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# Introduction



*This volume of the Federal Student Aid (FSA) Handbook discusses the eligibility requirements for students and parent borrowers and your responsibilities to ensure that recipients qualify for their aid awards.*

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## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

There are many factors you must consider when reviewing an application for aid from the FSA programs, such as whether the student is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, whether the applicant is making satisfactory academic progress, and whether he or she has a defaulted FSA loan. To answer these questions you receive information about the student from different sources, including the Department of Education's Central Processing System (CPS) for financial aid applications and the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).

Throughout the year, the Department of Education (The Department) provides updates to schools in the form of Dear Colleague Letters (DCLs). These and other releases, such as *Federal Register* notices and announcements containing system updates and technical guidance, are available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) website ([www.ifap.ed.gov](http://www.ifap.ed.gov)).

The FSA Handbook doesn't cover the operation of software. For schools using software from the Department, there are technical references on the FSA Download website (see the margin) that explain how the software operates. Schools using third-party software should consult the vendor's reference materials for technical guidance.

## RECENT CHANGES HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some of the significant changes to *Volume 1*:

### Chapter 1:

- Added DCL citation to Teacher certification coursework sidebar
- Added Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act citation to ATB options & Eligible Career Pathway Programs sidebar
- Added new sidebar, Ceasing to be an ATB student
- Revised & updated Ability-to-benefit (ATB) Alternatives & Eligible Career Pathway Programs section

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## Program and systems information online

### [www.fsadownload.ed.gov](http://www.fsadownload.ed.gov)

Software:

- Direct Loan Tools
- EDconnect
- EDEExpress for Windows
- SSCR for Windows

Technical References and User Guides for:

- CPS (ISIR, Summary of Changes, etc.)
- COD
- Electronic Data Exchange
- EDEExpress Packaging

### [www.ifap.ed.gov](http://www.ifap.ed.gov)

- Federal Registers
- Electronic Announcements
- Dear Partner/Colleague Letters
- FSA Assessment modules:
  - Student Eligibility—  
[www.ifap.ed.gov/qahome/qaassessments/studentelig.html](http://www.ifap.ed.gov/qahome/qaassessments/studentelig.html)

Satisfactory Academic Progress—

[www.ifap.ed.gov/qahome/qaassessments/sap.html](http://www.ifap.ed.gov/qahome/qaassessments/sap.html)

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### Questions about FSA policies

E-Announcement Nov. 15, 2013

For questions about Federal Student Aid policies and programs, call the new “Reach FSA,” phone line at 1-855-FSA-4-FAA (1-855-372-4322). *Reach FSA* will help you determine the appropriate call center for your question, and then transfer you to that call center.

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### FSA Coach

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FSA Coach, a self-paced, comprehensive online guide to the Title IV programs, has been updated for domestic schools. For more information, see: <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/ifap/fsacoach.jsp> COACH for foreign schools will be updated in the future; monitor IFAP for forthcoming training announcements.

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### Questions or comments?

If you have any comments regarding the FSA Handbook, please contact Research and Publications via email at [fsaschoolspubs@ed.gov](mailto:fsaschoolspubs@ed.gov).

- Added phone and email contact information for the CPS/SAIG Technical Support Center to the Drug Convictions sidebar
- Added E-Announcement citation (Sept. 23, 2016) to Question 23 Student Aid Eligibility Worksheet sidebar. Also added URL for the online drug worksheet to same sidebar
- Revised and updated the Incarcerated Students section
- Revised and updated Conflicting Information section
- Added DCL and Early FAFSA E-Announcement citations to the Conflicting Information sidebar
- Added new sidebar on Resolving 399 codes, including DCL citation
- Added link to the Foreign School Handbook under Students Studying Abroad subsection of Eligibility Requirements for Special Educational Programs graphic box section

### Chapter 2:

- Chapter renamed “U.S. Citizenship & Eligible Noncitizens”
- Documenting Citizenship sidebar expanded
- New sidebar added: Match for student who later changes names
- Revised and updated section on U.S. citizenship documentation
- Eligible noncitizen match with the DHS section updated
- “Third-step” verification sidebar added to describe the switch from “paper secondary” confirmation
- Paper Third-Step Confirmation section updated and revised
- Warning added: beginning in May, 2018, USCIS/SAVE will move to an electronic process for processing G-845 data and will no longer accept paper forms nor return paper responses
- Refugee status subsection revised and updated
- Persons paroled into the U.S. subsection revised and updated
- Battered immigrants-qualified alien sidebar expanded and updated
- Completing the G-845 Parts 1 & 2 updated and revised
- Interpreting the G-845 response section revised

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**Chapter 3**

- NSLDS Support Center sidebar updated with web and email links
- New sidebar added: Reporting data for students at closed schools

**Chapter 4**

- New sidebar added: Parents with no SSN

**Chapter 6**

- New subsection added on Restoring semesters of Pell eligibility for students affected by closed schools
- New sidebar added: Subsidized Loan eligibility time limitation (150% rule)
- New subsection on 150% for Pell added
- New sidebar added: Remaining Perkins authority
- Greatly expanded and updated section on Perkins Loans eligibility
- New sidebar added: Impact of declining Direct Loan on Perkins eligibility
- Revised subsection on TEACH Grant Amount of grant funds available

