**How do I fill out the FAFSA if I am a permanent resident or citizen, but a parent or both parents are undocumented?**

*Author: Katia Chapman. Finger Lakes Community College. Version September 2018.*

*Katia.chapman@flcc.edu*

Note: This guide is meant to accompany Financial Aid/ FAFSA worksheets and does not define all terms.

So long as you have legal status[[1]](#footnote-1), you are eligible to apply for state and federal aid regardless of the status of your parent(s).

Financial Aid officers protect your information. There is no need to be concerned about applying for Financial Aid or asking questions to offices because personal details are protected under federal privacy law (FERPA).

Federal aid and state aid include many types of aid, including grants, work study, and loans. Almost all of these forms of aid are in the name of the student, not the parents, which is why their status does not affect the award. The exception is the Parent PLUS loan program. Undocumented parents are ineligible to apply. However, if this is the case, you may receive a larger unsubsidized Direct Loan like independent students. Contact your college or university’s Financial Aid office.

*Do not worry if this above paragraph is confusing! You do not need to make loan decisions until your FAFSA is complete and you are deciding what aid to accept from your college or university’s award letter.*

Which questions on the FAFSA are often confusing for mixed status families?

*Am I an independent or dependent student?* Same rules apply as for citizen parents. If you live with your parent(s), in most cases you are a dependent student regardless of their immigration status. Contact your Financial Aid Office to discuss special circumstances or questions.

*State of legal residence*: On the FAFSA, this refers to where you (and your parents in their section) live or have lived, not your immigration status.

*Parent Information*:

1. Social Security number (SSN): Enter all zeros—000-00-0000. If your parent(s) use an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) do not place the ITIN in place of a Social Security number.
2. If your parents file taxes with ITIN, select “Already Completed” or “Will Complete” from the drop down. If not, select “Not going to file.”
3. Either way, you are unable to use the IRS retrieval tool for your parents without a social for them. Manually enter the information from their tax documents (if ITIN) or from pay stubs or other documents that show income.
4. Signature page: You can sign with your FSA ID, but your parents can not create a PIN number and electronically sign without a SSN. Therefore, undocumented parents must print, sign, and mail in the signature page. There is a bar code on the signature page that will match your parent’s signature to your specific application. This means your FAFSA will take a few weeks longer to process, so plan ahead of deadlines.
	1. At FLCC, if you included us in your list of schools on the FAFSA, you can also bring the signature page directly to our Financial Aid Office so we can start processing your award letter faster.
5. Sometimes an error comes up when you try to submit the application with zeros for both parents. Keep exiting the error and clicking Submit, and eventually it will go through. You only need to print and send the signature page.
6. The colleges and universities to which you send the FAFSA will usually ask for you to **Verify** the information you manually typed after you have successfully submitted the FAFSA before they package a financial aid award letter. Keep copies of the tax documents, pay stubs, letters from employers, or bank account information you used to fill out the FAFSA to present to the Financial Aid Office.

**Tip**: You can file the FAFSA with your parent in Spanish! Visit fafsa.gov/es\_ES

Sources

www.unitedwedream.org

studentaid.ed.gov

1. Have DACA, TPS, or a pending asylum case? If you have a temporary SSN for work purposes only, you can still file a FAFSA with this number. You will not be able to receive federal aid or state aid in NY, however, some colleges and scholarships still find the Student Air Report useful when deciding how to award their scholarships. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)