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2025–26

# **FAFSA® Specifications Guide**

## **Volume 2 – FPS Schedule and Getting Help**

October 2024

**U.S. Department of Education's  
Federal Student Aid**



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# Acronyms

Table 2-1: Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
COD	Common Origination and Disbursement
COPPA	Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act
CT	Central time
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
EDE	Electronic Data Exchange
FAA	financial aid administrator
FAFSA®	<i>Free Application for Federal Student Aid</i>
FISAP	Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate
FPS	FAFSA Processing System
FSA	Federal Student Aid
FSAIC	Federal Student Aid Information Center
ISIR	<i>Institutional Student Information Record</i>
IVRU	interactive voice response unit
MS	Microsoft
NSLDS®	National Student Loan Data System
PC	personal computer
R2T4	Return to <i>Title IV</i>
RCCC	Research and Customer Care Center

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
SAI	Student Aid Index
SAIG	Student Aid Internet Gateway
SAVE	Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements
SSA	Social Security Administration
TEACH	Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs

# Change History Table

The change history table below is updated each time the “FAFSA Processing System Schedule and Getting Help” volume of the *FAFSA Specifications Guide* is updated providing you with a cumulative list of revisions made to the document.

The footer is updated to include the revision date.

**Table 2-2: Change History**

Date	Page(s)	Changes/Notes
10/24	All	Volume 2 is released

# Overview

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## What's in Volume 2, FPS Schedule and Getting Help?

This volume includes a table with important FAFSA Processing System (FPS) processing deadlines and anticipated document and software release dates as well as information for getting help such as contact information for customer service, FPS mailing addresses, and lists of helpful publications and websites you can access for additional assistance.

# FPS Schedule

## Schedule

In addition to the annual 2025–26 system updates that we will implement in October 2024, we plan to release other system updates intermittently. Scheduling intermittent releases enables us to continuously improve our websites and other systems.

Table 2-3: FPS Schedule

Date	Event
August 7, 2024	Federal Student Aid announced the <a href="#">2025-26 FAFSA Processing Timeline Update</a> .
August 13, 2024	Federal Student Aid announced the availability of the updated draft <a href="#">Student Aid Index (SAI) and Pell Grant Eligibility Guide</a> .
August 23, 2024	Federal Student Aid announced the availability of the initial <a href="#">2025-26 FAFSA Specifications Guide volumes</a> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Introduction</i> – This volume describes the layout of the user document.</li><li>• Volume 4 includes financial aid administration (FAA) and programmer information that can assist FAAs in interpreting information and programmers designing or building a system or software to communicate electronically with Federal Student Aid.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <i>Volume 4A – Record Layouts</i></li><li>◦ <i>Volume 4B – Processing Codes</i></li></ul></li><li>• <i>Volume 5 – Edits and Rejects</i>, which describes system edits and rejects.</li><li>• The ISIR record layout in an Excel format.</li></ul>
September 3, 2024	Federal Student Aid announced the availability of the <a href="#">2025-26 FAFSA Prototype</a> . The FAFSA prototype is not a complete replica of the 2025–26 FAFSA form that will be available on fafsa.gov. Instead, it's a web-based design tool that allows users to navigate specific scenarios that many 2025–26 applicants will encounter on the live website.
September 3, 2024	The Secretary of Education announces the <a href="#">annual updates to the tables used in the statutory “Federal Need Analysis Methodology”</a> to determine an applicant's Student Aid Index (SAI) for the 2025–26 processing cycle.
September 17, 2024	Federal Student Aid announced the availability of a <a href="#">small file of ISIRs for system testing</a> . This file contains three records: one for a dependent student, an independent student, and a provisionally independent student.

Date	Event
October 1, 2024	Federal Student Aid released the 2025–26 online FAFSA form and ISIR processing for testing with a limited set of students and institutions. During the testing period, the form will be available to an increasing number of participants, starting with hundreds and expanding to tens of thousands of applicants. This process will allow Federal Student Aid to test and resolve issues before making the form available to all students and contributors.
October 1, 2024	The 2025–26 FAFSA Partner Portal ( <a href="https://fafsa.partnerportal2526.ed.gov">fafsa.partnerportal2526.ed.gov</a> ) is available to FAAs. This release includes Applicant View and Corrections.
October 7, 2024	FSA announces the availability of the <a href="#">2025–26 FAFSA Specifications Guide, Volume 7 – Comment Codes</a> , which supplies the comment codes, comment text, and reject resolutions.
October 8, 2024	FSA announces the availability of the <a href="#">2025–26 FAFSA Specifications Guide, Volume 1 – Summary of Changes</a> , which describes the changes to the FPS for 2025–26.
October 16, 2024	FSA announces the availability of the <a href="#">2025–26 FAFSA Specifications Guide, Volume 8 – Agency Matches</a> , which describes Agency match results and resulting comments.
October 16, 2024	Federal Student Aid announces the availability of the <a href="#">2025–26 EDExpress for Windows Packaging Technical Reference</a> . This technical reference provides instructions and record layouts for schools and other organizations that need to integrate their software or systems with the EDExpress 2025–26 Packaging module. Record layouts are included for all imports from external systems, such as Packaging Import External Add, Packaging Import External Change, and Packaging Import Add Funds. Packaging module setup guidance and setup worksheets are also provided.
October 2024	FSA announces the availability of the following <a href="#">2025–26 FAFSA Specifications Guide volumes</a> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Volume 2 – FPS Schedule and Getting Help</i>, which includes the schedule, sources of help, and helpful documents and websites.</li> <li>• <i>Volume 3 – Electronic Data Exchange and FAFSA Processing</i>, which describes the electronic data exchange with Federal Student Aid and FAFSA processing.</li> <li>• <i>Volume 6 – ISIR Guide</i>, which assists FAAs in interpreting applicant information from an <i>Institutional Student Information Record</i> (ISIR) and FAFSA Submission Summary.</li> <li>• <i>Volume 9 – Testing and Demo System</i>, which describes the test ISIR files that will be provided by FPS for testing against school system and the Web Demonstration System.</li> </ul>
November 1, 2024	Federal Student Aid announces the availability of the 2025–26 FAFSA.gov Preview Presentation. This Microsoft (MS) PowerPoint presentation contains information and screen shots pertaining to the 2025–26 online Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form that can be used as a tool for internal staff training or high school night presentations.
November 2024	The hard-copy FAFSA form is available for download from the “Resources” page at <a href="https://StudentAid.gov/sa/resources#fafsa">StudentAid.gov/sa/resources#fafsa</a> .
November 2024	The hard-copy FAFSA form for incarcerated applicants is available from <a href="https://StudentAid.gov">StudentAid.gov</a> .
November 2024	Federal Student Aid announces the availability of the 2025–26 Federal School Code List online. This document is updated quarterly.
December 1, 2024 (on or before)	Federal Student Aid will launch full functionality of the online 2025–26 FAFSA form, including submission, processing, and corrections, at the same time to all applicants.
Winter 2024	The FAFSA Partner Portal will be updated to include ISIR Request for 2024–25 and 2025–26.

Date	Event
Late June 2025	The FPS accepts 2024–25 paper and online FAFSA forms until late June 2025. Watch for a <a href="#">Federal Register notice</a> with the final deadline. Electronic FAFSA forms must be transmitted to and received by the FPS by midnight Central time (CT) to meet the deadline.
Mid-September 2025	The FPS accepts 2024–25 paper and online corrections until mid-September 2025. Watch for a <a href="#">Federal Register notice</a> containing more information about this deadline. Electronic corrections must be transmitted to and received by the FPS by midnight CT to meet the deadline.
Late June 2026	The FPS accepts 2025–26 paper and online FAFSA forms until late June 2026. Watch for a <a href="#">Federal Register notice</a> with the final deadline. Electronic FAFSA forms must be transmitted to and received by the FPS by midnight CT to meet the deadline.
Mid-September 2026	The FPS accepts 2025–26 paper and online corrections until mid-September 2026. Watch for a <a href="#">Federal Register notice</a> containing more information about this deadline. Electronic corrections must be transmitted to and received by the FPS by midnight CT to meet the deadline.

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# Holiday Closings for the 2025–26 FAFSA® Processing System

The FPS does not process application data on the holidays listed in the table below. A network message will be sent to let you know when closings are scheduled.

**Table 2-4: Holiday Closing Schedule**

Holiday	2025	2026
New Year's Day	Wednesday, January 1	Thursday, January 1
Martin Luther King's Birthday	Monday, January 20	Monday, January 19
Washington's Birthday	Monday, February 17	Monday, February 16
Memorial Day	Monday, May 26	Monday, May 25
Juneteenth National Independence Day	Thursday, June 19	Friday, June 19
Independence Day	Friday, July 4	Friday, July 3
Labor Day	Monday, September 1	Monday, September 7
Columbus Day	Monday, October 13	Monday, October 12
Veterans Day	Tuesday, November 11	Wednesday, November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 27	Thursday, November 26
Christmas Day	Thursday, December 25	Friday, December 25

# Getting Help

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## Customer Service

### FSATECH Listserv

FSATECH is an email listserv for technical questions about Federal Student Aid systems, software, and mainframe products. For information on subscribing, go to [listserv.ed.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=FSATECH&A=1](http://listserv.ed.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=FSATECH&A=1).

### FPS Help Desk

**1-800-330-5947; 307-459-2495**

Email: [support@fps.ed.gov](mailto:support@fps.ed.gov)

Federal Student Aid maintains this call center to address questions about FPS processing, the FAFSA Partner Portal, the FPS Web Applications Demo website, personal computer (PC) software such as EDExpress and EDconnect, Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) enrollment and data transmissions, as well as to collect system enhancement suggestions.

Representatives are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern time.

### Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC)

**1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)**

Email: [StudentAidHelp@ed.gov](mailto:StudentAidHelp@ed.gov)

The FSAIC serves the public with information, in both English and Spanish, about federal student aid programs. FSAIC customer service representative support includes a toll-free telephone number, interactive voice response unit (IVRU) self-service, email, and Live Help. Customers include students, parents, and FAAs seeking general information about federal grant and loan programs, assistance with the online and paper FAFSA form (including FSA ID assistance), and information for student aid processing timeframes.

FSAIC customer service representatives can assist with FAFSA form completion and corrections, application status checks, requests to change addresses and federal school codes on the FAFSA form, duplicate FAFSA Submission Summary requests, identification of loan holders (including contact information), Federal Student Aid publication requests, and National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS®) loan and TEACH Grant exit counseling.

For FSAIC's hours of operation, visit the StudentAid.gov website at [StudentAid.gov/help-center/contact](http://StudentAid.gov/help-center/contact).

## **Reach FSA**

### **1-855-FSA-4-FAA (1-855-372-4322)**

This phone number provides a simplified way for the student aid community to access these Federal Student Aid School Contact Centers:

#### **Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) School Relations Center**

- COD
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant
- Pell Grant
- TEACH Grant
- Direct Loan processing

#### **FPS Help Desk**

- FPS
- SAIG
- FAFSA Partner Portal
- EDconnect and EDExpress software

#### **NSLDS® Customer Support Center**

- NSLDS Functions
- Student Eligibility
- Overpayments
- Loan History
- Enrollment Reporting
- FVT/GE Reporting
- FVT/GE Completers List

#### **G5 Hotline**

- Electronic grants management and payments

#### **eZ-Audit Help Desk**

- Electronic Financial Submissions
- Compliance audits

**Note:** You can also continue to use the specific phone number for each contact center.

#### **Campus-Based**

- Campus-based programs
- Fiscal Operations Report Application to Participate (FISAP)
- Federal Perkins Loan Cohort Default Rate

#### **Nelnet Total and Permanent Disability Servicer**

- Disability discharge process
- General, total, and permanent loan discharge
- Veteran's disability discharge

#### **School Eligibility Service Group**

- Audit resolution
- Financial analysis
- Program reviews
- Technical assistance
- School and program eligibility and recertification

#### **Foreign Schools Participation Division**

- Eligibility and participation

#### **Research and Customer Care Center (RCCC)**

- All other questions related to Title IV aid programs

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## Mailing Addresses

The mailing addresses for 2025–26 are updated. English and Spanish versions of the forms are sent to the same mailbox based on the applicant type, which include a regular applicant, an incarcerated applicant, and an applicant 13 and younger who is protected by the Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act (COPPA).

**New for 2025–26:** The mailbox numbers for the regular and incarcerated applicants are new. There is no change to the mailbox used for COPPA protected applicants. Also, there is no change to the mailbox to submit the Revocation of Consent form.

Table 2-5: FAFSA Mailing Addresses

Type of Applicant	Document	Mailing Address
Regular Applicant including Pacific Islanders English and Spanish	FAFSA form and FAFSA Submission Summary	Federal Student Aid Programs P.O. Box 70208 London, KY 40742-0208
Incarcerated Applicant English and Spanish	FAFSA form and FAFSA Submission Summary	Federal Student Aid Programs P.O. Box 70209 London, KY 40742-0209
COPPA Protected Applicant English and Spanish	FAFSA form and FAFSA Submission Summary	Federal Student Aid Programs Attn: COPPA Process 25 Air Park Drive London, KY 40744-8236
All Applicants and their Contributors English and Spanish	Revocation of Consent form	Federal Student Aid Programs P.O. Box 70206 London, KY 40742-0206

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# Helpful Documents

We encourage you to review other documents in the Knowledge Center for more information about changes to the 2025–26 application processing system. Unless noted otherwise, all documents are available from the [Knowledge Center](#):

- [2025–26 FAFSA Prototype](#), September 3, 2024: The FAFSA prototype is a web-based design tool that allows users to navigate specific scenarios that many 2025–26 applicants will encounter on the live website. It is not a complete replica of the online 2025–26 FAFSA form.
- [2025–26 FAFSA Specifications Guide](#):
  - *Introduction*, August 23, 2024: This volume describes the FAFSA Specifications Guide.
  - *Volume 1 – Summary of Changes*, November 2024: This volume describes FPS changes for the new processing cycle.
  - *Volume 2 – FPS Schedule and Getting Help*, November 2024: This volume includes expected schedule releases, customer service help desks, mailing address, helpful documents, and office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) websites.
  - *Volume 3 – Electronic Data Exchange and FAFSA Processing*, October 2024: This volume describes FSA's software for the FPS and SAIG, electronic data exchange input and output files, ISIR files, and electronic corrections.
  - *Volume 4A – Record Layouts*, August 23, 2024: This volume contains the record layouts used for the ISIR and corrections.
  - *Volume 4B – Processing Codes*, August 23, 2024: This volume contains processing codes used in the ISIR and corrections.
  - Excel ISIR – The ISIR Record Layout in an Excel format, August 2024.
  - *Volume 5 – Edits and Rejects*, August 23, 2024: This volume contains descriptions of data edits for various FAFSA contributors (dependent or independent student, parent, other parent, student's spouse), as well as record-level, processing, verifiable, and non-verifiable reject codes, and resolution guidance.
  - *Volume 6 – ISIR Guide*, November 2024: The volume is designed to assist FAAs with interpreting student information on the ISIR and FAFSA Submission Summary.
  - *Volume 7 – Comment Codes*, October 2024: The volume contains comment code and text information and for the FAFSA Submission Summary (electronic and paper) and ISIR, as well as any action required by the contributors or school.
  - *Volume 8 – Agency Matches*, December 2024: The information volume provides guidance regarding processed comment codes, status codes, and reject codes from matching agencies such the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Social Security Administration (SSA), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and NSLDS.
  - *Volume 9 – Testing and Web Demo System*, November 2024: This volume includes testing data and Web Demo System information.
- [SAVE System Instructions for US Department of Education \(School\) Users](#): Provides instructions to FAAs on accessing and navigating the Department of Homeland Security Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (DHS SAVE) system for submitting third-step verification electronically.

- [Federal Student Aid Handbook](#): The Federal Student Aid Handbook consists of the Application and Verification Guide, numbered volumes, and appendices.
- English and Spanish versions of the paper FAFSA form will be available in October 2025 for download from the [StudentAid.gov/resources](#).
- English and Spanish sample versions of the FAFSA Submission Summary will be available in October 2025 for download from the [Application Processing library in the Knowledge Center](#).
- [2025–26 Student Aid Index \(SAI\) and Pell Grant Eligibility Guide](#), August 13, 2024: The guide provides updated Student Aid Index (SAI) calculations for federal student aid eligibility.

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# Federal Student Aid Websites

- Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System: [cod.ed.gov](http://cod.ed.gov)
  - Return to Title IV (R2T4)
- DHS/SAVE information: [fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/topics/dhs-save-eligible-noncitizen/dhs-save-electronic-third-step-verification](https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/topics/dhs-save-eligible-noncitizen/dhs-save-electronic-third-step-verification)
- FAFSA Partner Portal:
  - 2024–25 award year: [fafsa.partnerportal.ed.gov](https://fafsa.partnerportal.ed.gov)
  - 2025–26 award year: [fafsa.partnerportal2526.ed.gov](https://fafsa.partnerportal2526.ed.gov)
- Online FAFSA Form: [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov)
- Federal Student Aid Training Conference website: [fsaconferences.ed.gov](https://fsaconferences.ed.gov)
- FSA Partner Connect: [fsapartners.ed.gov](https://fsapartners.ed.gov)
- FSATECH email listserv subscription information: [listserv.ed.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=FSATECH&A=1](https://listserv.ed.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=FSATECH&A=1)
- Knowledge Center: [fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center](https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center)
- NSLDS Professional Access website: [nsldsfap.ed.gov/login](https://nsldsfap.ed.gov/login)
- Student Aid.gov: [StudentAid.gov](https://StudentAid.gov)
  - FSA ID: [StudentAid.gov/fsa-id](https://StudentAid.gov/fsa-id)
- SAIG Enrollment: [fsawebenroll.ed.gov](https://fsawebenroll.ed.gov)
- Training information and registration website for upcoming Fundamentals of Federal Student Aid Administration training opportunities and learning resources: [fsatraining.ed.gov](https://fsatraining.ed.gov)