

Key Points to Know About FAFSA Data Security

What FAFSA collects: FAFSA asks for students' personal information, including their name, birthdate, social security number (SSN) and mailing address. FAFSA collects similar information from students' "contributors," such as their parents (if they are dependents) or spouses (if they are married). Contributors do not need to provide an SSN to complete their portion of the FAFSA. On the online form, contributors will check off a box saying, "I do not have an SSN." On the paper FAFSA, contributors should enter zeroes in the SSN field.

How FAFSA information is protected: FAFSA data is protected by laws like the [Privacy Act of 1974](#) and the [Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#). These laws help ensure that FAFSA information is used to determine if a student is eligible for financial aid and govern institutions' use of FAFSA data. You can read more about them [here](#). The paper FAFSA is protected by the same policies that apply to the online FAFSA and is neither more nor less secure.

Concerns about future FAFSA data use: While the information provided on the FAFSA has not been used for immigration purposes in the past, there is a possibility that future administrations could attempt to use this data for immigration enforcement. As far as we know, a parent or other contributor has not been targeted as a result of filing a FAFSA. Currently, we don't have any specific information about proposed or actual plans to do this, but we'll keep you updated if anything changes.

Which students are most at risk: If a student has filled out the FAFSA in the past, the Department already has access to the PII they submitted with their past application(s). Continuing students who filled out the FAFSA in prior years can go ahead and renew their applications for aid if they choose. In addition, students whose parents or siblings filed a FAFSA should be aware that some family information may already be in Departmental databases. The information in [this guide](#) is most relevant to first-time FAFSA filers whose family members have not filed a FAFSA in the past.

