

California

Non-SSN Contributor Tip Sheet



The FAFSA is experiencing several issues for contributors without SSNs. Should the student wait to start the FAFSA?

CSAC recommends that students begin the FAFSA and complete the student section as soon as possible. The most important thing is to get the application started, and once the student has completed and submitted their section, advise them to save their confirmation email.

On March 12, 2024, Federal Student Aid (FSA) announced the issue that prevented contributors without a Social Security Number (SSN) from starting or accessing the FAFSA has been resolved.

However, at this time, contributors without SSNs must manually enter their financial information. If they filed taxes, they need a copy of their 2022 tax return for reference. Also, the personally identifiable information (PII) entered on the contributor invitation must match exactly with the PII entered on the contributor's StudentAid.gov account. For example, "Street" in the invitation and "St." in the StudentAid.gov account could cause a mismatch error.

Student's contributor does not have an SSN and needs to create a [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) account.

The contributor without an SSN can make a StudentAid.gov account to contribute to the student's FAFSA. They may be asked to verify their identity through a series of questions. In case these questions do not appear, or the contributor is unable to answer the questions correctly, they will be instructed on the next steps to verify their identity.

Should the contributor use their Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or work-authorized Social Security Number to create a StudentAid.gov account?

CSAC has been advised that a contributor can enter their DACA/work-authorized SSN when creating their StudentAid.gov account. However, an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) should **not** be used when creating a StudentAid.gov account.

Student's contributor does not have an SSN and has started the StudentAid.gov account setup process. Now FSA is requiring identity verification. What are the contributor's next steps?

- ▶ FSA will automatically assign the contributor a case number. Once the case number is created, FSA will send a verification email in their preferred language (English or Spanish), including their case number and instructions on submitting identity verification documentation.
- ▶ The contributor will be asked to submit an Attestation Form (available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) with copies of unexpired acceptable documentation. The completed form and documentation can be emailed to IDVerification@ed.gov.
- ▶ Contributors should NOT submit an Attestation Form or documentation to FSA until they have a case number; we have been advised that documents without a case number will not be processed.

The student's contributor does not have an SSN and was able to create a StudentAid.gov account. Then, the student received an error message when inviting their contributor due to the demographic matching error. What can the student and their contributor do?

On April 4, 2024, FSA announced that a known issue with contributor invitations has been resolved. If the student receives an error message when attempting to invite their contributor, the student should log out of StudentAid.gov and try again the next day. At that time, the student will have an opportunity to invite their contributor again. The student should ensure that ALL information on the invitation matches the contributor's StudentAid.gov account **exactly**. If the invitation is still not going through, the student can delete their in-progress FAFSA, the parent can start a FAFSA as a parent, and invite the student to the application.

CSAC has started the California Non-SSN Contributor Follow-Up Email List to provide up-to-date information regarding this issue and other related topics. Sign up [here](#).



The student's contributor without an SSN has submitted their attestation form and documents and is waiting for their identity verification to be completed. What can the student do while they wait?

On April 9, 2024, CSAC opened the **California Dream Act Application (CADAA)** for first-time FAFSA filers struggling to complete the FAFSA due to having a contributor without an SSN.

Opening the CADAA to FAFSA-eligible first-time applicants will allow them to complete an application prior to the May 2, 2024, state priority deadline for Cal Grant and Middle Class Scholarship. However, CSAC recommends that these students complete the FAFSA once the outstanding issues are resolved to maximize their eligibility for all forms of financial aid. Completing a CADAA now will allow the student to lock in a submission date and obtain a Student Aid Index (SAI) for estimated financial aid purposes.



What if the student is not a new FAFSA filer, and cannot complete a CADAA?

For students who are unable to complete a 2024-25 FAFSA and want to apply through the CADAA, CSAC is working towards a solution to allow students to submit this application. If a previous FAFSA filer attempts to create a CADAA account, we will capture their information so we may follow

up through an email or a phone call once this application is available for them to submit.

On February 20, 2024, FSA released steps for a student with a contributor without an SSN to submit an "Incomplete FAFSA", only if they have a critical deadline to meet. If needed, the student can complete their section of the FAFSA and then on the submission page, students will click on the link to "Provide Parent Information Manually." The student will provide the parent tax information and submit an "Incomplete FAFSA" that will lock in a submission date to meet the deadline.

However, their contributor will still need to login to provide consent to the IRS Direct Data Exchange and sign the FAFSA to complete the application after their StudentAid.gov account has been verified. Until contributors return to the application, the FAFSA will not generate the information needed so that a student can be considered for financial aid. Communications will be sent to students regarding completion of the application.

Should the student fill out a paper FAFSA?

The paper FAFSA is not recommended. FSA is prioritizing processing the online FAFSAs. CSAC recommends that the student start an online FAFSA first to avoid processing delays.

Please see the FAQs about the paper FAFSA [here](#).



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