

# How to Troubleshoot Common FAFSA Scenarios



## The FAFSA Fiasco

- 57 FAFSA problems have affected the ability of millions of applicants to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.
- At least 18 FAFSA problems remain unresolved, but most with official workarounds.
- Applicants have faced challenges creating and using an FSA ID and challenges filing the FAFSA. New process for linking applicants and contributors coming soon.

## Be Sure Everybody Submits the FAFSA

- Sometimes the FAFSA will be shown as “In Progress” to contributors who have already signed and submitted their part of the form.
- Usually this is because the student or contributor completed the FAFSA but did not sign and submit it.
- They need to sign and submit the form. Then the status will change for everybody.

## Inability to Sign the FAFSA

- On the Review Form page, the “Signature” section will be shown in gray to indicate that the FAFSA still needs to be signed.
- This is confusing for some applicants and contributors, who may report that the ability to sign the form is grayed out for them.
- Instead, they need to scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the “Continue” button to get to the next page, which is the Signature page. They will be able to sign the FAFSA on this page.

## Missing Information When Making a Correction

- Sometimes, when you try to make a correction on the FAFSA, some previously provided information (e.g., assets, country, etc.) may be missing.
- Enter this information again. And again, and again, as many times as necessary.

## Problems Accessing Particular Page on FAFSA

- If the applicant or contributor is unable to access a particular page on the FAFSA, try going to the page that comes afterward.
- Then click on the “Previous” button until they reach the page they seek.

## Problems After a Financial Aid Appeal

- Sometimes, the My Activity section of the StudentAid.gov dashboard will show “Action Required” after the college financial aid administrator implements an adjustment in response to a financial aid appeal.
- But, when the applicant logs in, there will be nothing for them to do.
- The applicant should check the FAFSA Submission Summary to see if any actions are required, and contact the college’s financial aid administrator.

## Missing SAI on FAFSA Submission Summary

- If the Student Aid Index (SAI) does not appear on the FAFSA Submission Summary, check whether family size information is missing from the FAFSA.
- The parent should initiate a correction to enter the family size information manually.
- In the Financial section, answer “Yes” to the question “Has your family size changed since you last filed your taxes?” (even if it hasn’t changed), enter the family size number manually and submit the correction.

## Other Tips

- If you can’t reach the 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) hotline, try calling first thing in the morning or on Wednesdays, when call volume is lowest.
- Wait a day or two. Sometimes, waiting until the next day will work if the FAFSA fixed the problem in the interim.
- Complete the FAFSA in one sitting without interruption. Do not stop filing in the middle of the FAFSA. If you stop in the middle, you may leave the FAFSA in an inconsistent state that prevents you from finishing it later.
- Print or save a copy of the Completion page, which lists the date your FAFSA was filed. This will come in handy if subsequent changes, such as corrections, change the submission date for the form.
- File an appeal if income has decreased from the prior year or you lost your job, or there’s something unusual about your family financial circumstances. Contact the college financial aid office to ask about how to appeal for more financial aid.
- If nothing else works, delete the incomplete FAFSA and try again. Sometimes, deleting the FAFSA and starting over can fix problems.