

WHO IS YOUR PARENT/CONTRIBUTOR?



If you are a dependent student, you must include information about your parent(s) when you fill out your FAFSA application. We understand all families are unique – some parents may be divorced, remarried, or you may live with someone other than your parent. So, how do you know whose information you should report? The guidelines below may help you decide.

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, “parent” refers to your legal (biological and/or adoptive) parent and stepparent, if your parent remarried. The guidelines below apply to your legal parents, regardless of gender.

- ✔ If your parents are living together, whether they are legally married to each other or not, answer questions about both of them.
- ✔ If your parent is widowed or was never married, answer questions about that parent only.
- ✔ If your parents are divorced or separated, answer the questions about the parent who provided more financial support over the last year (or during the most recent year you received financial support).
- ✔ If your parent is remarried, you must provide information about your parent and stepparent.

- ✔ If your parents are separated but still live together, their marital status will need to be “Married or Remarried” and you will need to answer questions about both of them.
- ✔ If your parents are divorced but still live together, their marital status will need to be “Unmarried and both parents living together” and you will need to answer questions about both of them.
- ✔ The following people are not considered your parent unless they have legally adopted you: grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians, older brothers or sisters, uncles or aunts, and widowed step-parents.

Exception: The FAFSA will ask about your parents’ education level. For these questions, your parents are considered to be your birth parents or adoptive parents only. You do not need to include information about stepparents.

