



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FAFSA Now Available for Tennessee Students, Tennessee Promise FAFSA  
Deadline Moved to May 15**

**Nashville, TN** – January 8, 2024 – The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is now available for Tennessee students, including recent changes to make it easier than ever to apply for financial aid to support a college education.

While the FAFSA typically launches in October on StudentAid.gov, this year the launch was delayed by the U.S. Department of Education due to program updates to improve online functionality. The Tennessee Promise FAFSA deadline has officially moved to May 15, 2024 to accommodate the late opening and to allow students extra time to complete the form.

“The FAFSA is now available for all Tennesseans” said James Snider, Director of Tennessee Promise at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. “Now is the time to finalize your plan to pursue education after high school. We are hopeful that we will continue to lead the nation in our FAFSA Completion efforts.”

An average of 350,000 Tennesseans complete the FAFSA each year. This crucial form is used to determine state and federal grants eligibility, as well as a requirement for the Tennessee Promise scholarship.

The revised FAFSA will be shorter for some families, with certain information automatically filled in based on tax returns along with changes in the formulas used for aid calculations. However, the delay in launching the FAFSA means that students can expect to receive their loan and scholarship packages later than usual, reducing the time available for evaluating competing offers before making enrollment decisions.

Here are some key takeaways for Tennessee students:

*What's new this year?*

- The updated FAFSA is expected to be shorter for some individuals, with the U.S. Department of Education predicting that some may need to answer as few as 18 questions, taking less than 10 minutes.

- Changes may require students to report information for spouses or stepparents not considered in previous years.
- The elimination of the "sibling discount" in aid calculations may affect some families negatively, but others may see an increase in aid. The U.S. Department of Education estimates that an additional 610,000 students from low-income families nationwide will be eligible for federal Pell Grants.

*How can students prepare?*

- To complete the FAFSA, students and contributors to their family income, including parents and spouses, should create online accounts at StudentAid.gov. Creating these accounts in advance is recommended to save time before completing the FAFSA.
- Required information includes names, dates of birth, email addresses, and Social Security numbers for all parties filling out the FAFSA. Tax information should transfer automatically from the IRS with family consent; however, having tax returns, child support records, and current balances for cash, savings, and checking accounts ready is advisable. Families should also know the net worth of their investments and businesses.
- A student starting classes in the fall of 2024 will fill out the **2024-2025** FAFSA form although aid calculations will be based on tax filings from 2022.
- Families are cautioned to only submit the FAFSA through the official government website (StudentAid.gov) and never pay to submit the free form.

*How will students know what aid they'll get?*

- Students can share their information with up to 20 colleges and trade schools, an increase from previous years. Early submission is encouraged, as some schools have priority deadlines for grants and scholarships. The deadline to remain eligible for the Tennessee Promise scholarship is May 15, 2024.
- After completing the FAFSA, students should expect communication from the schools they've applied to. However, due to late opening this year, any communications from campuses will be delayed until early February at the earliest. Families are warned against accepting unexpected offers of financial aid, as they could be scams. The U.S. Department of Education advises verifying the legitimacy of offers by checking with the school's financial aid office when in doubt.