



# Get Ready to File the FAFSA It's Almost Time!



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for weekly scholarship and financial aid information

- **The 2017–18 FAFSA available Oct. 1, 2016**
  - Change to October 1 availability is permanent
- **Earlier Year of Income Information Required**
  - For 2017-2018 FAFSA, 2015 income information required

## CHANGES TO THE FAFSA® PROCESS FOR 2017–18

**SUBMIT A FAFSA EARLIER:** Students will be able to submit a 2017–18 FAFSA as early as Oct. 1, 2016, rather than beginning on Jan. 1, 2017. The earlier submission date will be a permanent change, enabling students to complete and submit their FAFSAs as early as October 1 every year. (There is NO CHANGE to the 2016–17 schedule. The 2016–17 FAFSA became available Jan. 1, 2016.)

**USE EARLIER INCOME AND TAX INFORMATION:** Beginning with the 2017–18 FAFSA, students will report income and tax information from an earlier tax year. For example, on the 2017–18 FAFSA, students (and parents, as appropriate) will report their 2015 income and tax information, rather than their 2016 income and tax information.

Here's a summary of key dates for submitting the FAFSA depending on when you plan to go to school:

IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND COLLEGE FROM	YOU WILL SUBMIT THIS FAFSA	YOU CAN SUBMIT THE FAFSA FROM	USING INCOME AND TAX INFORMATION FROM
July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016	2015–16	January 1, 2015–June 30, 2016	2014
July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017	2016–17	January 1, 2016–June 30, 2017	2015
July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018	2017–18	October 1, 2016–June 30, 2018	2015
July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019	2018–19	October 1, 2017–June 30, 2019	2016

# Get Ready to File

- Get FSA IDs now!
  - STRONGLY encourage students and parents to get their FSA ID (username and password) ahead of time
  - All students need an FSA ID
  - Dependent students will also need one parent to have an FSA ID to:
    - Use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool
    - Sign the FAFSA

- Get FSA IDs now!
  - Benefit of getting FSA ID ahead of time:
    - SSA will verify info; if problem, time to resolve
    - When student signs in using his/her FSA ID, student name, SSN, and DOB will be prepopulated

# Get Ready to File

- Get FSA IDs now!
  - Go to [fsaid.ed.gov](https://fsaid.ed.gov) to create an FSA ID and use [FAME's FSA ID Information Tracking Sheet](#) to keep track of FSA ID information

- Encourage students to **file the FAFSA early**
  - Still unsure about school deadlines
  - Some schools award aid on a first-come, first-served basis
  - No downside to filing early
  - Must list one school but can add additional schools after the FAFSA has been filed

- Encourage families to use the **IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT)**
  - The 2017-18 FAFSA requires 2015 federal income information
  - Most of those required to file taxes will be able to use IRS DRT
  - To retrieve information, mailing address must be entered *exactly* as shown on the tax return
    - Recommend having 2015 federal income tax return(s) available when completing the FAFSA



- IRS DRT and the impact on verification:
  - According to Federal Student Aid (Jeff Baker):
    - “Applicants who use IRS DRT are very, very, very, very unlikely to be selected for verification”
- Keep in mind...
  - Certain information (assets) is “as of today,” so read each question and fill out accordingly

# Important Messages

- Important info for 2016-2017 FAFSA filers:
  - No renewal option this year
  - Avoid providing conflicting income information
  - Student Aid Report is available for reference
  - Use IRS DRT!

# Resources to Support Families

- Share our resources with families:
  - FAME Education Toolkit:
    - Postcards
    - Posters
  - FAMEmaine.com
    - Filing the FAFSA section
    - Webinars
    - New - [Get Ready to File Checklist](#)

# Resources to Support Families



## GET READY TO FILE THE 2017-2018 FAFSA

Changes have been made to the FAFSA! Students and families can now file the FAFSA beginning on October 1. In addition, students will be able to file using an earlier year's tax information. The 2017-2018 FAFSA (used for the 2017-2018 academic year) will require 2015 income information.

### What you need to file the 2017-2018 FAFSA

#### GET YOUR FSA ID NOW!

- The FSA ID is the user name and password students will use to access all Federal Student Aid websites, including [FAFSA.gov](http://FAFSA.gov). It takes about 10 minutes to create an FSA ID, so we recommend creating an FSA ID ahead of time. One parent of a dependent student will also need to create an FSA ID to sign the FAFSA.
- To create and learn more about the FSA ID, go to [FSAID.ed.gov](http://FSAID.ed.gov). Keep track of your FSA ID information using FAME's [FSA ID Information Tracking Sheet](#).

### Dependent students will need the following information:

- Your and your parents' FSA ID
- Your and your parents' Social Security numbers
- Your and your parents' 2015 federal income tax returns, 2015 W-2 forms, and other records of money earned
- Your and your parents' current bank statements

If applicable, you will also need...

- Your driver's license (if applicable)
- Your and your parents' 2015 untaxed income information
- Your and your parents' current business and investment mortgage information, business and farm records, stock, bond and other investment records
- Your alien registration or permanent resident card (if you are not a U.S. citizen)

See [reverse](#) to learn more about parent information on the FAFSA.

### Assets on the FAFSA

Many students and parents aren't required to report assets. If you are, be sure you only include assets that have to be reported.

#### REPORTABLE ASSETS ON THE FAFSA:

- Cash, checking, and savings
- Real estate (other than home you live in)
- Financial assets, such as stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit, mutual funds, and money market accounts
- UGMA/UTMA accounts
- College Savings Plans, including 529 plans and Coverdell accounts (list as a parent asset)

#### NON-REPORTABLE ASSETS:

- The home you live in
- Retirement plans
- Any small, family-owned businesses with less than 100 full-time employees
- The family farm (if family's principal residence and parents participate in farming operation)
- Life insurance policies
- Personal possessions, such as cars and boats

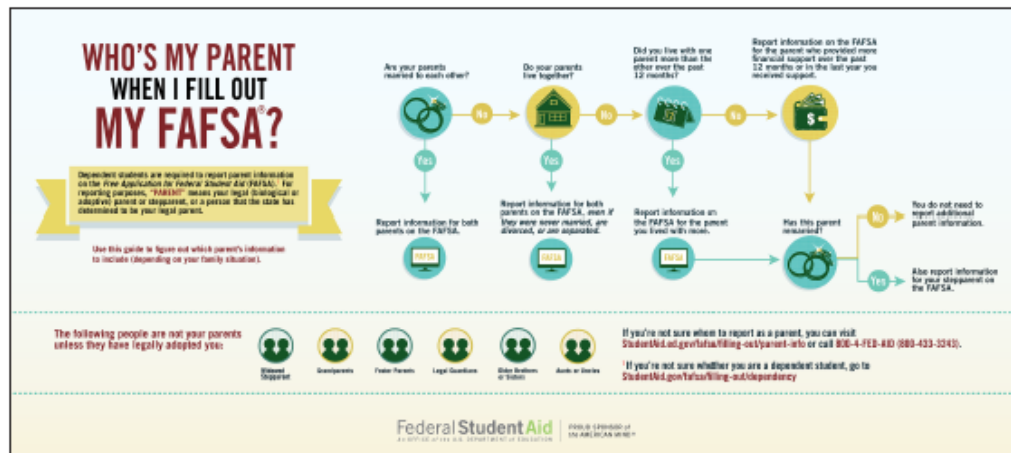
### HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FAFSA?

Get help from FAME. Explore our online FAFSA help at [FAMEMaine.com/FAFSA](http://FAMEMaine.com/FAFSA) for answers to frequently asked questions and a video tutorial (available after October 1).

### When Is Parent Information Required?

Students are considered dependent and required to provide parent information unless they can answer YES to one of the following questions:

- Were you born before January 1, 1994?
- As of today, are you married?
- At the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, will you be working on a graduate program?
- Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training, or are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?
- Do you have children or dependents who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018?
- At any time since you turned 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?
- As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor or in a legal guardianship?
- At any time on or after July 1, 2016, were you homeless or at risk of being homeless?



Works for ME ✓

# Resources to Support Families

- Share opportunities to learn more about the financial aid process
  - FA Nights presentation at local high schools
  - On-line FA Night presentation
    - Wednesday, Sept. 14 at 6:30 PM
    - Thursday, Sept. 15 at 6:30 PM
    - Wednesday, Sept. 21 at 12:00 PM
    - Saturday, October 1 at 10:00 AM
- Go to FAME's [Events](#) for a list of presentations and to register for the on-line events

# Resources to Support Families

- Notify families of FAME's In-Person FAFSA Help
  - Twenty-three sessions held statewide beginning on October 13
  - A full list of events can be found [here](#)
  - Pre-registration is not required but is recommended

# Resources to Support Families

- **Up Next - Text “College” to 44044**
  - Part of the First Lady’s Reach Higher campaign
  - Receive texts about applying to and paying for school
  - Students will get reminders about filling out the FAFSA and tips on the college admissions process –from choosing a school to signing up for exams
  - Learn more and print signs to share at [BetterMakeRoom.org/up-next](https://BetterMakeRoom.org/up-next)

# Supporting Your Efforts

- FAME
  - [famemaine.com](http://famemaine.com)
    - [Early FAFSA](#)
    - [Filing the FAFSA](#)
    - [Resources for Education Professionals](#)
  - Social Media
    - Facebook.com/FAME Education
    - Twitter.com/FAME Education



# Supporting Your Efforts

- Federal Student Aid
  - [FinancialAidToolkit.ed.gov](https://FinancialAidToolkit.ed.gov)
  - Social Media
    - [Twitter.com/FAFSA](https://Twitter.com/FAFSA)
    - [Facebook.com/FederalStudentAid](https://Facebook.com/FederalStudentAid)
    - [YouTube.com/FederalStudentAid](https://YouTube.com/FederalStudentAid)

# Supporting Your Efforts

- New this year-FAME's FAFSA Completion Checklist
  - Ideas for FAFSA completion
  - Complete 8 of 13 items - we'll send you a Dunkin' Donuts gift card and enter you to win an iPad
  - All counselors at a school are eligible
  - Each counselor can "count" an activity at your school like, hosting an FA Night

Help your students "win" by getting the FAFSA done early, and you could win too!

**Past FAFSA event surveys show us that school counselors are the primary source of information about FAFSA completion and the reason students "get it done."**

Thank you for all your past hard work encouraging students to file their FAFSAs. FAME has created this checklist of ideas to further push FAFSA completion at your school. To add some fun to your FAFSA completion efforts, we'll send you a Dunkin' Donuts gift card plus enter you to win an iPad once you've completed at least 8 of 13 of the items. All counselors at your school are eligible.

**Checklist items:**

- Like the FAME Education Facebook page or follow @FAME\_Education on Twitter and share or retweet a FAFSA-related post
- Hang posters, post a photo of hung posters on social media and tag @FAME\_Education
- Hand out or mail FAFSA reminder postcards to students
- Post reminders about FAFSA completion on social media and tag @FAME\_Education
- Make a FAFSA-related PA announcement
- Email or text FAFSA reminders to students and parents
- Promote FAME's FAFSA events by emailing, texting or calling families
- Volunteer at one of FAME's FAFSA events
- Host (or have hosted the previous spring) a Financial Aid Night for 2017 graduates
- Sign up to use FAME's FAFSA completion portal
- Hang a thermometer poster (will be mailed to schools after January 1, 2017) with your current FAFSA completion rate, post a photo on social media and tag @FAME\_Education
- Share your favorite FAFSA completion tips by emailing Mila Tappan at [mtappan@FAMEmaine.com](mailto:mtappan@FAMEmaine.com)
- Schedule a Financial Aid Night for the class of 2018

Visit [FAMEmaine.com/FAFSA](http://FAMEmaine.com/FAFSA) to download more tools such as the thermometer poster and scripts for texts, PA announcements, emails and newsletters.

**How to submit the completed checklist to FAME:**

- Post a photo of yourself with your completed checklist on social media and tag @FAME\_Education, OR
- Mail or email Mila Tappan a copy of your checklist - PO Box 949 Augusta, Maine or [mtappan@FAMEmaine.com](mailto:mtappan@FAMEmaine.com)

**We'll send you a \$10 Dunkin' Donuts gift card and enter you to win an iPad! Share your checklist with us as soon as you've completed 8 of the 13 items. All entries must be received by FAME by May 1. The drawing for the iPad will be done after May 1, 2017.**

- FAFSA's FAFSA Completion Portal
  - Get student specific FAFSA completion information
  - Enhancements
    - Verification selection flag
    - Expanded completion statuses – Y, N, and I
  - Developing process so Career and Technical High Schools can participate

# Supporting Your Efforts

- FAFSA's FAFSA Completion Portal
  - If your school hasn't signed up but is interested in participating, email [mtappan@famemaine.com](mailto:mtappan@famemaine.com)
  - We will email another invitation to schools that are not currently participating in October

# Things to Keep In Mind

- Response to families who have had significant income changes since 2015?
  - 2015 income information must be used on the 2017-2018 FAFSA, even if changes have occurred
  - If income is significantly different, contact the Financial Aid Office to discuss further

# Things to Keep In Mind

- Manage expectations related to timing of award notifications
  - Many schools won't begin sending award notifications until February
  - Students need to be offered admission before an award will be sent
  - Timeframes will vary by school
  - Early aid offers will likely be estimates

# Things to Keep In Mind

- These changes are very positive!
  - Even if awards aren't sent until February, students will have more time to compare award packages
  - We'll soon release our revised *What Happens Next* with additional information to help families compare awards

- October's Wednesday Webinar

***What You Need to Know to File the  
2017-2018 FAFSA***

**Wednesday, October 12 at 10:00 AM**

- Focus on the IRS Data Retrieval process
- Invitation and registration information will be sent on September 28





# Questions?

## Finance Authority of Maine

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P.O. Box 949

Augusta, ME 04332

1-800-228-3734

TTY: 207-626-2717

[education@FAMEmaine.com](mailto:education@FAMEmaine.com)

[FAMEmaine.com](http://FAMEmaine.com)



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