

Completing the FAFSA for Circle
Free Application For Federal Student Aid

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the first step in applying for Financial Aid. Prospective and returning students must complete a free FAFSA Application to determine eligibility for Federal Aid of any kind, as well as for need-based CITSTS Scholarships. The FAFSA is available every October 1st for the following academic year – for example, on October 1, 2022 for the 2023-24 academic year. The financial information and other information you or your parent enter on the FAFSA help determine your eligibility for aid. Award amounts are based on student eligibility, financial need assessment, cost of attendance (COA), and the length of the program. Start your FAFSA Application here:

<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

while referring to the CIRCLE-specific answers that follow:

STEP 1: IDENTITY, RESIDENCE, AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions 1, 2, 3:

You must use your legal name: Last, First, (and middle initial if you have one).

DO NOT USE YOUR STAGE NAME or NICKNAME.

Using a stage name or nickname on the FAFSA application, admissions application, school registration documents, class attendance, Federal Work Study, or any other financial aid documents, can lead to significant delays and problems with your applications, processing, and receipt of Federal funds.

Questions 11 and 12:

If you **do not** have a driver's license, **do not enter your state's abbreviation**, just leave everything blank. If you do have a driver's license, you must fill **both**.

Question 25: Will you have your first bachelor's degree before you begin the 2023-2024 school year?

If you already have, or will have, a Bachelor's degree (a 4-year degree), or a Graduate degree (Master's, Doctorate, PhD, or JD), by the start of classes in September 2023, you must answer **YES**.

If you have an Associate's degree (2 years) only or less than 2 years of college, the answer is **NO**.

Question 26: 6. What will your college grade level be when you begin the 2023-2024 school year (Fall 2023)?

If this is your first year at CIRCLE and **also your first time ever attending any college** you must answer: **0**.

If this is your first year at CIRCLE and **if you have ever attended college before**, you must answer: **1**.

This includes Eckerd transfers.

If this is your second year at CIRCLE, you must answer: **2**.

Question 27: What college degree or certificate will you be working on when you begin the 2023-2024 school year?

Even if you already have an undergraduate or graduate degree, you **must** answer:

Certificate or diploma (occupational, technical or education program of two or more years)...6

STEP 2: FAFSA TAX FILING STATUS and INCOME SECTIONS

The 2023-24 FAFSA uses information from the **2021** tax filing year, also known as "*prior-prior year*". We strongly recommend that you and parent use the "DRT" tool that links to the IRS. If you or your parent decide to enter information manually, make sure you are using **2021** information.

If you or your parent believe that your 2022 income was substantially different from 2021, or that the dependency status determined by you're the Department of Education is incorrect, contact the CIRCLE Financial Aid Administrator at financialaidadministrator@circlesquare.org to inquire about **Professional Judgement (PJ)**.

Go to the next topic to learn more about Professional Judgement.

STEP 3: DEPENDENCY DETERMINATION. You must answer all these questions in order to determine if your parent information must be used. If you have answered yes to any question, skip to Section 5. If you answer No to all the questions, you should proceed to Step 4.

Question 44: At the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, will you be working on a master's or doctorate program (such as an MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD, graduate certificate, etc.)?

You must answer NO. [You are enrolling in a 2-year Undergraduate Certificate program.

This includes Eckerd transfers.

NOTE: If you are simultaneously enrolled in another school while enrolled at CIRCLE, you must inform the Financial Aid Office.

Question 98.a [or c, e, g, if you added another school in 98a] :

In order for CIRCLE to receive your FAFSA information, you must put the following Federal School Code: **014760** .

Circle in the Square Theatre School should auto-populate.

Question 98.b [or d, f, h, if you added another school in 98b] :

Your answer must be "**off-campus**" if not living with parents, or "**with parents**" if staying at home.

You **cannot** enter "**on campus**".

Remember to select **continue** or **submit** after completing the application, and every time you update your information thereafter.

For other non-CIRCLE specific questions about completing the FAFSA, you should call **1-800-433-3243** for the latest information on FAFSA completion.

For CHAT and EMAIL options, visit

<https://studentaid.gov/help-center/contact#all-aid-fsaic>

NOTE: After completing the FAFSA you must complete all the additional steps of the financial aid process before receiving any federal funding you may be eligible for, and you must be enrolled and attending class to receive your first disbursement.

The FAO (Financial Aid Office) will inform you when you have completed all steps.