAFSA form asks about your parents' education level. For these two questions, your parents are considered to be your birth parents or adoptive parents—your stepparent is not your parent in these questions.

### **What if my parents are in a same-sex marriage?**

Same-sex couples must report their marital status as married if they were legally married in a state or other jurisdiction (foreign country), without regard to where they live or where the student will be going to school.

Please visit: <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out/parent-info>