

Who Is the Parent Of Record On the FAFSA Starting In 2024-25?

(1) Parents who live together

Parental income and assets in the case of student whose parents are married and not separated, or who are unmarried but live together, shall include the income and assets of both parents.

(2) Divorced or separated parents

Parental income and assets for a student whose parents are divorced or separated, but not remarried, is determined by including only the income and assets of the parent who provides the greater portion of the student's financial support.

(3) Death of a parent

Parental income and assets in the case of the death of any parent is determined as follows:

- (A) If either of the parents has died, the surviving parent shall be considered a single parent, until that parent has remarried.
- (B) If both parents have died, the student shall not report any parental income or assets.

(4) Remarried parents

If a parent whose income and assets are taken into account under paragraph (2), or if a parent who is a widow or widower and whose income is taken into account under paragraph (3), has remarried, the income of that parent's spouse shall be included in determining the parent's assessment of adjusted available income if the student's parent and the stepparent are married as of the date of application for the award year concerned.

(5) Single parent who is not divorced or separated

Parental income and assets in the case of a student whose parent is not described in paragraph (1) and is a single parent who is not divorced, separated, or remarried, shall include the income and assets of such single parent."

In its [Better FAFSA Better Future webinar presentations](#), the U.S. Department of Education (ED) further addressed divorced or separated parents. The determination is made in this specific order:

1. The parent of record is the parent who provided the greater portion of the student's financial support during the 12 months immediately prior to filing the FAFSA.
2. If neither parent provided support in the 12-month period in #1, the parent of record is the parent who provided the greater portion of support during the most recent year that the student received financial support from a parent.
3. If both parents claim an equal amount of support, then the parent of record is the parent with the greater amount of income or assets. There remains some confusion on whether this should be "income or assets," "income and assets," or "income plus assets." When this is finalized by ED, we will update this Q&A.

Child Support In Parent of Record Determinations: According to guidance NASFAA has received from ED, starting in 2024-25, the parent who pays child support should include the amount of child support paid during the relevant 12-month period when determining which parent is the parent of record based on providing more than half of the student's support. For example, if the mother is paying the child support to the father, that child support counts as part of the mother's (not the father's) support for the child. If this child support, along with any other support provided for the child by the mother, adds up to more than 50% of the support of the child, then the mother is the parent of record on the FAFSA.