Citizenship Status and Financial Aid Eligibility

In order to qualify for Federal and State Financial Aid, a student must be a citizen or eligible non-citizen. Students that have been asked to provide the Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) with proof of their US citizenship or DHS eligible citizenship status must present their original document in-person at the OSFA. The OSFA is unable to accept citizenship documents from family members on behalf of the student. With the exception of U.S. Passports, expired documents are not acceptable. Copies are not permitted unless indicated otherwise below. For additional information regarding citizenship, please visit: [Student Aid Guide - Citizenship](#) .

Eligible Citizenship Categories for Financial Aid:

A student must be one of the following to be eligible to receive Financial Aid:
- A U.S. citizen or national;
- A U.S. permanent resident or other eligible noncitizen;
- A citizen of the Freely Associated States: The Federated States of Micronesia and the Republics of Palau and the Marshall Islands. These students can only receive aid from some of the financial aid programs.

Documentation Required

U.S. Citizen or national:

• A copy of the student's birth certificate showing that the student was born in the United States, which includes Puerto Rico (on or after January 13, 1941), Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands (on or after January 17, 1917), American Samoa, Swains Island, or the Northern Mariana Islands, unless the person was born to foreign diplomats residing in the U.S.

• A U.S. passport, current or expired, except limited passports.

• A copy of Form FS-240 (Consular Report of Birth Abroad), FS-545 (Certificate of birth issued by a foreign service post), or DS-1350 (Certification of Report of Birth). These are State Department documents.

• A Certificate of Citizenship (N-560 or N-561), issued by USCIS to individuals who derive U.S. citizenship through a parent.

• A Certificate of Naturalization (N-550 or N-570), issued by USCIS through a federal or state court, or through administrative naturalization after December 1990 to those who are individually naturalized.

U.S. permanent resident or other eligible noncitizen:

Lawful permanent residents:
- The standard document is the Permanent Resident Card (Form I-551 since 1997) or Resident Alien Card (Form I-551 before 1997). Both forms are referred to colloquially as "green cards," though they have changed color over the years. Possessors of the older Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-151, issued prior to June 1978) should have replaced it with a newer card, but for receiving FSA funds it is acceptable as evidence of permanent residence.

- Permanent residents may also present an Arrival/Departure Record (CBP Form I-94) or the Departure Record (Form I-94A, which is used at land border ports of entry) with the endorsement "Processed for I-551. Temporary Evidence of Lawful Admission for Permanent Residence. Valid until _____. Employment Authorized." The form will have an A-Number annotated on it and is acceptable if the expiration date has not passed.

Conditional Resident alien of the United States:
- Conditional Resident Aliens are eligible for aid if their documentation has not expired. I-551, I- 94, I-94A, or a passport with an MRIV bearing the statement "Upon endorsement serves as temporary I-551 evidencing permanent residence for 1 year.

Alien granted asylum or refugee status in the United States:

Refugees:
- Form I-94 or I-94A annotated with a stamp showing admission under Section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).
- Old Refugee Travel Document (Form I-571)
- Newer U.S. Travel Document annotated with "Refugee Travel Document Form I-571

Persons granted asylum in the United States:
- I-94 or I- 94A with a stamp showing admission under Section 208 of the INA.
- May also have the same travel documents described for refugees.

Alien paroled into the United States pursuant to Section 212(d)(5) of the INA :

- **Persons paroled into the U.S. for at least one year** must provide evidence (such as having filed a valid permanent resident application) from the DHS that they are in the U.S. for other than a temporary purpose and intend to become a citizen or permanent resident. Their documentation must have a stamp indicating that the student has been paroled into the United States for at least one year, with a date that has not expired.

Alien who is a Cuban/Haitian entrant as defined by Section 501(e) of the REAA of 1980:

- Students will have a stamp across the face of the I-94 indicating that they have been classified as a "Cuban-Haitian Entrant (Status Pending). Reviewable January 15, 1981. Employment authorized until January 15, 1981." A document showing that the holder is a Cuban-Haitian entrant is valid even if the expiration date has passed.

Alien who is a conditional entrant:

- I-94 with a stamp displaying "Section 203(a)(7)" indicating that the person was admitted to the United States as a conditional entrant prior to March 31, 1980.

Victims of human trafficking

- Student's certification or eligibility letter from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
- The spouse, child, or parent of a trafficking victim might be eligible for aid with a T-visa (e.g., T-2 or T-3).

American Indian born in Canada, to whom the provisions of section 289 of the INA applies

Students who may be eligible for financial aid funds under the INA and who have a valid A-number should enter that on the FAFSA and indicate they are eligible noncitizens. Jay Treaty students who don't have a valid A-number should enter "A999999999" in that field on the FAFSA and report that they are eligible noncitizens. The student must submit proof that such a student has 50% Native American blood and was born in Canada. To do so, the student should provide one or more of the following documents:

- A "band card" issued by the Band Council of a Canadian Reserve, or by the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa;

- Birth or baptism records;

- An affidavit from a tribal official or other person knowledgeable about the applicant's or recipient's family history;

- Identification from a recognized Native American provincial or territorial organization.

Battered immigrants-qualified aliens

Students may, with their designated children, be eligible under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) for federal public benefits, including Federal Student Aid. The student must obtain and provide documentation based on their case type: self-petition, suspension of deportation, or cancellation of removal. Please contact your assigned Financial Aid Counselor for information regarding the required documentation.

Ineligible Citizenship Categories for Federal Financial Aid:
Some students are eligible for state financial aid through the expansion of state grants requirement. Visit https://www.hesc.ny.gov/dream/ for more information about the DREAM Act.

- Students granted **DACA** (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals).

- **Persons with nonimmigrant visas** include those with work visas, students, visitors, and foreign government officials. Someone with a nonimmigrant visa isn't eligible for FSA funds unless she has a Form I-94 with one of the endorsements given in the eligible document section. Nonimmigrant visas include the F-1, F-2, or M-1 Student Visa, B-1 or B-2 Visitor Visa, J-1 or J-2 Exchange Visitors Visa, H series or L series Visa (which allow temporary employment in the U.S.), or a G series Visa (pertaining to international organizations). Someone who has only a "Notice of Approval to Apply for Permanent Residence (I-171 or I-464)" cannot receive financial aid funds.

- **Family unity status** individuals have been granted relief from deportation under the Family Unity Program. They may present an approved Form I-817, Application for Family Unity Benefits. Previously they were eligible for financial aid funds, but they are no longer eligible.

- **Temporary residents** are allowed to live and work in the U.S. under the Legalization or Special Agricultural Worker program. Previously they were eligible for financial aid funds, but they are no longer eligible.

- **Illegal aliens under the legalization (also called the amnesty) program** established by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA). These individuals were given documentation that allowed them to work while their application for permanent resident status was being processed, but they aren't eligible for aid unless their application was approved. Documents they might have in the interim are the Employment Authorization Card (Form I-688A), Employment Authorization Documents (Form I-688B or the I-766), or the Temporary Resident Card (Form I-688). None of these documents qualifies a student for financial aid.

- **Students with "Temporary Protected Status"** stamped on their I-94 forms. This is used for persons who are from countries that are in upheaval, but the status differs significantly from refugee or asylee because it provides no conversion to permanent resident status. These students are not eligible for financial aid funds.

- **Alien who is employment authorized in the United States.** This indicates the expiration date or that there is no expiration. Employment authorization doesn't make the student eligible for FSA funds. Unless some eligible status is also checked or the student can provide other documentation that can be confirmed by the USCIS, the student isn't eligible for aid.

- **Aliens not employment authorized in the United States.** This block is checked when an alien's status prohibits employment in the United States. Students with this status aren't eligible for aid. Citizenship and Immigration Services will initial and stamp the front of the G-845 in the signature block.

- **Alien who has an application pending.** This is an alien waiting for a new immigration status or a change of status. A pending application for an immigration status doesn't by itself make the student eligible for financial aid funds; he must have an eligible status checked on the form or provide other documentation of an eligible status.

- **Alien who is a nonimmigrant.** A student with this status is not eligible for financial aid funds.