Fee Assistance Program Essentials

Calendar Year 2021

Contents

What Is the Fee Assistance Program?

The many costs associated with applying to medical school may discourage some students from applying. The AAMC believes that these costs should not be a barrier to anyone who aspires to become a physician. One resource to help offset some of the application costs is the AAMC Fee Assistance Program.

The AAMC Fee Assistance Program provides financial assistance to individuals who, without this aid, would find it very difficult — if not impossible — to take the Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®), apply to medical schools that use the American Medical College Application Service® (AMCAS®), and fulfill other application obligations.

The information in this guide is necessary for a smooth application process. You must read the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2021* before completing your AAMC Fee Assistance Program application. **When you apply, you will be asked to certify that you have read and understand the policies and procedures contained in the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2021* and that you agree to comply with them.**

If you are a returning Fee Assistance Program applicant, you must read the version of the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials* guide that is in effect at the time you submit your application because the guide can change from year to year.

Contact Fee Assistance Program staff if you have questions after reading this guide. You will find contact information for program staff in the Contact Us section of this guide and related resources at aamc.org/fap.

Before You Begin

You will need an AAMC ID and an associated username and password to apply for the AAMC Fee Assistance Program. If you have previously created an AAMC ID at any time or for any reason — which includes creating an AAMC ID to purchase or access other AAMC products and services, such as MCAT Official Prep products, the Medical School Admission Requirements™ (MSAR®) database, the MCAT exam, or the AMCAS application — you must use the same username and password to apply for the AAMC Fee Assistance Program.

If you do not have an existing AAMC ID, you will be directed to create an account and establish a username and password when initiating the AAMC Fee Assistance Program application.

If you cannot remember your username or password, **DO NOT** create a new AAMC ID.

The login page provides options to reset your password or request your username. If you encounter problems resetting your password or with the self-service security questions, contact the AAMC access team. You may not create multiple AAMC IDs for any reason without the prior written consent of the AAMC.

If you believe you have multiple accounts or created a duplicate account in error, contact the AAMC access team to resolve the situation. Allow up to two business days for a response.

Entering false information or creating multiple AAMC IDs may result in an investigation.

Note: Fee Assistance Program benefits are only linked to the AAMC ID used to submit the application. Therefore, you must use the same AAMC ID when ordering AAMC products and services for the benefits to apply.

Are You Eligible?

The AAMC Fee Assistance Program is funded by the AAMC. The AAMC eligibility guidelines **differ** from federally funded aid programs — for example, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Please read the Fee Assistance Program eligibility requirements carefully before starting your application. If you have questions about these requirements, contact program staff **before** submitting your application.

U.S. Citizenship Status

You are only eligible for the Fee Assistance Program if — at the time you are completing your Fee Assistance Program application — you are currently a:

- U.S. citizen.

- U.S. national.

- Lawful permanent resident (LPR) of the United States (also known as a green card holder).

- Person granted refugee or asylee status by the U.S. government.

- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient.

- Person awaiting refugee or asylee status approval by the U.S. government *and* have a U.S. Employment Authorization Document (EAD card).

If you are a Canadian citizen interested in the Canadian Fee Assistance Program, learn more about the eligibility criteria and application process and deadlines by visiting the Association of Faculties of Medicine in Canada's (AFMC) website (English website).

✔ You are only eligible for the Fee Assistance Program if **ONE** of the following is true for you:						
You are a **U.S. citizen**	You are a **U.S. national**	You are a **U.S. lawful permanent resident** (green card holder)	You have been granted **refugee status by the U.S. government**	You have been granted **asylum status by the U.S. government**	You have been granted **DACA status by the U.S. government**	You are waiting for **refugee or asylum status and have an EAD card**

Fee Assistance Program Poverty Guidelines

The award approval for the Fee Assistance Program is tied directly to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' poverty guidelines. In 2021, you are eligible for fee assistance if each household reported on your application (yours and your parents, as applicable) has a 2020 total family income that is equal to or less than 400% of the 2020 national poverty level for your family size. Refer to the AAMC website for the specific Fee Assistance Program Poverty Guidelines.

❗ Important Requirement: Parental Information

Unlike some federally funded aid programs, the Fee Assistance Program requires your parents' financial information, even if you are independent.

> Your parents' financial information and supporting tax documentation are required regardless of your marital status, your age, your tax filing status (independent or dependent), your parents' country of residence, or whether your parents are willing to provide documentation.

Your parents' financial information and supporting tax documentation are required **regardless of your:**

- Marital status.

- Age.

- Tax filing status (independent or dependent).

- Parents' country of residence.

- Parents' willingness to provide documentation.

Parental information is described in more detail below. Your parents' financial information is considered separately from your financial information. However, each household (yours and your parents') must fall within the poverty guidelines of the Fee Assistance Program described above.

Maximum Number of Awards

You may be awarded fee assistance a maximum of five times during your lifetime. This restriction enables others to benefit from this program.

Benefits

Each Fee Assistance Program award includes access to the Medical School Admission Requirements website, reduced fees for MCAT registration, waived MCAT Official Prep product fees, assistance in paying for an updated psychoeducational or medical evaluation (if required to support an MCAT accommodation application), and waived AMCAS application fees for one application cycle. **You will receive MCAT Official Prep product benefits once in a lifetime, regardless of the number of times you are a Fee Assistance Program awardee.** Refer to the What Are the Benefits of the Fee Assistance Program? webpage for information about the specific award benefits.

Effective Date

If your Fee Assistance Program application is approved, your benefits will begin on the date of approval and will expire on Dec. 31, 2022, regardless of when your application was approved within the Fee Assistance Program application year. Fee Assistance Program benefits awarded in 2021 are for the remainder of calendar year 2021 and for calendar year 2022.

Not Retroactive

Fee Assistance Program benefits are not retroactive. Benefits may only be applied *after* the Fee Assistance Program benefits have been awarded. No refunds will be issued for any fees paid before you have been approved for the Fee Assistance Program. Also, you will not be able to use your awarded medical school designations if your AMCAS application was submitted before your Fee Assistance Program application was approved. The AAMC is not responsible for any MCAT registration deadlines or medical school application deadlines you may miss while waiting for the review of your Fee Assistance Program application. If you have questions about whether your Fee Assistance Program benefits will be applied, contact AAMC before making a purchase.

Remaining Benefits

For returning applicants, if you were awarded Fee Assistance Program benefits in 2020, you will see a summary of your remaining benefits when you log into the Fee Assistance Program application.

If you do not require new benefits, there is no need to create a new application. If you do want new benefits, select "Start Application" at the bottom of the page to initiate a new Fee Assistance Program application for 2021. If you start a new Fee Assistance Program application and are approved, you will no longer see the Benefits Overview page. If you are denied fee assistance in 2021, you will have access to the Benefits Overview page to view and use your remaining 2020 approved benefits.

Note: Unused AMCAS benefits from a previous approval would be forfeited as soon as your new award is approved.

Steps for Applying to the Fee Assistance Program

When filling out your Fee Assistance Program application, follow the application prompts and enter the information requested completely and accurately. Failure to do so may result in an investigation. Refer to the Violations and Investigations section of this guide for more information.

Tips for Completing Your Fee Assistance Program Application

- Some of your personal information may be prepopulated from the information you provided when you registered for an AAMC profile. You may edit any incorrect information before submitting your application.

- Fields marked with an asterisk are required fields.

- You cannot proceed to the next page of the application if a required field is left blank.

- Enter income and other dollar amounts in whole dollars. Round to the nearest dollar if necessary.

- If documentation that includes sensitive personal information is required (e.g., Social Security Number (SSN), Social Insurance Number (SIN), or other government ID numbers), redact or mask that information before uploading it to your Fee Assistance Program application.

- Review your Application Summary carefully. Select "Edit" to revise your answers before submitting.

Use of Personal Information

The AAMC recognizes the sensitivity of the information you submit as part of your Fee Assistance Program application. Any personal information submitted as part of your Fee Assistance Program application will be treated in accordance with the AAMC Privacy Statement. Supporting materials are retained by the AAMC for a limited time and then securely destroyed. To the extent the AAMC publishes information related to the Fee Assistance Program, such information will be reported using aggregate data.

My AAMC Profile

Information you entered when you registered for an AAMC account will populate on the first page you see in the application process — My AAMC Profile. Review the information and update or complete as necessary.

Check that your email address is accurate; this email will be used to contact you with any application updates.

Note: Changes you make to My AAMC Profile in the Fee Assistance Program application may update across your AAMC service program profiles and vice versa.

Applicant Information

You will certify your citizenship status and enter your mailing address, phone number, and state of legal residence on the Applicant Information page. You may change information on this page before submission. After submission, you may request changes to your mailing address and phone number by contacting program staff.

Your citizenship status cannot be changed after you submit your Fee Assistance Program application. Providing false information about your citizenship status may lead to an investigation.

If you do not meet the citizenship standards for the Fee Assistance Program, check "No." You will be prompted to enter your password into a dialogue box, and your application will not be eligible.

Applicant Financial Information

The Applicant Financial Information page has several components. Guidance on how to answer the questions in each component is provided below.

Marital Status

You are required to enter your spouse's financial information if you are married. Indicate if you were married as of Dec. 31, 2020. If you were not married, or no longer married, as of Dec. 31, 2020, answer "No." Your marital status determines what information is required for this component. If you are uncertain of your marital status, review the Marital Status Definitions table.

Marital Status Definitions			
Applicant Marital Status	**Description**	**One Household Income Required**	**Two Household Income Required**
Married, Filing Jointly	If the applicant is legally married as of Dec. 31, 2020, and filing taxes jointly, the applicant should select "Married, Filing Jointly" regardless of whether the applicant and their spouse were residing together or separately.	✓	
Married, Filing Separately	If the applicant is legally married as of Dec. 31, 2020, and filing taxes separately, the applicant should select "Married, Filing Separately" regardless of whether the spouses were residing together or separately.		✓
Widowed	If the applicant's spouse passed away as of Dec. 31, 2020, the applicant should select "Widow."	✓	
Separated, Filing Jointly	This is a legal status. Select "Separated" if the applicant has received a court order for legal separation from their spouse and they are filing taxes jointly. **Tip:** If the applicant and their spouse were not legally separated as of Dec. 31, 2020, regardless of where they reside, the applicant should select "Married, Filing Jointly" or "Married, Filing Separately."	✓	
Separated, Filing Separately	This is a legal status. Select "Separated" if the applicant has received a court order for legal separation from their spouse and they are filing taxes separately. **Tip:** If the applicant and their spouse were not legally separated as of Dec. 31, 2020, regardless of where they reside, the applicant should select "Married, Filing Jointly" or "Married, Filing Separately."		✓

Marital Status Definitions (continued)			
Divorced	Applicants should select this status if they were issued a legal divorce from their spouse as of Dec. 31, 2020. **Tip:** If the applicant was never legally married, refer to the "Single" marital status.	✓	
Single	Select "Single" if the applicant has never been married.	✓	

Family Size

To enter your family size, enter "1" for yourself, "1" for your spouse (if applicable), and "1" for each dependent listed on your 2020 IRS 1040 tax form.

Taxable Income

Have you filed your federal tax return for 2020?

If you have already filed your 2020 tax return, select "Yes" and enter your adjusted gross income as it appears on your tax return.

If you intend to file a tax return but have not yet done so, select *"Not Yet."* Before the April federal tax filing deadline (typically April 15), the AAMC will accept federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) W-2 and 1099 income data and forms in place of a federal IRS 1040 tax form. However, the AAMC may require the federal IRS 1040 tax form before the tax filing deadline to verify your family size listed on the application. After the federal tax filing deadline, you cannot select *"Not Yet."* If you are required to file a tax return, even if you filed an extension, you must submit an IRS 1040 tax form to the Fee Assistance Program before your application can be processed.

If you are not required to file a tax return, select "Will Not Be Filing." If you have earned income, you are required to enter the income listed on your IRS W-2 or 1099 form.

Note: If you are married or separated and did not or will not file a joint tax return, you are required to enter the sum of your and your partner's individual incomes in the fields where income is required. You are also required to provide your spouse's IRS 1040 tax form if you filed separately. Be sure *all* appropriate parties sign and date their IRS 1040 tax form before submitting the documentation.

Will you be receiving W-2 or 1099 forms from your employer(s) for 2020? Have you received W-2 or 1099 forms from your employer(s) for 2020?

If you have selected "Not Yet" or "Will Not Be Filing" for your tax filing status, input the total income you received from work as shown on your W-2 or 1099 forms.

Employers typically provide either a W-2 or 1099 form to full- or part-time employees and/or contractors around Feb. 1 of each year. These forms summarize all your wages, tips, and other earnings. Contact your employer if you are unsure if you received or will receive such a form.

Submitting false information or omitting required or pertinent information could result in an investigation, which may impact eligibility for fee assistance. Be sure to document all earned income.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is defined as any grant, scholarship, loan, or federal work study offered to help a student meet their college expenses. This is typically detailed on your postsecondary institution's financial aid award letter.

The Fee Assistance Program does not consider financial aid awarded and used for tuition, books, or fees as part of your income. Only the portion of financial aid awarded for living expenses is considered income. If you have received or will be receiving financial aid for the 2020-21 academic year, select "Yes" when prompted for this information and enter the financial aid awarded for living expenses.

If you answer "Yes" indicating you have received or will receive financial aid, the Financial Aid Calculator will appear. **Use this calculator to determine the amount of aid you were awarded for living expenses.** The calculator will prompt you to enter the total financial aid awarded, total tuition amount, total amount spent on books, and total amount spent on fees (e.g., lab, studio, activities, or other fees) for the 2020-21 academic year, which it will subtract from the total amount of financial aid received for the 2020-21 academic year. **This will calculate the financial aid awarded for living expenses to be entered into the application.**

The program staff recommends you use the formula below to ensure you are entering your financial aid information appropriately.

Total financial aid awarded for the 2020-21 academic year − Total tuition amount for the 2020-21 academic year − Total amount spent on books for the 2020-21 academic year − Total amount spent on fees for the 2020-21 academic year = Financial aid awarded for living expenses

You will need to reference your school's Cost of Attendance Sheet or similar documentation detailing the cost of tuition for the academic year and how much students typically pay for books and fees. This information is usually found on the financial aid or admissions sections of your school's website.

If you received any financial aid, you will be required to submit a copy of your financial aid award letter and the Cost of Attendance Sheet. The Fee Assistance Program will not accept IRS Form 1098-T Tuition Statement, semester bills, loan statements, or FAFSA documentation in lieu of your award letter and Cost of Attendance Sheet.

If you did not receive financial aid for the 2020-21 academic year and you have submitted your application, you will be required to provide a letter from your institution stating that you have not received financial aid for the 2020-21 academic year. This letter must have the institution's letterhead and be signed by a representative of that institution's financial aid office.

Housing and Food Assistance

Some students live with relatives or are provided housing by a relative or friend. If any of these living situations applies to you, select "Yes" when prompted. If you did not receive assistance from a relative or friend or your housing assistance was provided as part of your financial aid award or through a federal, state, or local welfare program, select "No" for this question.

Quantify the value of your housing and food assistance by using the Housing/Food Assistance Calculator within the application. The Housing/Food Assistance Calculator will appear if you select "Yes" for the question.

Estimate what you would have paid monthly for rent based on market rates for similar housing in your area. Use the same method to estimate the food assistance you received as a dollar amount.

If you received housing and/or food assistance from a relative, friend, or other entity, you must submit a signed Housing and Food Assistance Letter that documents the assistance you received in 2020. The signature must be either handwritten or a digital signature that includes an audit trail, such as DocuSign or Adobe Signature.

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Income Earned While Living in a Country Outside the United States

If you lived and worked outside of the United States in 2020 and received income that is not reflected on your IRS W-2 or 1099 forms, select "Yes" when prompted for this information and enter the amount of money you earned. Convert this income to U.S. dollars.

If you received income while residing in a country outside the United States, you must submit a signed Foreign Income Letter that documents the income you earned abroad. The signature must be either handwritten or a digital signature that includes an audit trail, such as DocuSign or Adobe Signature.

Social Security Benefits

Enter the full amount of benefits you received from the Social Security Administration last year. In addition to retirement benefits, individuals may receive survivor benefits, disability benefits, or other less common benefits from the Social Security Administration. Enter "0" if you did not receive benefits from the Social Security Administration.

Other Federal, State, and Local Welfare Programs

Enter the total value of food stamps (SNAP), housing vouchers, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), or other welfare program benefits you or your spouse (if applicable) received last year.

If you received such benefits, you must submit a formal statement of the benefits you received from the agency that administers the benefit program(s). Enter "0" if you did not receive benefits from other federal, state, or local welfare programs.

Financial Gifts

Enter the combined value of gifts of cash that you received last year if that combined value is greater than $200. This amount includes one-time gifts of cash provided throughout the year for general living expenses.

For example, if a relative gave you $100 per month for general living expenses for 12 months, enter $1,200 in this section. Similarly, record one-time gifts of cash using your best estimate of the value of that gift. You do not need to report gifts if their combined total is less than $200.

If you received cash totaling more than $200 last year, you must submit a signed Financial Gift Letter that documents the amount you received. Enter "0" if you did not receive cash gifts. The letter must be signed with either a handwritten or digital signature that includes an audit trail, such as DocuSign or Adobe Signature.

Child Support

Enter the sum of all child support payments you received. Do not include information about child support payments you made.

If you received child support payments, you must submit an official document that details the amount you received last year. Enter "0" if you did not receive child support payments.

Alimony or Spousal Support

Enter the sum of alimony or spousal support you received. Do not include information about payments of spousal support you made.

Note: If you indicated that you have already filed your federal tax return, you will not see this question because this income would be included in your taxes.

If you received spousal support payments, you must submit a signed, formal document that details the amount you received last year. Enter "0" if you did not receive alimony or spousal support.

Income or Financial Support Received From Other Sources

Enter the total amount of other income or financial support you received last year that you have not yet reported in the previous sections. For example, other income might include veterans benefits or an inheritance.

If you received income or financial support from other sources, you must submit a formal document that details the amount you received in the previous year. Enter "0" if income or financial support from other sources was not received.

Parental Information

To continue with your application, you must agree to provide your parents' financial information. Refer to the Are You Eligible? section of this document for more details on this requirement.

The Fee Assistance Program application contains a threshold question for parental information: **"Do you have any living parents?" Answering "No" to this question indicates that your parents are deceased, and therefore no other information about your parents will be asked.** Failure to respond to this question accurately may result in an investigation. Refer to the Violations and Investigations section of this guide for more information.

The AAMC defines "parents" as biological parents, adoptive parents, and stepparents. If you were adopted, you do not have to report biological parental information. You are only required to submit information about a stepparent married to one of your biological or adoptive parents as of Dec. 31, 2020.

Grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians, aunts, uncles, and other relatives are not considered parents for the purposes of this application.

The program staff understands that parents may be unwilling to provide their financial information; however, you must submit this information to be considered for the Fee Assistance Program unless an extenuating circumstance prohibits you from obtaining that information.

Exception: If one of the following circumstances applies that prohibits you from obtaining a parent's financial information, contact program staff **before** submitting your application: you were legally emancipated, do not know if a parent is living, or do not have a relationship and do not communicate with a parent; have a parent who is incarcerated or institutionalized or who is permanently incapacitated or hospitalized; were in foster care or in the care of a legal guardian at the time you reached the age of majority; or another circumstance prohibits you from obtaining a parent's financial information.

Contact the Fee Assistance Program outreach team at fap@aamc.org or 202-828-0600 for instructions on how to complete the parental requirement *before submitting the Fee Assistance application.*

Marital Status

If you have living parents, you are required to indicate their marital status as of Dec. 31, 2020. Your parents' marital status determines what other information is required for this component. If you and your parents are uncertain of your parents' marital status, review the Parental Information: Marital Status Definitions table.

Parental Information: Marital Status Definitions			
Parental Marital Status	**Description**	**One Household Income Required**	**Two Household Incomes Required**
Married	If the applicant's living parents were legally married to one another as of Dec. 31, 2020, the applicant should select "Married," regardless of whether the parents were residing together or separately. **Tip:** Applicants who have one deceased parent and whose surviving parent was married as of Dec. 31, 2020, should select "Married."	✓	
Not Married, Living Together	If the applicant's living parents shared a residence and were never legally married as of Dec. 31, 2020, the applicant should select "Not Married, Living Together." **Tip:** If the applicant's parents were ever married to one another for any amount of time before Dec. 31, 2020, refer to the "Divorced" marital statuses.	✓	
Not Married, Living Separately	If the applicant's living parents were never legally married to one another and did not share a residence as of Dec. 31, 2020, the applicant should select "Not Married, Living Separately." **Tip:** If the applicant's parents were ever married to one another for any amount of time before Dec. 31, 2020, refer to the "Divorced" marital statuses.		✓
Divorced, One or Both Remarried	Applicants should select this status if their living parents were issued a legal divorce from one another *and* either one or both parents were legally remarried to someone else as of Dec. 31, 2020. Stepparent income will be required for remarried parents. **Tip:** If the applicant's parents were never legally married to one another, refer to the "Not Married" marital statuses.		✓
Divorced, Neither Remarried	If the applicant's living parents were issued a legal divorce from one another and were not legally remarried to someone else before Dec. 31, 2020, the applicant should select "Divorced, Neither Remarried." **Tip:** If the applicant's parents did not share a residence but were legally married to one another as of Dec. 31, 2020, the applicant should select "Married."		✓
Separated	This is a legal status. Select "Separated" if the applicant's parents have received a court order for legal separation from one another. **Tip:** If the applicant's parents were not legally separated from each other as of Dec. 31, 2020, regardless of where they reside, the applicant should select "Married."		✓

(continued)

Parental Information: Marital Status Definitions (continued)			
Parental Marital Status	**Description**	**One Household Income Required**	**Two Household Incomes Required**
Widow	If one of the applicant's parents has passed away and the other is still living, regardless of whether the parents were ever legally married to or divorced from one another, the applicant should select "Widow." **Tip:** If the surviving parent was legally remarried as of Dec. 31, 2020, the applicant should select "Married."	✅	
Single	If the applicant has only one parent and has never met the other parent, select "Single." **Tip:** If you have only met one parent in your life because one is deceased, refer to the other marital statuses and select the status that most reflects the surviving parent's circumstance as of Dec. 31, 2020.	✅	

Enter the full name and state of legal residence of each parent. This information can be updated from this page before submission. After submission, you will be unable to edit these fields.

If your parents' marital status is "Married" or "Not Married, Living Together," enter both parents' names and state of legal residence. When you get to the Parent Financial section, you will report income for one parent household.

If your parents' marital status is "Divorced, One or Both Remarried," "Divorced, Neither Remarried," "Not Married, Living Separately," or "Separated," enter both parents' names and states of legal residence. When you get to the Parent Financial section, you will report income for both parent households.

If your parent is "Widowed" or "Single," enter your parent's name and state of legal residence. When you get to the Parent Financial section, you will report income for one parent household.

Parents' Financial Information

Depending on the marital status of your parent(s), there will be one or two tabs to enter financial information. Each tab will represent the full household of your parent(s). For each household, enter income and other dollar amounts, rounding to the nearest whole dollar. Enter income for all parents in the household, including a parent's spouse (if applicable), even if they file taxes separately. The following components make up the Parents' Financial Information page.

Family Size

To enter your parent's family size, enter "1" for parent, "1" for your parent's spouse (if applicable), and "1" for each dependent listed on your parent's 2020 IRS 1040 tax form.

Taxable Income

Have your parent(s) filed their federal tax return(s) for 2020?

If your parents have already filed their 2020 tax return, select "Yes" and enter their adjusted gross income as it appears on their tax return.

If your parents intend to file a tax return but have not yet done so, select "Not Yet." Before the April federal tax filing deadline (typically April 15), the AAMC will accept IRS W-2 and 1099 income data and

forms in place of an IRS 1040 tax form. However, the AAMC may require the federal IRS 1040 tax form before the tax filing deadline to verify the family size listed on the Fee Assistance Program application. After the federal tax filing deadline, you will no longer be able to select "Not Yet." If your parents are required to file a tax return, even if they filed for an extension, they must submit an IRS 1040 tax form to the Fee Assistance Program before your application can be processed.

If your parents are not required to file a tax return, select "Will Not Be Filing." If your parents have earned income, you are required to enter the income listed on their IRS W-2 or 1099 forms.

Note: If your parents are married or separated and did not or will not file a joint tax return, you are still required to enter the sum of their individual incomes in the fields where income is required. You are also required to provide the IRS 1040 tax form for all parents if they are married but filed tax returns separately. Be sure all appropriate parties sign and date their IRS 1040 tax form before submitting the documentation.

Will your parent(s) be receiving W-2 and/or 1099 forms from their employer(s) for 2020? Have your parent(s) received a W-2 and/or 1099 forms from your employer(s) for 2020?

If you have selected "Not Yet" or "Will Not be Filing" as your parents' tax filing status, input the total income they earned from work as shown on their W-2 or 1099 forms.

Employers typically provide either a W-2 or 1099 form to full- and part-time employees and/or contractors around Feb. 1 of each year. These forms summarize all wages, tips, and other earnings. Ask your parents to contact their employer if they are unsure if they have received, or will receive, such a form.

Submitting false information or omitting required or material information could result in an investigation, which may impact eligibility for fee assistance. Be sure to document all earned income.

Housing and Food Assistance

Some parents live with relatives or are provided housing by a relative or friend. If any of these living situations applies to your parents, select "Yes." If your parents did not receive assistance or their housing assistance was provided through a federal, state, or local welfare program, select "No."

Quantify the value of your parents' housing and food assistance by using the Housing/Food Assistance Calculator. The Housing/Food Assistance Calculator will appear if you select "Yes" for this question.

Estimate what they would have paid monthly for rent based on market rates for similar housing in their area. Use the same method to estimate the amount of food assistance they received.

If your parents received housing and/or food assistance from a relative, friend, or other entity, you must submit a signed Housing and Food Assistance Letter that documents the assistance they received. The signature must be either handwritten or a digital signature that includes an audit trail, such as DocuSign or Adobe Signature.

Income Earned While Living in a Country Outside the United States

If your parents lived and worked outside of the United States in 2020 and received income that is not reflected on their IRS W-2 or 1099 forms, select "Yes" and enter the amount of money your parents earned. Convert the income to U.S. dollars.

If your parents received income while residing in a country outside the United States, then you must submit a signed Foreign Income Letter that documents the income they earned abroad. The signature must be either handwritten or a digital signature that includes an audit trail, such as DocuSign or Adobe Signature.

Social Security Benefits

Enter the full amount of benefits your parents received from the Social Security Administration last year. In addition to retirement benefits, individuals may receive survivor benefits, disability benefits, or other less common benefits from the Social Security Administration. Enter "0" if this type of income was not received.

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Federal, State, and Local Welfare Programs

Enter the total value of food stamps (SNAP), housing vouchers, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), or other welfare program benefits (if applicable) your parents received last year.

If your parents received such benefits, you must submit a formal statement of the benefits they received from the government agency that administers the benefit program(s). Enter "0" if this type of income was not received.

Financial Gifts

Enter the combined value of gifts of cash that your parents received last year if that combined value is greater than $200. This amount includes one-time gifts of cash provided throughout the year for general living expenses.

For example, if a family friend gave your parents $100 per month for general living expenses for 12 months, enter $1,200 in this section. Similarly, record one-time gifts of cash using their best estimate of the value of that gift. You do not need to report these gifts if their combined total is less than $200.

If your parents received cash totaling more than $200 last year, you must submit a signed Financial Gift Letter that documents the amount they received. Enter "0" if this type of income was not received. The signature must be either handwritten or digital signature that includes an audit trail, such as DocuSign or Adobe Signature.

Child Support

Enter the sum of all child support payments your parents received. Do not include information about child support payments your parents made.

If your parents received child support payments, you must submit an official document that details the amount they received last year. Enter "0" if this type of income was not received.

Alimony or Spousal Support

Enter the sum of alimony or spousal support your parents received.

Note: If you indicated that your parents have already filed their federal tax return, you will not see this question because the income would be included in their taxes.

If you parents received spousal support payments, you must submit a signed, formal document that details the amount they received last year. Enter "0" if this source of income was not received.

Income or Financial Support Received From Other Sources

Enter the total amount of income or other financial support that your parents received last year that you have not yet reported in the previous sections. For example, this might include veterans benefits or an inheritance.

If your parents received income or financial support from other sources, you must submit a formal document that details the amount they received in the previous year. Enter "0" if this type of income was not received.

Application Summary

The Application Summary provides a summary of the information you entered in your application. You can access your Application Summary at any time. Before submitting your application, you may edit the information you entered by selecting the pencil icon in the header of the Applicant Information section.

Submission and Certification Statement

To submit your Fee Assistance Program application, you must indicate that you understand and accept the terms of the Certification Statement. If you do not indicate that you understand and accept the Certification Statement terms, you will not be able to submit your application. Adherence to the Certification Statement is necessary to enable the AAMC to maintain a fair process for you and other applicants.

Full Text of the Certification Statement

By selecting "I Agree" at the end of the Certification Statement, you acknowledge that you have read and understand these terms.

I certify that I have read and understand the policies and procedures contained in the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2021* and that I agree to comply with them. Further, I certify that the information provided in this application is complete and accurate.

I understand and agree to the AAMC Website Terms and Conditions and the AAMC Privacy Statement.

I understand that any alleged violation of this Certification Statement or any alleged activity that may compromise the integrity or security of the Fee Assistance Program application may be investigated. If I violate the terms of this Certification Statement, including the additional terms and conditions stated in the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2021,* or fail to fully cooperate in any investigation, I may face the following consequences, further outlined in the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2021*:

- The AAMC may issue a report of the factual findings of the investigation to legitimately interested parties, both now and in the future.

- I may lose my eligibility to apply to, or receive an award from, the Fee Assistance Program in the future.

I have read and agree to comply with the terms of the Certification Statement, including the additional terms and conditions stated in the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for Calendar Year 2021,* and I understand the consequences for failing to comply.

After You Submit Your Application

After you submit your Fee Assistance Program application, the AAMC performs an initial review and determines whether the financial information you submitted is at or below the Fee Assistance Program Poverty Guidelines.

Your Fee Assistance Program application status will be determined on the basis of that initial review and will be emailed to you from the AAMC. Depending on the status of your application, you may need to take more actions to finalize your application. Below is a description of each application status.

Submitted and On Hold

The status of your application will be Submitted and On Hold if you appear to be eligible for the Fee Assistance Program on the basis of the information you submitted in your application; however, additional information is needed. You will receive details about the supporting documentation the AAMC requires to continue to process your application in the Next Steps component of the application. The status of your application will be Submitted and On Hold until all required documents are received.

Next Steps

The Next Steps component of the Fee Assistance Program application provides information about required documents and allows you to upload your documents directly to your application. You also have the option to claim your initial MCAT Official Prep benefits upon approval and release information to your academic advisor.

Step 1: Would you like to receive MCAT Official Prep product benefits upon approval?

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Regardless of the number of times you are awarded fee assistance, you will receive MCAT Official Prep product benefits only once.

Select "Yes" **only** if you wish to receive MCAT Official Prep product benefits immediately. The program staff recommends selecting "Yes" no more than one year before your exam date. Once you select "Yes," your products will be automatically activated in the AAMC MCAT Official Prep Hub and will be valid through the expiration date of your Fee Assistance Program application award.

Fee Assistance Approval and Expiration Dates

If your application is approved:	Your benefits expire:
Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2021	Dec. 31, 2022
Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2022	Dec. 31, 2023
Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2023	Dec. 31, 2024

Select "No" if you plan to take the MCAT exam more than one year from the date of your Fee Assistance award. You will be able to log into your account and change your response to "Yes" when you are ready to receive your MCAT Official Prep product benefits.

If you received MCAT Official Prep product benefits from a previous Fee Assistance Program award, you will not be given the option to claim this benefit again.

Step 2: Advisor Release

Answer "Yes" if you authorize the AAMC to release your Fee Assistance Program award status to the school-designated advisor(s) at institutions you have attended. The AAMC only provides your award status; detailed financial information is not released. Advisors can only view your award status if you also release your MCAT scores, your AMCAS application information, or both. If you select "No," you can change your response to "Yes" any time before and after approval.

Step 3: Consent and Certification Forms

The Consent and Certification Form is required for all applicants and their parents (if applicable). A form will be generated for each household listed in your application. Each form must be signed by all parties; spousal signatures should be included if applicable. Signatures must be either handwritten or digital signatures that include an audit trail, such as DocuSign or Adobe.

Step 4: Document Gathering and Upload

Use this component to upload required documentation for yourself and your parents (if applicable). All required documents are listed here, and you can also upload supplemental documents. To upload a document, browse and select the appropriate file for the correct listing. Select "Upload" under the corresponding listing. For details on required documentation, visit the What You Need to Apply page of the Fee Assistance Program website. If you cannot upload your required documents, you may mail or fax the documents to the address or fax number listed in the Contact Us section of this document.

Note: The Fee Assistance Program does not accept typed signatures.

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During review of your documentation, Fee Assistance Program staff may determine that additional supporting documentation is required. If this occurs, you will receive an email listing the required documents. Follow the steps provided by the Fee Assistance Program team in this email. Failure to follow the steps in this email could result in your application being on hold. Your list of required documents also appears in the Document Gathering and Upload component of your application.

Error Explanation Letter

If an error is discovered in your Fee Assistance Program application by you or program staff, you may be required to complete an Error Explanation Letter to document the error and provide revised information.

The Error Explanation Letter may only be considered when your application is actively being reviewed by the AAMC.

If you noticed an error after you submitted your Fee Assistance Program application, the program staff asks that you indicate where the error occurred. For example:

1. If you entered an incorrect amount under a specific component on your Fee Assistance Program application, and the household received that type of income or aid, upload the document that details the correct amount received for that household. In this situation, an Error Explanation Letter would not be needed. The Fee Assistance Program team can adjust the figure during the verification process after receiving documentation of the correct amount of income or aid. For example, if you incorrectly entered the total amount of Social Security benefits received by your parents, and your parents did in fact receive Social Security benefits, upload the document that details these benefits correctly to the Document Gathering and Upload section for your parents' household(s).

2. If you did not list a source of income or aid on your Fee Assistance Program application for a household, and the household did in fact receive it, you should upload the document under the corresponding listing under Optional Supplemental Documents for that household. In this situation, an Error Explanation Letter would not be needed. The Fee Assistance Program team can add the source of income or aid and the amount during the verification process after receiving documentation of the correct amount. For example, if you did not list you earned Housing and Food Assistance and you in fact did receive this source of income, locate the Optional Supplemental Documents for your household, select "Housing/Food Assistance Letter, signed" from the drop-down menu, and submit the correct document.

3. If you entered an incorrect source of income or aid on your Fee Assistance Program application, an Error Explanation Letter would be required, along with any other supporting documentation, if applicable. For example, if you listed on your application that your parents received $500 in welfare benefits, but the income source was Housing and Food Assistance, you should:

   - Submit an Error Explanation Letter under the "Welfare Statement" listing under your parents' Document Gathering and Upload section, since this is where the mistake was made.
   - Submit the Housing and Food Assistance Letter under the "Housing/Food Assistance Letter, signed" listing. Since this was not initially entered in the application, access this listing from the drop-down menu under the Optional Supplemental Documents listing under your parents' Document Gathering and Upload section.

If you did not receive Housing and Food Assistance as detailed in the third example above, you would not be required to submit that documentation. Note that you are still required to provide a source of income or aid for each household. You should not submit an Error Explanation Letter without additional supporting documentation for a household if the household only has that source of income. For example, if you listed on your application that you only received welfare benefits, you should not submit an Error Explanation Letter under the "Welfare Statement" listing without providing a different source of income or aid.

Important: An Error Explanation Letter cannot be used to change your submitted responses to the following questions on your Fee Assistance Program application:

1. Are you currently a U.S. citizen; a U.S. national; a lawful permanent resident (LPR) of the United States (green card holder); granted refugee or asylee status by the U.S. government; a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient; or a person awaiting refugee or asylee status approval by the U.S. government and have a U.S. Employment Authorization Document (EAD card)?

2. Do you have any living parents?

Also note, submitting an Error Explanation Letter may not change the information you entered and submitted in your application, nor will it prevent the AAMC from initiating or continuing an investigation regarding an application that was submitted with incomplete, incorrect, or inaccurate information. Refer to the Violations and Investigations section of this guide for more information.

Submitted and Pending Verification

Once all the required documents are received, your application will go into a Submitted and Pending Verification status. This status means that your application is in line to be verified by the Fee Assistance Program staff. The staff's goal is to review your application and supporting documentation and contact you regarding the findings within five business days. If program staff determines that additional information is required or that the documentation submitted was incorrect or missing signatures, your application will reflect a status of Submitted and On Hold, and you will receive an email with further instructions. Otherwise, program staff will review your application and render a decision.

Withdrawing Your Application

Your application may only be withdrawn after it has been submitted but before the AAMC has approved or denied it. **The decision to withdraw your application is final. You will not be able to reactivate or resubmit your application or start a new application for the 2021 calendar year after you have withdrawn your application. Withdrawn applications are still subject to be investigated.**

Approved

Congratulations! Your Fee Assistance Program application has been approved, and you may now begin to receive Fee Assistance Program award benefits. Note that once your application has been approved, you may not change or update your application for any reason. If a material error is found in your application after your application has been approved, the Violations and Investigations section of this guide will apply.

Denied

Your application will be denied if you are ineligible for the Fee Assistance Program on the basis of the information you submitted in your application.

Appeal

If you believe that your application was denied in error, you may appeal the decision made on your application. The program staff will not consider appeals based on a dispute of Fee Assistance Program policies, such as the use of parental income, to make a decision on your application. Submission of an appeal does not guarantee a change in outcome. The AAMC will consider appeals and make final judgments on an application at its sole discretion.

The only circumstance in which you may appeal the denial of your Fee Assistance Program application is if your (or your parental) financial information was entered incorrectly on the application.

For example:

- You entered the wrong family size, and the correct family size would make you eligible for consideration.

- You entered the incorrect amounts for your income and/or your parents' income.

If it appears that you have a reason to submit an appeal, email fap@aamc.org with the subject line

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"Fee Assistance Program Appeal."

Your email must include:

1. Your name.

2. Your AAMC ID.

3. Reason for appeal.

4. Corrected financial information (if applicable).

If an appeal is initiated, allow up to five business days for the AAMC to review the request and provide a response. Reinstatement of your application does not mean approval is guaranteed. Upon review of your appeal, your application may again be denied. It is the program staff's goal to process each request in a timely manner and appreciate the time-sensitive nature of the application process.

If the AAMC made a legitimate error when reviewing your application, Fee Assistance Program staff will correct the error upon receipt of verified supporting documentation.

If you made a legitimate error when completing your application, such as an error when entering income information, your application will be returned to you, and supporting documentation, including the Error Explanation Letter, will be required. You will be required to resubmit your application after the requested documentation has been provided. After review, you may be asked to submit additional documentation to complete the verification process.

Reconsideration

If your 2021 Fee Assistance Program application was denied and you have experienced a change of income due to COVID-19, email fapreconsideration@aamc.org to request reconsideration of your denial. You must complete the Reconsideration Request Form, provide supporting financial documents for calendar year 2020 (if required), and provide a copy of the most recent pay stub for the household experiencing the loss. We will review your submitted information and, if appropriate, will adjust the 2020 household income downward based on the estimated loss. If the adjusted household income is below 400% of the national poverty level for that family size, you are eligible.

Note: To be eligible for a reconsideration request, you must complete the 2021 Fee Assistance Program application and receive a denial.

Violations and Investigations

For all applicants to be considered fairly, it is critical that applicants adhere to a set of common procedures and that the AAMC investigate those who do not. Investigations are initiated at the AAMC's sole discretion.

Violations

If an applicant allegedly provides the AAMC with false information, engages in conduct that may compromise the integrity of the Fee Assistance Program, or otherwise violates the applicant Certification Statement or the terms and conditions of the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for 2021*, the AAMC may investigate the alleged claim and may issue a report of the factual findings of the investigation. Further, the AAMC reserves the right to take other action as is warranted in certain circumstances.

Investigation Procedures

The AAMC Policies and Procedures for Investigating Reported Violations of Admission and Enrollment Standards apply and are incorporated into the *Fee Assistance Program Essentials for 2021* by reference.

- Any applicant who is the subject of an investigation by the AAMC shall fully cooperate with the AAMC investigation, produce all documents and materials requested by the AAMC, and submit to an in-person interview conducted by or on behalf of the AAMC at the association's request.

Applicants shall truthfully and completely answer all questions posed during investigative interviews conducted by or on behalf of the AAMC.

- If the AAMC initiates an investigation, it will notify the applicant before issuing an investigation report.

- At its sole discretion, the AAMC may elect to send a fact-based investigation report documenting the violation and subsequent investigation, with any attachments provided by the applicant, to legitimately interested parties, both now and in the future. Legitimately interested parties related to Fee Assistance Program applicants are defined in the AAMC Policies and Procedures for Investigating Reported Violations of Admission and Enrollment Standards.

Arbitration for Investigation Disputes

There is one exclusive remedy available to applicants who wish to appeal or otherwise challenge a decision made by the AAMC to send an investigation report to legitimately interested parties. That remedy is binding arbitration obtained through written submissions before a single arbitrator under the JAMS Streamlined Arbitration Rules and Procedures in the District of Columbia. Examinees electing to proceed with arbitration understand that they are waiving their rights to file suit against the AAMC in any court of competent jurisdiction. **The sole issue for arbitration shall be whether the AAMC acted reasonably and in good faith in making its decision.**

Loss of Future Eligibility

If a previous Fee Assistance Program application results in an issued investigation report, the applicant will not be eligible to apply to the Fee Assistance Program in the future.

Contact Us

Specialists are available to assist you with the Fee Assistance Program application, policies, and procedures. Please contact program staff with any questions.

AAMC
Attn: Fee Assistance Program
655 K Street, NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20001

Phone: 202-828-0600
Email: fap@aamc.org
Fax: 202-828-1120

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