

STETSON UNIVERSITY

FAFSA TIPS AND RESOURCES

What is the FAFSA?

The FAFSA is the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*. You complete the FAFSA every year to apply for federal student aid such as loans, grants and work-study.

When should I file the FAFSA?

The FAFSA opens on October 1. It's best to submit the FAFSA as soon as possible, as some aid is awarded on a first-come basis. The priority deadline for continuing students is January 15.

How do I complete the FAFSA?

Visit studentaid.gov (recommended) or download the myStudentAid Mobile App and login using your FSA ID. In the school section, use Stetson's Code: **001531**. Once you have completed all of the sections, don't forget to sign and submit the FAFSA with your FSA ID.

Note: If using the myStudentAid App, **the digital mobile signature is not valid**. You will still need to sign electronically with your FSA ID and submit.

What do I need to complete the FAFSA?

Gather your documents ahead of time. Some items you will need are FSA ID, social security number and/or alien registration number, federal tax information, records of untaxed income, cash/checking/saving account balances and investment information.

What is an FSA ID and how do I create one?

An FSA ID gives you access to Federal Student Aid's online systems and serves as your legal signature for the FAFSA. You may register for an FSA ID at fsaid.ed.gov.

How long does it take to fill out the FAFSA?

It takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. You can save your work and return to finish later if needed.

What is the IRS Data Retrieval Tool?

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) is used to automatically transfer tax information into the FAFSA. We recommend using the DRT in the Financial Information section for the most efficient processing. The DRT may not work for some families, such as those who filed an amended tax return, do not have a SSN or are married but filed taxes separately.

What are some common mistakes to avoid?

Mistakes delay the processing of your FAFSA. Some common mistakes are leaving blank fields, using the wrong SSN or birthdate, reporting incorrect marital status or financial information, failing to register with Selective Service or forgetting to sign. You can make corrections to your FAFSA by logging back in and submitting changes.

I've been selected for Verification. What does this mean?

Federal verification is a process mandated by the U.S. Department of Education to ensure the accuracy of data submitted by FAFSA applicants. Approximately 30% of applicants are selected randomly. If selected, you will receive an email from our office and verification documents will be listed on your My.Stetson.Edu Onestop and Student Requirements checklists. More information at www.stetson.edu/federal-verification.

How can I find help with my FAFSA or Verification?

Contact FAFSA at 1-800-433-3243 or use the email form or live chat at www.studentaid.gov. For help with your financial aid or the financial aid process, contact the Office of Student Financial Planning at 386-822-7120, finaid@stetson.edu, or on the second floor of the Welcome Center on campus.