

# Who Is a FAFSA Contributor Starting With the 2024-25 FAFSA?

This guidance is specific to the 2024-25 award year and later.

A contributor is anyone who is asked to provide information on an applicant's FAFSA including:

- The student;
- The student's spouse (if applicable);
- A biological or adoptive parent; or
- The spouse of the remarried parent who is on the FAFSA--the stepparent.

The new FAFSA is student driven, so that means the student's answers on their section will determine who will be a contributor (in addition to the student). Students will need the contributor's name, date of birth, Social Security Number (SSN), and email address to invite them to complete the required portion of the FAFSA. Contributors will need to provide personal and financial information on their section of the FAFSA.

All contributors are required to have an FSA ID and to provide consent to have their federal tax information (FTI) transferred from the IRS, have their tax data used to determine the student's eligibility for aid, and allow the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to share their tax information with institutions and state higher education agencies for the administration of Title IV aid. Consent is provided once for the award year and cannot be revoked in that award year. This consent is necessary even if the contributor does not have an SSN, did not file taxes, or filed taxes in another country.

Contributors cannot avoid providing consent by manually entering FTI on the FAFSA. If a student or spouse (if applicable) contributor does not provide consent, they will not be eligible for any Title IV aid. If a parent contributor refuses to provide consent, the student will be given the opportunity to indicate they would like to receive only a Direct Unsubsidized Loan. NASFAA remains unclear as to whether this means both parents who are contributors must decline consent for the student to receive the unsubsidized loan; we will update this Q&A when we have an answer from ED.

If a dependent student's parents are unmarried and living together, both parents will be contributors, need separate FSA IDs, and need to provide consent. Dependent student's parents who filed their U.S. income tax return as Married Filing Jointly only require one parent contributor to complete the FAFSA. If the student's parents filed separately, both parents will be considered contributors and therefore need separate FSA IDs and both must provide consent. The same is true for the independent student. If an independent student is married and filed separately, both individuals are contributors, must have FSA IDs, and must provide consent in order for the student to be eligible for Title IV aid.