
Introduction



This publication is intended for financial aid administrators and counselors who help students begin the student aid process—filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), verifying information, and making corrections and other changes to the information reported on the FAFSA.

Throughout the Handbook we use “college,” “school,” and “institution” interchangeably unless we mean something specific. “Parents” in this volume refers to the parents of dependent students, and “you” refers to the primary audience of the Handbook: financial aid administrators at colleges. “We” indicates the United States Department of Education.

We appreciate any comments that you have regarding the Application and Verification Guide (AVG) as well as all the volumes of the Federal Student Aid Handbook. We revise and clarify the text because of questions and feedback from the financial aid community, so please contact us at fsaschoolspubs@ed.gov to let us know how to improve the Handbook so that it is always clear and informative.

CHANGES FOR 2008–09

We report on page 3 that the paper FAFSA is no longer available for schools to order in bulk quantities (special orders of up to 50 copies are permitted), though students can still request individual copies by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center. We also note that there is a new portable document format (PDF) version of the FAFSA, in color or black and white, that anyone can download from the Web.

While students can still correct their application online and file a renewal FAFSA that has been prepopulated with data from the previous year’s application, Corrections on the Web and Renewal FAFSA on the Web are no longer distinct applications, so these names will no longer be used. Making corrections and filling out renewal applications will still occur on the FAFSA on the Web site. These changes appear in Chapters 1 and 5.

On page 4 we mention the new FAFSA4caster website for students, which allows them to get an estimated EFC and aid package before they apply for college.

Also on that page we explain that the PIN will now be available immediately for students and parents so that they can use it to sign the application. Other uses of the PIN will be enabled after the application passes the Social Security match.

On page 11 we revised the definitions of undergraduate and graduate students in keeping with the new regulations dated Nov. 1, 2007.

On page 13 we note that, beginning with this award year, the application will be rejected if the income earned from work exceeds the threshold for filing a tax return and the person indicates that she will not be filing a return.

Also beginning with this award year, the Federal School Code List is no longer available in hard copy; students need to get school codes from the search on the FAFSA on the Web site. The entire list will also be available in PDF on www.ifap.ed.gov.

On page 31 we note that students can now list up to ten schools on the Web applications, either FAFSA on the Web or FAA Access to CPS Online. The number remains at four for the paper application.

Beginning with this award year, applications that are rejected only because a signature is missing will generate an unofficial EFC that will be available to state agencies and schools. We mention this on page 34.

In Chapter 3 we made the usual updates to the elements of the EFC calculations.

In Chapter 4 we updated the verification worksheets and the line items for the tax return, and we modified the margin note for the HEROES Act to indicate that the provisions of that legislation have been made permanent.