

HIFE CPP REQUIREMENTS:

- ◆ Must have a minimum of 2.5 GPA
- ◆ Must attend an accredited institution
- ◆ Must be willing to complete the assigned homework provided by the HIFE Coach

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## What To Do When You Receive A Student Aid Report

As soon as possible after receiving your SAR, you should review it to make sure your financial information is correct.

After you submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form to apply for federal aid as well as other types of financial aid money for college, you will receive your Student Aid Report (SAR). If you provided an e-mail address, the SAR will be sent to you via e-mail a few days after your FAFSA has been processed. If you did not provide an email address, you'll receive your SAR by mail a few weeks after your report has been processed.

Because the information in your SAR will be used to help determine your college aid eligibility, it's important for you to understand how to read the report and make any necessary changes. Errors on your SAR could mean you receive less college money to help pay for

school, which could prevent you from getting your college degree at your top school.

*Scholarships and grants are considered "gift aid," in other words, money you don't have to pay back, so be sure to accept that before any college loans, which do need to be paid back.*

### What Is Included in a Student Aid Report (SAR)?

The SAR summarizes the financial aid information you gave on your FAFSA. Your SAR will inform you whether you are eligible for a Federal Pell Grant, as well as for other federal grants, college loans or work-study programs. It will also state whether your FAFSA form has been selected for verification. Each year, some FAFSA forms are selected for this process, in which your school confirms that the information on your FAFSA is accurate. If your FAFSA is selected for verification, your school may contact you to

request documentation supporting what you listed on your form.

The SAR will also inform you if you are required to provide additional information to be eligible for federal aid. If no further information is needed from you, your SAR will include your expected family contribution (EFC), the amount of college money you are expected to contribute toward your college education. The Department of Education, as well as colleges and universities, will use your EFC as they determine whether you are eligible for federal aid.

If more information is needed from you, your SAR will not include your EFC. Instead, the financial aid office at your school will contact you to answer all outstanding questions.

Source: *Campus Explorer*

## Message From The Dean - Bob Fulcomer

By now, you should have completed all of your FAFSA and admissions applications for the school(s) you have selected. Now is the time for you to make sure you gather all of your

supporting documents in preparation for the SAR and award letter(s) that you will be receiving shortly. It normally takes around 4 to 6 weeks to get any response back once you

have submitted your FAFSA. Be sure to follow up with each school if you don't hear back from them after the allotted time. Keep your HIFE Coach informed of all correspondence.

## 10 FAFSA Mistakes That Affect Financial Aid



A mistake on your FAFSA can delay the processing of your application for financial aid! About 30% of all FAFSAs were selected for verification, a process intended to identify and correct common errors. Some colleges voluntarily required 100% of FAFSAs to undergo verification. If your FAFSA is verified and contains errors, it can cost you.

To avoid these errors, get started early and use the online version of the FAFSA. The online FAFSA has built-in “edit checks” that can catch and prevent many errors. If you use a printed version of the FAFSA, be sure to proofread your application before you submit it.

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool can be used to copy the answers to some FAFSA questions directly from your federal income tax return. If you do not modify those answers, those questions will not be subject to verification. This will reduce the likelihood that your FAFSA will be selected for verification, saving you time and hassle.

Do not, however, wait until you file your federal income tax returns to file the FAFSA. Some states have very early deadlines for state grants, and some states award their grants on a first-come, first-served basis.

Use the **Pre-Application Worksheet** to insure you’ve gathered all the necessary information. The worksheet is updated every year, so if this year isn’t available yet, keep checking until it is.

### Avoid the most common mistakes:

1. The most frequent mistake made on the printed form is leaving a field blank. If the answer is zero or the question does not apply to you, write in a zero. If you leave a question blank, the processor will assume that you forgot to answer.
2. Use the 1040 federal tax return for income reporting and reporting taxes paid. If you use your W-2 and 1099 forms, compare them with the previous year’s income tax return to make sure you did not overlook any source of income, such as interest and dividends.
3. Don’t forget to report all the required sources of untaxed income. These include Social Security, child support and workers compensation/disability income.
4. Report your correct marital status. If you plan to file as a married student, you must be married on or before the date that you sign your FAFSA.
5. If your parents are divorced, your stepparent’s financial information must be reported in addition to the financial information for your custodial parent.
6. Include yourself in the household size. Even if you didn’t live there during the previous year, you should always include yourself as part of your parent’s household.
7. Don’t forget to sign the application. If you’re filing as a dependent, both you and your parents must sign. If you file online, you and your parents can sign the form electronically using your PIN numbers.
8. Remember to file on time. Priority for programs with limited funds is often given to students who file the FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible.
9. As with all forms and applications, make sure you read the instructions and questions carefully. If you’re unclear about a question or are having trouble filling out the FAFSA, check the FAQ section on the FAFSA website, or call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).
10. On the paper form, follow instructions with regard to using a pen or pencil. Make sure to fill it out right the first time, and you’ll have your financial aid award letter in no time.

Source: *Mike Pugh, Fastweb March 2014*

## Filing Time - FAFSA Checklist

### STUDENTS

You must complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to apply for federal student aid – that's the government money for college or career school. Financial aid offices use information from the FAFSA to determine whether you are eligible to receive federal grants, loans, or work-study funds. States and schools also use the information from the FAFSA to determine whether you qualify for additional aid. In fact, some schools won't consider a student for the school's merit scholarships until the student has submitted a FAFSA. So be sure to fill out a FAFSA even if you think you won't qualify for federal aid.

### DEADLINES

If you want to be considered for aid from your state or college, you must meet its FAFSA deadline. If you plan to go to college in the fall, your state financial aid deadline is probably going to be between March and May; and your college financial aid deadline may be as early as February. The FAFSA site at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) lists many state deadlines and tells you how to find yours if it's not listed. For a college's FAFSA deadline, check the school's website or contact its financial aid office.

### TO DO:

( ) Get free information and

help from your school counselor, the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend, or the U.S. Department of Education at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) or 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243). Free help is available any time during the application process.

( ) Optional: If you think the Social Security Administration might have the wrong name or date of birth for you in its records, go to [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) to find out how to correct any errors. Your information must be correct before your FAFSA can be processed.

( ) Collect the documents needed to apply. If you've already filed your taxes, you may be able to have the FAFSA automatically retrieve information from your tax return. Tax return not completed at the time you apply? Estimate the tax information, apply, and finalize information later. Here are some items you might need:

- ◆ Your Social Security number and your parents' Social Security numbers if you are providing parent information
- ◆ Your Alien Registration Number if you are not a U.S. citizen
- ◆ Information on savings, investments, and business assets for yourself (and for your parents if you are providing parent information)

( ) Submit the FAFSA in time to meet school and state aid deadlines. Here are the ways you can complete the FAFSA:

- ◆ Apply online (the fastest and easiest way) by going to [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov).
- ◆ Download a PDF version of the FAFSA at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Fill out the PDF and mail it to the address on the form.
- ◆ Ask the financial aid staff at the college you plan to attend whether you may fill out the FAFSA with their help and have them submit it for you. Visit [www.edpubs.gov](http://www.edpubs.gov) to order a paper FAFSA.

( ) Review your Student Aid Report (SAR) – the result of your FAFSA. You will receive your SAR by email or by mail. If necessary, make changes or corrections and submit your information for reprocessing. Your complete, correct SAR will contain your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) – the index number used by colleges to determine how much federal student aid you can receive. If you do not receive your SAR within three weeks of submitting your FAFSA, go to [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) and log in to check the status of your FAFSA, or you may call 1-800-4-FED-AID.

( ) Your school might request additional information from you. Be sure to respond by any deadlines, or you might not receive federal student aid.



# HIFE



## COLLEGE PLANNING PROGRAM



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Fax: 303-369-3900  
Email: hifecpp@hife-usa.org

Check us out on the web:  
[www.hife-usa.org](http://www.hife-usa.org)

### Filing Time - FAFSA Checklist (cont.)

( ) All applicants: Contact the financial aid office if you have any questions about the aid being offered.

( ) First-time applicants: Review award letters from schools to compare amounts and types of aid being offered. Decide which school to attend based on a combination of (a) how well the school suits your needs and (b) its affordability after all aid is taken into account.

( ) Keep in touch with the school you've chosen to find out when tuition and fees are due, whether your financial aid will cover those expenses completely, and how much (if any) extra financial aid will

come directly to you once your tuition and fees are paid.

( ) Pay special attention to letters or emails from schools, and contact the financial aid office if you do not understand what the school is offering you.

( ) Follow all directions on the FAFSA and on any communications from your school.

#### PARENTS

#### TO DO:

( ) File taxes as early as possible, but don't delay the FAFSA due to your taxes not being done. It's okay to

estimate your financial information on the FAFSA; you just need to finalize it later

( ) Complete the "Students: To Do" list with your child. If possible, file the FAFSA online - it's much faster and easier, and your information is safe because it's encrypted (i.e., we use a mathematical formula to scramble the data).

( ) Examine the bill from the school your child chooses and make sure you understand all the fees and how they will be paid (e.g., through scholarships, student loans, etc.).

Source: *Department of Education*

### Coach's Corner: Comments From Article On "Filing Time - FAFSA Checklist"

Here are a few things you need to do (in addition to the FAFSA Checklist) to assist your HIFE Coach in helping you apply to your desired college or university:

- ◆ Work with your assigned HIFE Coach to get guidance in completing the FAFSA application.
- ◆ Narrow your college selection to around 5 to 10 schools that you would like to attend.
- ◆ Once you have completed your FAFSA application, have your

Coach review the application for any possible mistakes that you have overlooked.

- ◆ Ask your HIFE Coach to help you monitor the different deadline dates for each school that you apply to.
- ◆ Provide your HIFE Coach a copy of the Student Aid Report as soon as you have received it from your school.
- ◆ Provide your HIFE Coach with your award letter(s). Remember: you do not

have to accept the award if you do not feel that the amount is adequate. Your HIFE Coach can assist you in the reconsideration or appeals process.

- ◆ Review with your HIFE Coach what your best options are before you decide with your final selection.
- ◆ Always ask your HIFE Coach for help ahead of time before you make a final decision.