

Financial Aid: Frequently Asked Questions



How do I apply for a Pell Grant and other types of need-based aid?

[Submit a FAFSA online](#) or visit the SVCC Financial Aid Office to receive assistance in filling out the application.

What semesters does the FAFSA cover?

Each year a new FAFSA is released for the upcoming academic year, which covers the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. For example, the 2013-2014 FAFSA application covers the *Fall 2013, Spring 2013, and Summer 2014*. You will need to fill out a new 2014-2015 FAFSA application for the next Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Summer 2015.

What do I need to bring with me when I apply in the office with a Financial Aid Assistant?

Dependent students will need:

- their federal tax returns and W-2's for the prior tax year (if applicable)
- parent(s)' federal tax returns and W-2's for the prior tax year (if applicable)
- PIN number for themselves and their parents (visit the [pin website](#) to apply for a pin)
- If your parents did not work in the prior tax year, we will need to know what means of support they had.

Independent students will need:

- their federal tax returns and W-2's for the prior tax year (if applicable)
- their spouse's federal tax returns and W-2's for the prior tax year (if you didn't file jointly)
- If you and/or your spouse did not work in the prior tax year, we will need to know what means of support you had.
- your PIN number (visit the [pin website](#) to apply for a pin)

** If you feel you should not have to supply your parent(s)' information, please contact our offices. Students with mitigating circumstances will be evaluated and considered based on documentation provided.

What is a pin number?

A pin number is what the federal government considers to be your electronic signature. You are also required to have a pin number in order to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool on [FAFSA on the Web](#).

What is the IRS Data Retrieval Tool?

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool is a resource offered through the online FAFSA application. It links your federal tax information from the prior tax year to the FAFSA application. This means that if you successfully link your information and you are chosen for verification, then you will not need to provide tax transcripts to our financial aid office.

Is the financial aid application the same for all community colleges and 4-year institutions?

Yes, the FAFSA is the same for each institution. In order to allow schools to view the FAFSA information on file for you, the school code for each institution you plan to attend must be added to the application. Our school code is **008661**.

Who can I contact if I have questions while filling out my FAFSA?

You may contact our Financial Aid Office or the Federal Help Line at 1-800-433-3243.

I probably don't qualify for aid. Should I apply for aid anyway?

Yes. Many families mistakenly think they don't qualify for aid and prevent themselves from receiving financial aid by failing to apply for it. The FAFSA form is free.

Do I need to be admitted before I can apply for financial aid at a particular university?

No. You can apply for financial aid any time after January 1. To actually receive funds, however, you **must** be admitted and enrolled at the university.

Do I have to reapply for financial aid every year?

Yes. Most financial aid offices require that you apply for financial aid every year. If your financial circumstances change, you may get more or less aid. Note that your eligibility for financial aid may change significantly, especially if you have a different number of family members in college. Renewal of your financial aid package also depends on your making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree, such as earning a minimum number of credits and achieving a minimum GPA.

How much financial aid can I receive?

It will depend on your and your parents' income, living expenses, assets and savings. This is called the expected family contribution (EFC). Your eligibility is also determined by the cost of attendance at the institution you select. The FAFSA will determine your financial need from this information and will send a report to the schools you indicated. The amount of financial aid you are eligible to receive is determined by subtracting the EFC from the total cost of attendance for a specific school:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Cost of Attendance} \\ - \text{Expected Family Contribution} \\ = \text{Financial Need} \end{array}$$

Do families need to complete a separate FAFSA for each child?

Yes. However, the [FAFSA on the Web](#) will allow you to transfer parental information from one child's FAFSA to another's if they apply within the same year.

Why was I chosen for Verification?

One-third of our students are randomly chosen by the federal processing center to fulfill verification requirements. If you did not use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool on the online application, then you will need to provide the Financial Aid Office with a copy of your IRS Return Transcripts, which can be requested [here](#).

What happens if I do not pass all of my classes? What if I drop a class?

As a recipient of financial aid you must meet satisfactory academic progress standards. If you fail, withdraw from, or do not participate in your courses, it may impact your eligibility for financial aid. If you change your enrollment level before the census date, your aid will be revised accordingly.

What happens if I withdraw from school before the term is over?

If you withdraw from school you may be expected to repay a portion of your financial aid. Please contact the Financial Aid Office if you think you may be in this situation. If this applies to you and you do not pay the money back to SVCC, there will be a service indicator placed onto your account and you will not be allowed to enroll in classes.

Can I get a student loan to pay for my classes?

Unfortunately, Southside Virginia Community College does not participate in student loan funding. As a result, you are not able to receive student loans to pay for courses at SVCC.

What types of scholarships are available?

To find out about scholarships, please contact our [Foundation Office](#).

How do I find my financial aid award?

We always mail award letters and send e-mails. You may also log in to [MySVCC](#). Click on "VCCS SIS". You can find your financial aid award by clicking on "View Financial Aid" under Campus Finances. You can also find what financial aid documents you are missing by reviewing your "To Do List".

Can I get a job as work-study?

You may contact the Financial Aid Office to see if you qualify to be a work-study student.