

Gov. Evers: Proclaims FAFSA® Filing Month in Wisconsin

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MADISON, Wis. – Today marks the first day to file the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA®\)](#) for the academic year that begins in the fall of 2022. To encourage Wisconsinites to complete the FAFSA®, Gov. Tony Evers proclaimed the month of October as [FAFSA® Filing Month](#) in Wisconsin.

“Completing the FAFSA® is the first step in qualifying for financial aid to pay for college, graduate school, and career training programs,” said Gov. Evers. “I encourage all Wisconsinites to support our high school seniors and college students as they complete the FAFSA® and necessary steps to access financial aid resources that will allow them to succeed in postsecondary education.”

The FAFSA®, filed annually, is the gateway to virtually all federal, state, and institutional financial aid, including scholarships, grants, work study, and federal student loans, and many private scholarship providers require it as well. For those looking to enroll in college during the 2022-2023 academic year, it’s important to submit the FAFSA® as soon as possible and take time to understand the various [deadlines](#) that apply. School deadlines can be as early as February or March. By filing in the fall, these deadlines will be met, too.

Gov. Evers, the [Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions \(DFI\)](#), and the [Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board \(HEAB\)](#) offer the following tips to help students and families complete the FAFSA®:

- **Do your homework before you file** – Both students and parents should

gather Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers, bank statements, 2020 tax returns, and W-2 forms. Having this information ready before you begin the application can help expedite the process and alleviate stress.

- **Create a Federal Student Aid ID** – The first step, before filling out the FAFSA[®], is to create a Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID), which serves as an electronic signature. Parents and students can find a link to obtain a FSA ID through the U.S. Department of Education's office of [Federal Student Aid website](#). To create a unique ID, applicants will need their Social Security number, date of birth, and their name as it appears on official documents.
- **Complete the FAFSA[®] on October 1 (or soon after)** – Some financial aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, or from programs with limited funds. The earlier students and families complete the FAFSA[®], the better their chances are to be in line for that aid. The FAFSA[®] form is available on the [myStudentAid mobile app](#), available in the Apple App Store or on Google Play, as well as [fafsa.gov](#).
- **Sync your tax return** – The [IRS Data Retrieval Tool](#) will electronically transfer your 2020 federal tax return information onto your FAFSA[®] form, expediting the process and simplifying the application.
- **Be mindful of potential errors** – Mistakes on the FAFSA[®] could delay an application, meaning students and families could possibly lose out on some financial aid. Entering incorrect social security or driver's license numbers or forgetting to sign the application are some of the most common errors.
- **File the special circumstances form if COVID-19 impacted your finances** – There's an opportunity after filing the FAFSA[®] to submit a special circumstances form, specifically if a student's or parent's income has changed as a result of COVID-19 or other events. The form can be requested from college financial aid offices.

“Completing the FAFSA[®] is your ticket to being considered for financial aid,

including aid you don't have to repay, like scholarships and grants," said DFI Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld. "Every year families nervously await and often postpone filling out the FAFSA®. Some even skip it entirely because they think it's a waste of time and only a fast track to federal student loans. However, the FAFSA® package also includes college scholarships and grants. Not filling it out can result in families losing money that could have helped them pay for college. I encourage all Wisconsin students and families to submit a FAFSA® whether they think they will qualify for aid or not."

According to the National College Attainment Network (NCAN) [FAFSA® Tracker](#), through September 17, 2021, 50.4% of the high school class of 2021 in Wisconsin has completed the FAFSA®. There have been 35,677 completions in Wisconsin, a 5.4% decrease compared to the last academic year. Nationally, NCAN's [FAFSA® Tracker](#) shows 58.6% of the high school class of 2021 has completed the FAFSA®, through September 17, 2021, a 4.2% decrease compared to the last academic year. To see FAFSA® completion data by high school and public school district, visit Federal Student Aid's [application volume reports webpage](#).

"Many colleges and states, including Wisconsin, use the FAFSA® to determine both federal aid and eligibility for need-based state financial aid programs," said HEAB Executive Secretary Connie Hutchison. "Wisconsin students and families should complete the FAFSA® for the 2022-2023 school year as soon as possible because many need-based financial aid programs are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis," she added.

In Wisconsin, [College Goal Wisconsin](#), an all-volunteer program that includes the commitment and support of many state agencies, businesses, secondary schools, colleges, and universities, helps students and families with the timely completion of the FAFSA®. College Goal Wisconsin is offering several free in-person and virtual events throughout the months of October and November. View the event dates and register to attend [here](#).

For more information about Wisconsin's student financial aid, including grant, scholarship, and loan programs, tuition reciprocity agreements, and tuition capitation contracts, visit [HEAB's website](#). For more information about college

affordability and the Wisconsin 529 College Savings Program, visit [DFI's website](#).

Students and families with questions about the FAFSA[®] can [contact Federal Student Aid](#) or the [Federal Student Aid Information Center \(FSAIC\)](#), which provides support on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education. FSAIC is available at 1-800-433-3243, or 1-800-730-8913 for applicants who are hearing-impaired.

For more FAFSA[®] tips, follow Federal Student Aid on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).