



FAFSA Completion Tips for Immigrant Families

The student needs to have a **FSA ID** (Federal Student Aid Identification) before starting the **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Go to **fsaid.ed.gov** to get started. If one of the parents has a social security number, then this parent should also get a FSA ID. Be sure to have paper and pencil to write down the user name and password for each FSA ID and keep them in a safe, secure place. The FSA ID you set up will be required each year you complete a FAFSA.

If neither parent has a social security number, he/she will not be able to get the FSA ID. However, there is a solution. See bullets below:

- The student should click on Start My FAFSA and begin to answer the questions. Make sure to enter student information into the student part of the FAFSA and parent information into the parent part. This is a common error.
- If neither parent has a social security number, they will need to enter 000-00-0000 in the SSN box on the FAFSA. You will get a message this is an error, however, this is the correct way to proceed. Don't give up -- scroll down to the bottom of the page and click the box that says "Confirm Error." You may have to click twice for two parents, but then you can continue to the next section.
- Parents sometimes try to use their ITIN numbers instead of 000-00-0000. **Do not use the ITIN number!** The ITIN always begins with a 9 and will appear to be a valid social security number, but it is **not**. **ITIN numbers will not work on the FAFSA; use 000-00-0000 instead.**

If parents do not have social security numbers, they will not be able to use the DRT (Data Retrieval Tool) shown on the FAFSA. (The DRT is a feature that directly reaches into a person's income tax data at the IRS and transfers the information directly to the FAFSA. Since this is a direct data transfer, there are fewer human errors.)

Parents who use 000-00-0000 must manually enter the data directly from the paper copy of the income tax return filed for 2016. People seem to need a lot of help with this section. If you're at a FAFSA event, ask questions or call CFNC toll-free at 866.866.CFNC (2362).

When you reach the signature part of the FAFSA, students and parents with FSA ID will simply use it to sign the FAFSA.

Parents who use 000-00-0000 have the option to mail an ink-on-paper signature. Here's what they need to do:

- To find the parent signature sections, the parents should scroll down below where the student has just signed the FAFSA with his/her own FSA ID. In this section, the parent should click the box that says "I agree" and then click "Print This Page". After the page is printed, the parent should sign the page on the line, write in the date and immediately send **only this page** to Federal Student Aid Programs, P.O. Box 7654, London, KY 40742-7654. **Make sure you do not have a pop up blocker on. This is important.**
- It is not necessary to send the entire FAFSA in paper form, *only the signature page*. Send the signature to KY as soon as possible because it takes about 3 weeks to process it. Your FAFSA will be sitting there, idle, until the signature is matched up. You'll notice the bar code on the signature page, and this will be scanned when it arrives in London, KY.

Questions? Call CFNC toll-free at 866.866.CFNC (2362)
Monday – Thursday, 8 am – 8 pm and Friday, 8 am – 5 pm
En Español: 919.799.3779