

FAFSA TIPS FOR UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH WITHOUT STABLE HOUSING

Questions on the 2009-2010 FAFSA which may cause difficulty for youth who are, or have been, homeless are listed below. Question **numbers** refer to the paper FAFSA. **Steps** refer to the FAFSA itself.

“Unaccompanied” means you are not living in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

“Homeless” means lacking fixed, regular, and adequate housing, including living in shelters, motels, cars, and temporarily with other people because you have nowhere else to go.

<p>Question #4 FAFSA Step 1 Your permanent mailing address</p>	<p>Q: I don't have a permanent mailing address because I don't have a stable home. What address should I use? A: Use an address where you will be able to receive mail reliably. The address of your school or a trusted mentor or family member might be appropriate.</p>
<p>Question #33 FAFSA Step 2 “For 2008, have you (the student) completed your IRS income tax return or another tax return listed in question 34?”</p>	<p>Q: I did not file a tax return, and I am not sure if I was required to file. How can I get information about whether I was required to file a tax return and how I can file now, if necessary? A: You must consult the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules to determine your obligation to file a tax return. IRS information is available at http://www.irs.gov/. For the FAFSA, you should indicate whether you have filed or intend to file and continue to the following questions, as indicated.</p>
<p>Question #47i FAFSA Step 2 Welfare benefits, TANF</p>	<p>Q: My parent or another caretaker gets TANF or welfare benefits for me. Is this my income? A: No. These benefits are income for the person receiving them. Do not include as part of your income any TANF or welfare benefits received by another person even if they are designated for your support or care. Also, you should not include these benefits when answering Questions 98-102.</p>
<p>FAFSA Step 3</p>	<p>Answer all the questions in Step 3 to the best of your knowledge.</p>
<p>Question #56 FAFSA Step 3 “As of today, are you an emancipated minor as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?”</p>	<p>Q: I was emancipated at age 15 but lived with my aunt and uncle during my last semester of high school. How should I complete the FAFSA? A: Check “Yes” and complete the FAFSA as an independent student if you have a copy of a court order that you are an emancipated minor. The court must be located in your state of legal residence. If you do not have such a court order, you should check “No” for this question. However, you should review Questions 58-60 carefully, to determine if you qualify as an unaccompanied youth who is homeless or at risk of homelessness.</p>
<p>Question #57 FAFSA Step 3 “As of today, are you in legal guardianship as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?”</p>	<p>Q: I have been living with a family member/friend who provides for some of my financial needs, but that person has not been appointed my legal guardian by a court. How should I complete the FAFSA? A: A caregiver or other person with whom you are living is only considered a legal guardian if a court in your state of legal residence has established guardianship. You should check “Yes” if you have a copy of a court order indicating that legal guardianship was established. If you are living with a caregiver, but that caregiver is not your legal guardian as determined by a court in your state of legal residence, you should check “No” for this question. However, you should review Questions 58-60 carefully, to determine if you qualify as an unaccompanied youth who is homeless.</p>
<p>Question #58 FAFSA Step 3 “At any time on or after July 1, 2008, did your high school or</p>	<p>Q: I ran away from home during my senior year in high school and am staying temporarily with a friend. Am I considered an independent student? A: You are considered an independent student if you received a determination any time on or after July 1, 2008, that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless, or an unaccompanied youth providing your own living</p>

<p>school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?"</p>	<p>expenses who is at risk of being homeless. The financial aid administrator at your college may require you to provide a copy of the determination.</p> <p>If you do not have a determination but you believe you are/were an unaccompanied youth who is homeless or an unaccompanied youth providing your own living expenses who is at risk of being homeless, contact your high school counselor, school district McKinney-Vento homeless liaison, school's financial aid office, or the National Center for Homeless Education at 1-800-308-2145 for assistance. More information and a template homelessness determination form are also available at www.naehcy.org/dl/uy_higher_ed.doc.</p>
<p>Question #59 FAFSA Step 3 "At any time on or after July 1, 2008, did the director of an emergency shelter program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?"</p>	<p>Q: I stayed in a shelter last year. How do I complete the FAFSA? A: Check "Yes" if you received a determination any time on or after July 1, 2008, that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless, or an unaccompanied youth providing your own living expenses who is at risk of being homeless. The financial aid administrator at your college may require you to provide a copy of the determination or other documentation.</p> <p>If you do not have a determination but you believe you are/were an unaccompanied youth who is homeless or an unaccompanied youth providing your own living expenses who is at risk of being homeless, contact your high school counselor, school district McKinney-Vento homeless liaison, school's financial aid office, or the National Center for Homeless Education at 1-800-308-2145 for assistance. More information and a template homelessness determination form are also available at www.naehcy.org/dl/uy_higher_ed.doc.</p>
<p>Question #60 FAFSA Step 3 "At any time on or after July 1, 2008, did the director of a runaway or homeless youth (RHYA) basic center or transitional living program determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?"</p>	<p>Q: I am living in a transitional housing program. Am I an independent student? A: Check "Yes" if you received a determination any time on or after July 1, 2008, that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless, or an unaccompanied youth providing your own living expenses who is at risk of being homeless. The financial aid administrator at your college may require you to provide a copy of the determination or other documentation.</p> <p>If you do not have a determination but you believe you are/were an unaccompanied youth who is homeless or an unaccompanied youth providing your own living expenses who is at risk of being homeless, contact your high school counselor, school district McKinney-Vento homeless liaison, school's financial aid office, or the National Center for Homeless Education at 1-800-308-2145 for assistance. More information and a template homelessness determination form are also available at www.naehcy.org/dl/uy_higher_ed.doc.</p>
<p>FAFSA Step 4</p>	<p>If you (the student) answered "Yes" to any question in Step 3, skip Step 4 and go directly to Step 5 on page 10.</p>
<p>Question #96 FAFSA Step 5 "How many people are in your household?"</p>	<p>Q: I am staying with a friend's family. Are they part of my "household"? A: No. If you are considered independent (for example, because you are an unaccompanied youth who is homeless), and you have no dependent children of your own, you are a family of one (yourself). For this question, as well as Questions 97-102, you should not count people with whom you share housing as part of your household.</p>
<p>Question #106 FAFSA Step 7 Signatures</p>	<p>Q: I have filled out this form as an independent student because I have been determined to be an unaccompanied youth who is homeless. Do I need my father's and/or mother's signature(s)? A: No. Because of your status as an unaccompanied youth, you are considered an independent applicant; parental signatures are not required.</p>

FAFSA TIPS FOR UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH WITHOUT STABLE HOUSING AND THOSE IN FOSTER CARE

RESOURCES

Casey Family Programs – www.casey.org

Casey Family Programs' mission is to provide and improve—and ultimately to prevent the need for—foster care.

College Goal Sunday – www.collegegoalsundayusa.org

Financial aid administrators around the country organize an event, College Goal Sunday, typically held a few weeks after Super Bowl Sunday, where students can get help filling out and submitting the FAFSA. The website has the list of specific locations where these events are held.

FinAid: The SmartStudent Guide to Financial Aid - www.finaid.org

A very comprehensive and reputable public service website on student financial aid information, including scholarships.

KnowHow2Go.org- www.knowhow2go.index.php

KnowHow2Go is a website that helps students better understand how to prepare for college.

Legal Center for Foster Care and Education - www.abanet.org/child/education/

The Legal Center serves as a national technical assistance resource and information clearinghouse on legal and policy matters affecting the education of children in the foster care system.

LeTendre Education Fund – www.naehcy.org/about_letendre.html

Scholarship program for students who have experienced homelessness.

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth –www.naehcy.org

National grassroots organization connecting educators, service providers, and others to ensure school enrollment, attendance, and overall success of children and youth without safe, adequate, and permanent housing.

National Center for Homeless Education –www.serve.org/nche

Federally-funded clearinghouse of information on homeless education. A directory of state coordinators of homeless education is available on the web site.

National College Access Network (NCAN) – www.collegeaccess.org/NCAN

National College Access Network (NCAN) improves access to and success in postsecondary education for first-generation, underrepresented and low-income students. NCAN supports a network of state and local college access programs that provide counseling, advice, and financial assistance. State and local college access programs can be found on the directory on the NCAN web site.

National Network for Youth –www.nn4youth.org

The National Network for Youth is membership organization of community-based, faith-based, and public agencies working with runaway, homeless, and other disconnected youth.

National Runaway Switchboard –www.1800runaway.org

Northern Virginia Community College Online FAFSA Tutorial - www.nvcc.edu/fafsa/help

Northern Virginia Community College has created a tutorial to help their students better understand how to fill out the FAFSA, but the tutorial can be viewed by anyone.

Student Aid on the Web –www.studentaid.ed.gov

U.S. Department of Education web site on preparing for college and applying for financial aid.