A Review of the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid

January 9, 2024
Agenda

- ISAC Contact Updates
  - Student Services
  - School Services
  - Partner Services

- Retention of Illinois Students & Equity (RISE) Act
  - Overview
  - Eligibility criteria

- Review of the 2024-25 Alternative Application

- Alternative Application Resources

- Processing Policies & Procedures
ISAC’s Student Services Department

For inquiries from students, parents, and the general public

Phone: 800-899-ISAC (4722)
Fax: 847-831-8549
E-mail: isac.studentservices@illinois.gov
Spanish-speaking counselors are available
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. CT

Call Center Reps
Bertha Esquivel
Ghouse Farooqi
Vanessa Guzman
Matt Setnicar
Larry Thompson
ISAC’s School Services Department

Exclusively for school inquiries, both colleges and high schools

School Services Manager Mary Lewis retired at the end of 2023 after 40+ years at ISAC

Thankfully, she trained us all well 😊 ... and we will continue to respond to school inquiries in a timely manner

Phone: 866-247-2172
Fax: 847-831-8549
E-mail: isac.schoolservices@illinois.gov
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. CT
ISAC’s Partner Services Department

Provides training, program information, and support to school and other ISAC partners

Assists School Services

Partners with ILASFAA and other professional organizations

Partner Services Staff
Stephanie Claudio, Stephanie.Claudio@illinois.gov
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A Review of the Retention of Illinois Students & Equity (RISE) Act

- Public Act 101-0021 went into effect January 1, 2020

- Allows eligible undocumented students who are disqualified from federal financial aid to apply for all forms of state financial aid
  - Includes any student aid or benefit funded or administered by:
    - the state
    - a state agency, or
    - any public institution of higher learning
  - Includes (but not limited to):
    - Scholarships
    - Grants
    - Awards
    - Stipends
    - Free room and board
    - Tuition waivers, or
    - Other financial or in-kind assistance

- Does not exempt students from having to meet general eligibility criteria for ISAC programs as well as criteria specific to each individual program
Rise Act Provisions

• Undocumented students may be eligible to apply for ISAC programs if they meet all of these criteria (which are based on Illinois statute regarding in-state tuition eligibility):
  • the individual resided with his or her parent or guardian while attending an Illinois public or private high school;
  • the individual graduated from a public or private high school or received the equivalent of a high school diploma in Illinois;
  • the individual attended school in Illinois for at least 3 years as of the date the individual graduated from high school or received the equivalent of a high school diploma;
  • the individual provides an affidavit stating that the individual will file an application to become a permanent resident of the United States at the earliest opportunity the individual is eligible to do so; and
  • the individual has not established a residence outside of Illinois.
Purpose of the Alternative Application

• To accommodate RISE Act-eligible students, ISAC created an Illinois-specific online application for the need-based Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant

• It is patterned after the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) and is known as the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid

• An Alternative Application is made available for each award year at the same time that the FAFSA® becomes available

• The Alternative Application calculates an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) for 2023-24 and a Student Aid Index (SAI) for 2024-25 to determine financial need for MAP
Completing the Alternative Application

- There are seven sections to the online application.
- Sections 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 are about the student.
- Section 4 is about the parent.
- Section 7 is for signatures and certification.

- The application must be completed online; there is not a paper version possible.
- Students should answer all questions as accurately as possible.
  - Some fields are optional, but most are required.
  - Messaging will be presented if required fields are left blank.
  - The application and help text for each question are available in both English and Spanish.
  - A “Save” button allows applicants to save their data and return to finish at a later time.
The 2024-25 Alternative Application

- The format and layout of the application will remain the same as the 2023-24 Alternative Application
- Questions have been added to be consistent with the 2024-25 FAFSA®
- Some questions have been removed to simplify the application whenever possible, and the questions do not always follow the same order as they appear on the FAFSA®
- The application will continue to collect all data elements required to calculate an SAI in the same manner that the FAFSA® form does
- The application will continue to have seven sections
The 2024-25 Alternative Application

• Nothing is changing with the:
  • Pre-screening or log-in process
  • Eligibility criteria
  • Signature process

• Financial aid administrators at the colleges will continue to have the ability to make corrections and/or professional judgment adjustments in the MAP system in GAP Access
Accessing the Application

- The Alternative Application is accessed at isac.org

- Must navigate to the RISE Act information page from the home page
  - Provides information about eligibility requirements
  - The application and resources are available in Spanish

- The Application is not accessible in ISAC’s Student Portal or on the general ISAC Applications page with other ISAC program applications

- The Application is not mobile-friendly
Accessing the Application

- Resources are available to assist with the application process
- They have been updated for 2024-25
Pre-Screening Questions

- Pre-screening questions at the beginning of the application help students determine which application (Alternative Application vs. FAFSA) should be completed
  - An applicant will only need to respond to the pre-screening questions if it is their initial application
  - Renewal applicants will not see the pre-screening questions
  - Data provided by applicants in the pre-screening questions is not provided to colleges

- If an applicant’s answers to the pre-screening questions indicate the Alternative Application should not be completed, a message will advise them to consult their high school counselor, a financial aid professional, or an ISACorps member for assistance in completing the FAFSA
Creating a Student Profile

Once a student has completed the pre-screening process and is determined eligible to complete the Alternative Application, the student must complete a Student Profile.

The applicant should make note of the data used to create their profile.

The e-mail address provided should be a permanent one that the student will have regular access to (not one used just for high school or college purposes).

If the applicant also has an ISAC Student Portal Account, they will need to use a different e-mail than the one used for the Portal.

Once the Student Profile is complete, ISAC will assign an ISAC ID number that is unique to the student.

This is a permanent identifier that will remain the same for a student every year.
Alternative Application – Section 1

• Collects student demographic information
  • New name field: suffix (e.g. Jr. or III)
  • Wording of questions and answer options have been edited to match FAFSA® changes
    • College grade level
    • Question about pursuing teacher certification
    • Parents’ education status
  • Removed the driver’s license questions

• Student gender, race and ethnicity questions are not included on the Alternative Application
Alternative Application – Section 2

• Collects student financial and tax information
  • Data fields and question text have been adjusted to match those on the FAFSA
    • On the paper FAFSA, these are the data elements in Questions 20, 21 and 22
      • Child support received has been added as a data element

• Spouse fields will be presented to collect financial data if the student indicates a status of married and the student did not file taxes or indicates taxes were filed separately
  • On the paper FAFSA, these are the data elements in Question 25, 27 and 28
    • Application will not require a spouse’s signature
Student Information > Dependency Status

Student’s Personal Circumstances – Answer the questions in this section to determine if you will need to provide parental information. The student is currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training.

- Yes
- No

The student is a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces.

- Yes
- No

The student has children or other people (excluding their spouse) who live with the student and receive more than half of their support from the student now and between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

- Yes
- No

At any time since the student turned 13, they were an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent).

- Yes
- No

At any time since the student turned 13, they were a ward of the court.

- Yes
- No

At any time since the student turned 13, they were in foster care.

- Yes
- No

The student is or was a legally emancipated minor, as determined by a court in their state of residence.

- Yes
- No

The student is or was in a legal guardianship with someone other than their parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in their state of residence.

- Yes
- No

At any time on or after July 1, 2023, was the student unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of homelessness?

- Yes
- No

Do unusual circumstances prevent the student from contacting their parents or would contacting their parents pose a risk to the student?

- Yes
- No
Alternative Application – Section 3

- Collects information about the student’s personal circumstances
  - Often referred to as the “dependency questions”
    - Step Three on the current 2023-24 FAFSA®
  - Question text has been edited to be consistent with the FAFSA®
    - Dependency questions
    - Other circumstances
      - Questions related to homelessness
    - Unusual circumstances
      - To identify a student who may qualify for a dependency override (provisionally independent)
Alternative Application – Section 4

Parent Information > Demographics

Your ISAC ID Number
865003701

Answer all the questions in Section Four even if you do not live with your legal parent(s). Legal parents are biological or adoptive, or as determined by the state. Grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians, widowed stepparents, aunts, uncles, and siblings are not considered parents on this form unless they have legally adopted the student.

First name

Middle name

Last name

Suffix

Date of Birth

E-mail address – We require an e-mail from your parent so ISAC can send them a Personal Identification Number (PIN) that is needed to sign your application. This e-mail will also be shared with the schools you select on your application.

Permanent mailing address
Number and street (include apt. number)

City (and country if not U.S.)

Parent Information > Household Information

How many people are in the parent's family? Include the parent (and spouse or partner), the student, the parent's dependent children even if they live apart due to college enrollment, and other people living with the parent now. Include these dependent children and other people only if the parent will provide more than half of their support between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

How many people in the parent's family will be in college between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025? Do not include parent(s).

At any time during 2022 or 2023, did the parent or anyone in their family receive benefits from any of the following federal programs? Select all that apply.
Earned Income credit (EIC)

Federal housing assistance

Free or Reduced Price School Lunch

Medicaid

SAVE
Alternative Application – Section 4

• Collects demographic information about the parent(s) required to provide their data
  • Uses same definition and guidance regarding parent contributor as the FAFSA®
  • Collects same data elements as the FAFSA®
    o Name
    o Address
    o Date of birth
    o Marital status
    o State of residence
    o Date residency was established
    o Family size
    o Number in household
    o Receipt of benefits from federal programs

• Does not collect Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)
Alternative Application – Section 4

• Also collects tax and financial information about the parent(s) required to provide their data
• May require Parent Spouse or Partner data, depending on marital and tax filing status
  • Will not require two parent signatures on the application
  • If parent is not married, parent spouse data fields will not be presented
• An email will be required for at least one parent
### Alternative Application – Sections 5 & 6

#### Student Information > Household Information

How many people are in the student's family? (Include the student and spouse), the student's dependent children (even if they live apart due to enrollment), and other people living with the student now. Include these dependent children and other people only if the student will provide more than half of their support between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

At any time during 2022 or 2023, did the student or anyone in their family receive benefits from any of the following federal programs?

- EITC
- Federal Housing Assistance
- Free or Reduced Price School Lunch
- Medicaid
- Refundable credit for coverage under a qualified health plan (QHP)

#### Student Information > School Information

Indicate which colleges you want to receive your application data.

1ST Federal School Code
- Select

2ND Federal School Code
- Select

3RD Federal School Code
- Select

4TH Federal School Code
- Select

5TH Federal School Code
- Select

6TH Federal School Code
- Select

7TH Federal School Code
- Select

8TH Federal School Code
- Select

9TH Federal School Code
- Select

10TH Federal School Code
- Select
Alternative Application – Section 5

• Collects additional information about an independent student
  • Family size (number in household)
  • Number in college
  • Receipt of benefits from federal programs
    • By student, spouse or anyone in the family/household

• Number in college question
  • Although the number in college is not included in the Student Aid Index calculation, the question will still appear on the 2024-25 FAFSA and the Alternative Application
    • The data is still being collected for institutions that may want to have the data for determining options for institutional aid
    • May be used for professional judgement determinations
Alternative Application – Section 6

- Collects information about the school choices
  - Will no longer collect information about the housing plans
  - Will allow for up to 10 Illinois school choices
  - Student can log-in at any time and change their school choices
### Alternative Application – Section 7

#### Review

**Eligibility Requirements**

**Certification/Affidavit**

**Parent Signature and Certification**

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**Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid 2023-2024**

- Section 1: Student
- Section 2: Student
- Section 3: Student
- Section 4: Parent
- Section 5: Student
- Section 6: Student
- Section 7: Review & Signature

- Application was successfully saved.

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**Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid 2024-2025**

- Section 1: Student
- Section 2: Student
- Section 3: Student
- Section 4: Parent
- Section 5: Student
- Section 6: Student
- Section 7: Review & Signature

#### Your ISAC ID Number

826007476

- **Section 1: Student**
  - First name: Daniels
  - Middle name: Edit
  - Last name: Rios
  - Suffix: Edit
  - Date of birth: 07/29/2001
  - Telephone number: 815-915-7602
  - ISAC requires your e-mail address so we can send the Personal Identification Number (PIN) needed to sign your application. Your e-mail address will also be shared with the schools that you select on your application.
    - E-mail address: duriel.rios@illinois.gov
  - Number and street: 1755 Cook rd
  - City (and country if not U.S.): Deerfield

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**ISAC**
Alternative Application – Section 7

• Review the Application
  • After all data has been entered, applicants can navigate back to an appropriate section if a correction or update is needed

• Student signature process
  • Applicants will be provided with a review of the RISE Act eligibility requirements, followed by the Certification/Affidavit, which is part of the RISE Act eligibility requirements
  • If the applicant agrees with the statements on the certification page, they can click on the Provide Signature button and will be presented with a field to enter their PIN
    • The student’s PIN is provided by ISAC in an e-mail to the applicant after the Student Demographics page has been completed in Section 1 of the application
    • The student’s PIN is associated with the ISAC ID Number that is created and assigned to the student as part of the application process.
Alternative Application – Section 7

• Parent signature process
  • The parent may sign the application after the student has completed their signature process either at the same time, or the parent may log in to the student’s application at a separate time
  • To log in, a parent will need the Student’s ISAC ID number and the parent PIN, which will be provided to the parent in an e-mail after their e-mail address has been provided on the application
  • The field for the parent address is in Section 4, page 1 and is a required field
    • Once the next button is selected to navigate to page 2 of Section 4, an e-mail will be sent to the parent from ISAC and it will include the parent PIN
  • The student and the parent must have separate e-mails
Parent Access to the Application

• Requires the student’s ISAC ID Number and the four-digit PIN sent to the parent e-mail address that was provided on the application
Alternative Application Resources

Retention of Illinois Students & Equity (RISE) Act and Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid

(last updated January 2, 2024)

The Retention of Illinois Students & Equity (RISE) Act allows eligible undocumented students to apply for all forms of state financial aid. The Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid (Alternative Application) provides a way for these qualified students to apply for Monetary Award Program (MAP) grants, the state's largest need-based grant program for low-income college students. For eligible students, the Alternative Application is also part of the application process for the Minority Teachers of Illinois (MTI) Scholarship Program (visit the MTI Scholarship page on this website for more information).

Applying for ISAC Programs
Application for MAP: Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid
Application Process for MAP
Applying for Other ISAC Programs

Applying for ISAC Programs

The RISE Act provides a way to apply for ISAC gift assistance programs – including MAP, the

Monetary Award Program (MAP)

Program News
(last updated January 2, 2024)
2024-25 Start-up Update
2024-25 Award Announcements
2024-25 Start-up Formula
2024-25 File Layout Specifications
2023-24 Program Funding
Suspension of 2023-24 Award Announcements
2023-24 Payment (second-term claims being accepted for payment; late first-term claims being held)
2023-24 Recompute Formula
2023-24 Award Announcements
2023-24 File Layout Specifications
2023-21 Alternative Application Student Record School File Layout Specifications
2023-21 Operational Guide for Alternative Application Processing
2023-21 Start-up Implementation
Additional MAP References

E-Library for Partners

1. Partner E-Messages & Newsletters
   - This month’s e-Messages and the monthly ISAC Update and Communicate

2. Partner Training
   - ISAC training and event calendars and online registration

3. Applications
   - Scholarship, grant, and loan application/freedom applications

4. Administrative Rules
   - Current and previous year’s ISAC Rules, Proposed Rules if applicable

5. ISAC Governing Board: The Commission
   - Meeting schedules, Commissioner biographies, Agenda books

6. Manuals & Handbooks

7. Outreach Events
   - Outreach events calendar of college fairs, financial aid nights and FAFSA Completion workshops

8. Electronic Tools
   - Specifications for loan and grant payment processing, software program links
Alternative Application User Guide

- Intended as a resource for students, parents and counselors
- Includes information on how to reset a password, update an email address, make corrections, etc.
- Includes several FAQs at the end of the guide as well as resource links
Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid FAQs

(last updated July 19, 2023)

Click on a question (below) to access the corresponding answer.

Q. Who should complete the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid?

A. This application is only for students who are not eligible for federal student financial aid, including qualified undocumented students. Most students will still complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) to apply for financial aid. If you are not sure whether you should complete this Alternative Application or the FAFSA, the pre-screening questions at the beginning of the Alternative Application will help you to determine which application you should file. We also encourage you to talk with your school counselor or the financial aid office at your college or university to learn which application to file.

Q. What kinds of financial aid can I receive by completing the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid?

Q. If I am eligible to complete and submit the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid, does that mean I am guaranteed to get a MAP grant?

Q. The criteria to complete the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid says that I had to have graduated from high school to be eligible to complete it, so if I'm currently a senior in high school, does that mean I have to wait until after I actually graduate to complete the application?
Alternative Application Worksheet

This worksheet provides a preview of questions asked on the online Alternative Application. Answers must be typed exactly as they appear in the worksheet. This worksheet does not include all Alternative Application questions or provide space to answer all the questions. The online application, along with more application instructions, is available online at www.isac.org.

Section 1: Student Information

Full legal name:

E-mail Address:

To begin the online application process, you will need to create a Student Profile with your own individual e-mail address. You are encouraged to use a personal e-mail address provided by your school. Your e-mail address will be your student section of the application and is what ISAC will use to send you a four-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) that you will need to electronically sign your application.

Student's Current Marital Status:

- Single (never married)
- Married (not separated)
- Unmarried or Separated

Education Background:

- First year undergraduate (freshman)
- Second year undergraduate (sophomore)
- Junior year and beyond
- Master’s, doctoral, or graduate certificate program (MA, MBA, MD, JD, etc.)

When the student begins the 2024-25 school year, will they already have their first degree? Yes No

Will the student be pursuing an initial teaching certificate at the elementary or secondary level? Yes No

Did either of the student's parents attend or complete college? (This is asked because offering based on the level of schooling your parents completed; this does not apply to student's previous education.)

- Neither parent attended college
- One or both parents attended college but neither parent completed college
- One or both parents completed college
- Don't know

High school completion status when the student begins the 2024-25 school year:

- Diploma from an Illinois high school
- GED from an Illinois Community College Board approved provider
- Home schooled in Illinois
- None of the above

If you indicate you have/ will have a high school diploma, you will be asked to provide name, city, and state.
Alternative Application Worksheet

2024-25 Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid Worksheet

Section 4 – Parent Spouse’s Tax Information
The parent’s spouse or partner must complete the following questions if the parent answered “No” to “Did or will the parent file a 2022 joint tax return with their current spouse?”

Did or will the parent spouse or partner file a 2022 IRS Form 1040 or 1040-NR?  
○ Yes  ○ No

- If the answer is “No,” indicate which one of the following situations applies to the parent spouse or partner for 2022:
  o The parent spouse or partner filed or will file a tax return with Puerto Rico or another U.S. territory.
  o The parent spouse or partner filed or will file a foreign tax return.
  o The parent spouse or partner either earned income in a foreign country but did not and will not file a foreign tax return, or worked for an international organization and was not required to report income on any tax return.
  o The parent spouse or partner, even though they earned income in the U.S., did not and will not file a U.S. tax return because their income was below the tax filing threshold.
  o The parent spouse or partner did not and will not file a U.S. tax return for reasons other than low income.
  o The parent spouse or partner did not and will not file any tax return because they did not earn any income.

Parent or partner’s 2022 tax filing status:
○ Single ○ Head of household ○ Married filed jointly ○ Married filed separately ○ Qualifying surviving spouse

These questions ask about the parent spouse or partner’s financial information for the 2022 tax year. If the parents filed a joint tax return and provided information in the parent section on the previous page, these questions below can be skipped. The information may be found on W-2 forms or on the tax return they filed. Convert all currency to U.S. dollars. If the answer is zero or doesn’t apply, enter 0. If the answer is negative, include a negative sign.

Income earned from work
(RS Form 1040 or 1040-NR line 12 + Schedule 1: lines 3 + 6)

$ [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

Adjusted gross income
(RS Form 1040 or 1040-NR: line 11)

$ [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

Income tax paid
(RS Form 1040: line 22 minus Schedule 2: line 2. If negative, enter a zero.)

$ [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

Education credits (American Opportunity and Lifetime Learning credits)
(RS Form 1040 Schedule 3: line 3)

$ [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

Did the parent file a Schedule A, B, D, E, F or H with their 2022 Form 1040?
○ Yes ○ No ○ Don’t know

Net profit or loss from IRS Form 1040 Schedule C
(RS Form 1040 Schedule C: line 31)

$ [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

2024-25 Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid Worksheet

Section 7 – Review & Signatures
Following are examples of the certification statements that will be presented to you and to your parent (if you are a dependent student) in the online application process prior to submitting the application.

Student Certification and Affidavit Statement

By signing this application electronically using my username and password and/or any other credential, I certify that I have read the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid requirements and that I meet the requirements of the Eligibility Status criteria as stated, making me eligible to complete this Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid.

I also understand that I am applying to be considered for the Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant and that my eligibility will be determined based on additional factors, including, but not limited to, my financial condition, my Illinois residency and the availability of funds appropriated by the State.

If I am not a U.S. Citizen (U.S. National) or eligible noncitizen as defined in Federal law, I hereby swear or affirm that I will file an application to become a permanent resident of the United States at the earliest opportunity I am eligible to do so.

I further certify that I am the person identified by the username and password, and/or any other credential and have not disclosed that username and password and/or any other credential to anyone else.

I understand that any person who, by means of any false statement, willful misrepresentation, or through another fraudulent device obtains or attempts to obtain or aids or abets any person in obtaining student aid from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission to which the person is not entitled, will be guilty of a Class B misdemeanor and the award obtained by such means will be recoverable in a civil action. (110 ILCS 947/120).

I certify to the best of my knowledge all of the information and attestations provided in this application are true, accurate and complete.

Parent Certification Statement

By signing and submitting this signature page, I agree, if asked, to provide documentation that verifies the accuracy of the completed Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid. This documentation may include, but is not limited to, a copy of my U.S. or State income tax form or pay stubs.

I understand that any person who, by means of false statement, willful misrepresentation or through another fraudulent device obtains or attempts to obtain or aids or abets any person in obtaining student aid (from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission) to which the person is not entitled will be guilty of a Class B misdemeanor and the award obtained by such means will be recoverable in a civil action. (110 ILCS 947/120).

I certify to the best of my knowledge all information and attestations provided in this application are true, accurate and complete.

After you complete this worksheet, go online to www.isac.org and complete the Alternative Application. DO NOT MAIL THIS WORKSHEET.
Alternative Application Policies & Procedures
Alternative Application or FAFSA?

• A student should complete either the FAFSA or the Alternative Application, depending on their eligibility and other considerations in determining which application to file.

• In general, a student should not complete both applications, however, please note the following exceptions:
  • If the student filed an Alternative Application, but then becomes eligible for federal aid, it would be acceptable to file a FAFSA for the same award year.
  • If the student filed a FAFSA and it was rejected due to their citizenship status, they are encouraged to file an Alternative Application for the same award year if they meet all RISE Act eligibility requirements.
Alternative Application Eligibility Policies

• If a school is aware that a student completed a FAFSA and the Alternative Application, the school should review the ISIR to determine if there are eligibility issues that would need to be resolved before awarding MAP.

• It is in a student’s best interest to complete the FAFSA if eligible to do so and to resolve eligibility issues that may be flagged on an ISIR to maximize the amount of financial aid the student is eligible to receive.

• If an institution has any information that indicates an applicant does not meet the eligibility requirements for MAP or is aware of conflicting information, regardless of which application was used, the school is expected to resolve it.
Alternative Application Eligibility Policies

• Schools are not expected to check all Alternative Applications to see if those students have also submitted a FAFSA. However, as part of the payment claim and reconciliation process for MAP recipients, schools are expected to review results to ensure that a student does not receive a MAP award as both a FAFSA and an Alternative Application applicant in the same term.

• The Alternative Application is not intended to be an alternate option for students who do not pass the database match checks on the FAFSA.
  • It is intended for students who meet the specific eligibility criteria in the RISE Act legislation.

• If a student completed a FAFSA in error and meets all the criteria specified by the RISE Act, the student may complete the Alternative Application.
Students Unable to Provide Parent Information

• Dependent students may still be eligible to complete the Alternative Application without parental information if they have an unusual circumstance

• **Unacceptable** reasons for not providing parental information:
  • Parents unwilling to provide information
  • Parents refuse to pay for college
  • Parents do not claim student on taxes
  • Student does not live with parents
Alternative Application Corrections

- Students may make corrections to their application by logging in as a Returning Applicant.
Returning Applicants - Student Access

- Requires the student’s Student Profile Username and Password
  - Username is the e-mail address entered when creating the Student Profile
    - It may or may not be the same as the one provided on the application e-mail
  - Password is created by the student and can be updated
  - Challenge question and answer is created by the student and can be updated
Making Corrections to the Application

• Any of the data elements, except the ISAC-assigned ID number, can be corrected or updated by the student

• In general, a student should not update information that was correct as of the date it was initially signed and submitted
  • Like the FAFSA, it’s considered to be a “snapshot” of the family’s financial situation as of that date

• All corrections will require the student to re-sign the application

• If changes are made to parent data, the parent will need to re-sign the app as well
  • Parent will need the student’s ISAC ID number and the parent PIN to log in

• Each time a correction or update is made, a new transaction will be generated
Making Corrections as an FAA

• There is a process in the MAP system that provides colleges with the ability to make corrections for students who have submitted an Alternative Application

• An Application Correction tab is available on the Student Detail: Eligibility screen that allows colleges to access a student’s Alternative Application record and update most of the information on the application
  ○ FAAs cannot update an ISAC ID Number, student e-mail address, parent e-mail address, and school choices/codes.

• During the update process, messaging will appear if data is removed from a required data field, and the user will not be able to proceed until required information has been entered.

• Once all changes have been entered, you must select a “Submit” button to complete the update process.
  ○ If updated data is not submitted at the time of entry, all changes will be lost; changes cannot be saved to be submitted at a later time.

• Updates will be processed nightly and results will be available on the following business day.
To Make Corrections in the MAP System ...

- Log in to the MAP system in the GAP Access portal.

- Select the appropriate academic year on the MAP system home screen.

- Navigate to the Student Detail screen by entering the student’s ISAC ID number in the SSN field on the MAP home screen
  - Or, from the Student List screen, select the Student Detail icon to navigate to the Student Detail screen.
    - If unsure of a student’s ISAC ID number, use the Filter function to filter by the student’s name.

- If there is more than one transaction for the student, be sure to identify which transaction you want to be the basis for the correction process.

- On the Student Detail: Eligibility screen, select the Application Correction tab and begin the process of updating the application.

- Review all changes and click on the Submit button to complete the correction/update process.

- Review the new transaction on the next business day to ensure corrections/updates processed as expected.
Professional Judgments for Alternative Application Students

• A process is also available in the MAP system that provides colleges with the ability to submit professional judgment adjustments for students who have submitted an Alternative Application.

• Colleges may rely on the same policies and procedures they have in place for FAFSA applicants who have special or unusual circumstances.

• A Professional Judgment tab is available on the Student Detail: Eligibility screen in the MAP system.

• During the update process, messaging will appear if data is removed from a required data field, and the user will not be able to proceed to the next page until required information has been entered.

• Once all changes/updates have been entered, you must select a “Submit” button to complete the process.
To Process a Professional Judgment in the MAP System ...

- Log in to the MAP system in the GAP Access portal.

- Select the appropriate academic year on the MAP system home screen.

- Navigate to the Student Detail screen by entering the student’s ISAC ID number in the SSN field on the MAP home screen.
  - Or, from the Student List screen, select the Student Detail icon to navigate to the Student Detail screen.

- If there is more than one transaction for the student, be sure to identify which transaction you want to be the basis for the professional judgment.

- On the Student Detail: Eligibility screen, select the Professional Judgment tab and begin the process of updating the application.

- Review all changes and click on the Submit button to complete the process.

- Review the new transaction on the next business day to ensure corrections/updates processed as expected.
Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid

Introduction
Red messaging will indicate if information is missing from a required field, and you won’t be able to proceed to the next page until information has been entered in the required field.

Please note that if you exit this application record before submitting your changes, all edits will be lost and you will need to re-enter all of your changes to complete the correction/update process.
Alternative Application Student Records

• Similar to an ISIR, the Alternative Application Student Record includes all application data elements
  • The order of the data in the file layout follows the order of the ISIR and the values are the same, unless otherwise noted
  • Available as a text file in Notepad
    • Using free Notepad++ app provides more user-friendly viewing
  • Alternative Application Student Record School File Layout document provides details about field names, length of data fields, and start and end positions
    • Located in the Electronic Tools section of the E-Library at isac.org

• Creating/uploading Alternative Application Student Record files to colleges’ internal systems is not required.
  • Relevant student applicant data that is provided in GAP Access may be relied on to administer MAP for both FAFSA and Alternative Application applicants
Alternative Application Student Records

**MAP 2023-2024: Reports: Eligibility Reports: Create New Report**

- Home
- Student
- Payment
- Budget
- Reports
- File Extractions

**Select Report**
- MAP Eligibility Report

**Applicant**
- All Students
- Alternative Applications
- MAP

**Begin MAP Paid Credit Hours**

**End MAP Paid Credit Hours**

- Request Report

**MAP 2023-2024: File Extractions: Eligibility Status Files: Create New**

- Home
- Student
- Payment
- Budget
- Reports
- File Extractions

**Select Report**
- MAP Eligibility File

**Applicant**
- All Students
- Alternative Applications

**Begin Date Range**

**End Date Range**

- Request Report
MAP 160-Byte File Layout Specifications

• The file layout for 2024-25 MAP processing has been posted to the Electronic Tools section of the E-Library

• For 2024-25, these data elements are no longer included on the file:
  ▪ Student Social Security number (SSN)
  ▪ Student Last Name (previously an optional field)
  ▪ Original SSN
  ▪ Name ID

• These Personally Identifiable Information (PII) data elements were removed to protect student identity when transmitting files between ISAC and colleges.

• The student’s Person Universally Unique Identifier (UUID) that is assigned to the student by the Department of Education (ED) by the FAFSA Processing System (FPS) will replace the SSN on the file
  o The Person UUID field is 36 characters in length, and the total number of characters being removed is also 36, so the length of the file will not change
  o The Person UUID will stay the same for the student across FAFSA cycles
  o ISAC will generate and a Person UUID for Alternative Application applicants
Questions/Comments

Thank you for attending today!
ISAC Contact Information

School Services
866-247-2172
isac.schooolservices@illinois.gov

ISAC Call Center – Student Services
800-899-4722
isac.studentservices@illinois.gov

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