Navigating FAFSA and NC RDS to Prepare for College

CFNC

	FAFSA	NC RDS
Completing the FAFSA and NC RDS can unlock access to many types of financial aid for eligible students.	**FAFSA** Federal Student Aid — An OFFICE of the U.S. Department of EDUCATION Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to determine eligibility for federal, state, and college-based financial aid.	**NCSEAA RESIDENCY DETERMINATION SERVICE (RDS)** Use NC RDS (Residency Determination Service) to receive an RCN (Residency Certification Number) to determine eligibility for in-state tuition and/or state grant awards.
Where?	**studentaid.gov**	**ncresidency.org**
First Step?	Set up a studentaid.gov account—required for students and parents/legal guardians of dependent students.	Log in to NC RDS using your CFNC.org username and password. If you don't have one, you'll be able to set one up from the login page.
When? (recommended)	Set up studentaid.gov account before Oct. 1; Submit the FAFSA as soon as possible after Oct. 1.	Ideally before student applies to NC colleges and universities.
INFORMATION REQUESTED		
Student's Personal Identifying Information*	**SSN, ARN, or USCIS**	**SSN, ARN, USCIS, ITIN, I-94, or NC Student ID**
Parent's Personal Identifying Information*	**SSN**, ARN, USCIS, or ITIN**	**SSN**, ARN, USCIS, or ITIN**
Student-Filed Federal Taxes	**YES**	**YES**
Parent/Legal Guardian-Filed Federal Taxes	**YES**	**YES**
Student-Filed State Taxes	**NO**	**YES**
Parent/Legal Guardian-Filed State Taxes	**NO**	**YES**
Address of Permanent Residence	**YES,** for state grant eligibility determination	**YES,** for in-state tuition and state grant eligibility determination
Driver's License or Vehicle Information (if available)	**NO**	**YES**
Military Information (if applicable)	**YES**	**YES**
What to Save After Completing Form?	Studentaid.gov account username and password to review the FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS).	RCN to share with NC colleges/universities for in-state financial aid consideration.
Apply Again?	**YES** Use studentaid.gov account to complete the FAFSA each year in college.	**NO** RCN never changes, but you may need to reapply if you transfer to a different institution.