How to Create an FSA ID:
A Guide for Mixed-Immigration Status Families

This short guide is intended to help mixed-status families understand how to create a studentaid.gov username and password, often called an FSA ID, in order to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®).

What is a mixed-status family?

"A mixed-status family is a family whose members include people with different immigration statuses. One example of a mixed-status family is one in which the parents are undocumented, and the children are U.S.-born citizens."
–The National Immigration Law Center

Who is eligible to complete the FAFSA® to apply for federal financial aid?

A student who is a U.S. citizen or an "eligible non-citizen" with a Social Security number is eligible to complete the FAFSA to receive federal financial aid. This list shows all the non-citizen statuses that are eligible. Students are eligible regardless of the citizenship of their parents. Students must create their own FSA ID with their Social Security Number before completing the FAFSA.

Please note that students who are citizens of the Freely Associated States (the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau) **are eligible to complete the FAFSA and can do so without a Social Security number**.

Contributors without a Social Security number (SSN)

Every parent who needs to enter information on a FAFSA (called a contributor) needs an FSA ID (username and password.) If the parent does not have a Social Security number, they can still create an FSA ID.
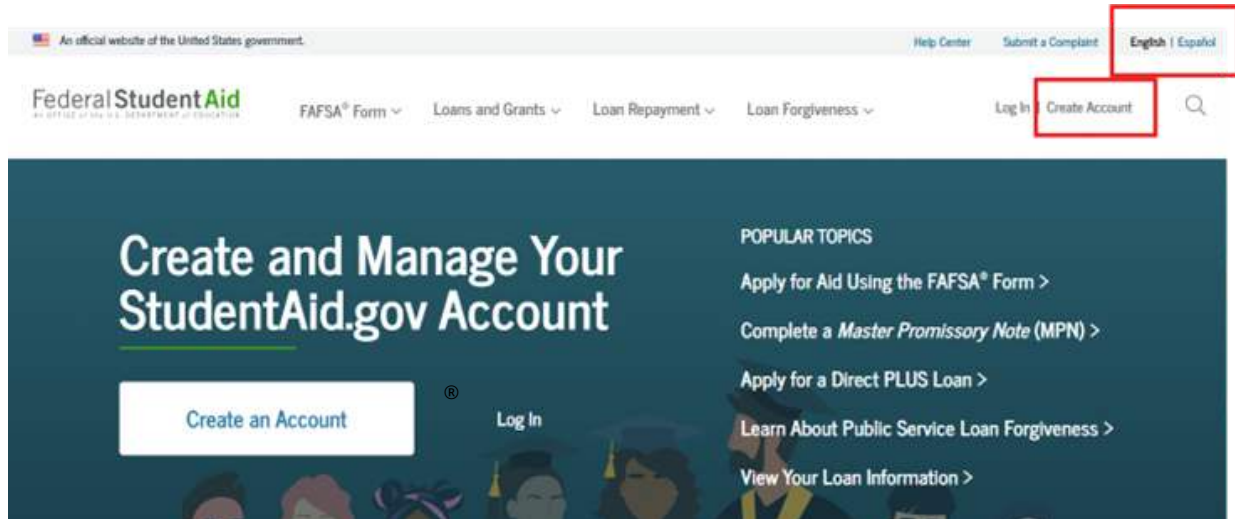
Did you know?

The current use of FAFSA information is governed by the Privacy Act of 1974. The Privacy Act clarifies that personally identifiable information (PII) cannot be disclosed without written consent. There is also a federal law called the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) that "*prohibits the use of data collected through the FAFSA for anything other than calculating federal and state financial aid. Entities with access to this data are also required to protect the data against security threats or unauthorized uses.*" - *Better FAFSA for Mixed-Status Families: Top 10 Things to Know So You Can Prepare*
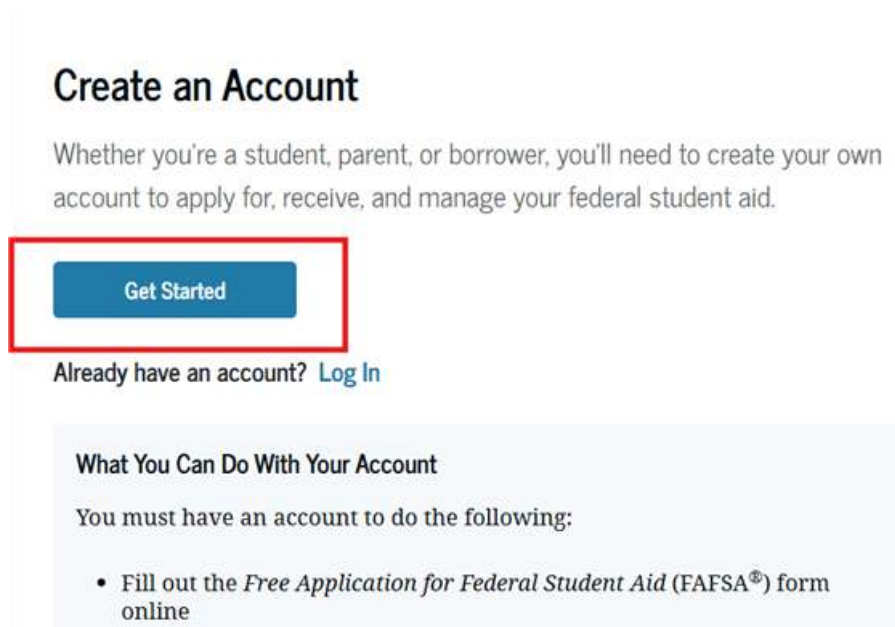
Your information and identity are currently protected. But as with anything related to immigration law and policy, several national organizations are committed to sharing new information that may impact students, families, and the safety of information in the future. For a trusted source of real-time updates, you can consult the *Data Protections for FAFSA Information* resource from the Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration.

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To Obtain an FSA ID

Step 1: Log on to studentaid.gov and click *Create Account*.
Note: you also have the option to view the page in Spanish.

Step 2: Click *Get Started*

To Obtain an FSA ID

Step 3: Fill out your personal information and then click on the blue text *What if I don't have a Social Security number*

Personal Information

I understand that I'll be required to certify that the information I provide to create an account is true and correct and that I'm the individual I claim to be.

If I'm not the person I claim to be, I understand that I'm not authorized to proceed and that I should exit this form now. If I provide false or misleading information, I understand that I might be subject to a fine, prison time, or both.

First Name

Middle Initial

Last Name

Date of Birth

Month   Day   Year

Social Security Number

What if I don't have a Social Security number? ⌄

Cancel   Continue

Step 4: View the drop-down set of options.

If one of the options applies to you, then check off the *I do not have a Social Security number* option and press *Continue*

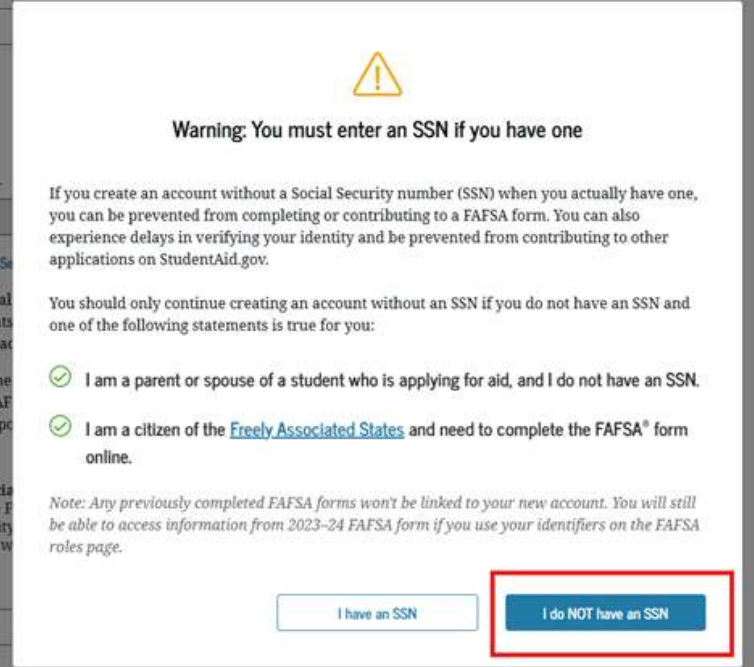What if I don't have a Social Security number? ⌃

If you don't have a Social Security number (SSN) **and** at least one these two statements describes you, you can check the box below to create an account without an SSN:

- I am a citizen of the Freely Associated States who needs to complete the FAFSA® form online.
- I am a parent or spouse of a student who is applying for aid.

☐ **I do not have a Social Security number.**
I am a citizen of the Freely Associated States and I do not have a Social Security number (SSN); *OR* I am a parent or spouse of a student who is applying for aid and I do not have an SSN.

Cancel   Continue

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To Obtain an FSA ID

Note: You will see this pop-up with a warning. Click the blue button, *I do NOT have an SSN*

Step 5: Continue through the next steps, including creating a username and password. (keep a note of your password) and providing an email address (it should be one you have access to). We also encourage you to provide a mobile number, which is another way to keep your account secure and also reset your password if you ever forget it.

Step 6: You will also see the option of answering 1-4 knowledge-based verification questions, provided by the TransUnion® credit bureau.

Step 7: Upon completing the account creation process, you will see a confirmation page with the results of your identity verification.

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Results

YOUR IDENTITY WAS VERIFIED ✅

- You do not need to take any additional steps to verify your identity with Federal Student Aid (FSA)

YOUR IDENTITY WAS NOT VERIFIED ⛔

- You were not able to successfully answer the TransUnion® identity questions
- Your FSA ID username and password account was still created, and you can still fill out your student's FAFSA. THIS SHOULD NOT HOLD UP YOUR STUDENT'S ABILITY TO SUBMIT THEIR FAFSA.
- You do have additional steps to follow up on directly with Federal Student Aid (FSA) and the colleges where student applied in order to finish verifying your identity.
- You will receive an email with an FSA case number and further instructions. Please start this manual identity verification process as soon as you are able to.
  - You will be asked to provide additional documentation in order to verify your identity.

Acceptable Documents to Establish Your Identity:

Provide one (1) of the following documents:
U.S. driver's license
U.S. state/city identification card
Foreign passport

or

One (1) set of the following documents:
Municipal identification card + utility bill
Community ID + utility bill
Consular Identification Card/Matricula Consular + utility bill

If you have questions or don't receive an email with a case number, reach out to FSA at 800-433-3243.

FSA will review your submitted verification documents and if they match the information you submitted during the account creation process, your identity will be verified. Colleges will receive confirmation of this verification as well.

References

- https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements/non-us-citizens
- https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/ferpa
- https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ncan.org/resource/resmgr/policyadvocacy/top_10_mixed_status_families.pdf
- https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/wp-content/.uploads/2024/11/Data-Protections-for-FAFSA-Information.pdf

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This information is accurate as of 12/18/24