

News Advisory

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PHEAA Selected to Test 2025-26 FAFSA

Will provide input on improving user experience

Harrisburg, PA (October 23, 2024) – The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) has been selected as a beta tester by the U.S. Department of Education as it conducts testing on its new 2025-26 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®).

The FAFSA for the upcoming academic year is typically available on October 1, but it was delayed last year as the FAFSA underwent changes because of the FAFSA Simplification Act, intended to streamline the financial aid application process. It was finally released in December 2023, followed by widespread issues and delays. It will be delayed again this year to allow for the Beta testing.

The 2025-26 FAFSA will be available on December 1.

PHEAA will conduct beta testing with more than 200 participants at several schools throughout Pennsylvania from November 4 – 7.

“We are pleased to have PHEAA selected as a Beta tester,” said Senator Wayne D. Fontana, PHEAA Board Chairman. “This is an excellent opportunity to assist students and families in successfully submitting the FAFSA by ensuring that the new form is easy to use and that all previous issues have been addressed.”

While PHEAA is diligently working to help ensure a successful launch of the new FAFSA, students and families can use this time to prepare. Every applicant needs their StudentAid.gov account (formally FSA ID) to successfully submit their FAFSA. This is a username and password combination used to log in to U.S. Department of Education online systems. They must visit StudentAid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch to create their own accounts.

“We are dedicated to helping students afford their dream of higher education,” said James H. Steeley, PHEAA President and CEO. “Everyone who plans to attend college should submit the FAFSA as the first step to determine if they qualify for a Federal Pell Grant, PA State Grant, need-based scholarships, institutional awards, and federal student loans. It’s critical that the new form be as easy to navigate and user-friendly as possible and our input is going to help ensure that.”

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About PHEAA

The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) was created by the Pennsylvania General Assembly in 1963 to provide affordable access to higher education for PA students and families. Through the years, PHEAA has evolved into one of the nation's leading providers of student financial aid services, including the Commonwealth's first state-based student loan program – PA Forward. PHEAA also serves millions of students through its loan guaranty, loan servicing, financial aid processing, and other programs.

PHEAA conducts student loan servicing operations nationally as American Education Services (AES).

PHEAA's press releases are accessible at <https://www.pheaa.org/about/press-releases/>.