

# Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid Worksheet

## DO NOT MAIL THIS WORKSHEET



This worksheet provides a preview of questions asked on the online Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid, available. This worksheet does not include all Alternative Application questions and is only intended as a resource to help prepare you to complete the application and assist with gathering the documents you will need to complete it online. This worksheet should not be mailed to ISAC.

The Alternative Application is intended for students who meet specific eligibility criteria in the Retention of Illinois Students & Equity (RISE) Act, providing a pathway for undocumented students who are ineligible for federal financial aid to apply for the Illinois Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant. The online application, along with more information about the RISE Act and application instructions can be found at [www.isac.org](http://www.isac.org).

Before beginning the online application process, you will be presented with pre-screening questions to help determine if you are eligible to complete the Alternative Application or if you should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). Data collected in the pre-screening questions is retained only by ISAC and is not shared with the colleges.

### Pre-Screening Questions:

- *Are you a U.S. citizen (U.S. national) or someone who meets the definition of an eligible noncitizen\**
- *To be eligible to apply for a MAP grant through the Alternative Application, you must meet **all** of the following criteria under Section 1 OR Section 2:*

#### Section 1.

- *You attended a public or private high school in Illinois for at least two (2) years;*
- *You graduated from a public or private high school, or received the equivalent of a high school diploma in Illinois;*
- *You attended high school while residing in Illinois and have not established residency outside of Illinois; and;*

*Do you meet all of the above criteria?*

If No, Review Section 2:

(A) You attended any of the following for at least 2 years and attended for a cumulative total of at least 3 years:

- *A public or private high school in Illinois;*
- *A public community college in a community college district organized under the Public Community College Act; or*
- *A combination of those educational institutions set forth above.*

(B) You have:

- *Graduated from a public or private high school in Illinois or received the equivalent of a high school diploma in Illinois;*  
*and*
- *Earned an associate degree from or completed at least 60 credit hours of graded, transferable coursework at a public community college in a community college district organized under the Public Community College Act;*

(C) You attended an educational institution as set forth above while residing in Illinois and have not established residency outside of Illinois before enrolling at the institutions; and

(D) By signing the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid, you will be providing an affidavit stating that you will file an application to become a permanent resident of the United States at the earliest opportunity you are eligible to do so and that you are not a citizen or lawful resident of the United States.

- *Have you already filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) for the 2026-2027 academic year?*



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## Additional Information:

\* Generally, you meet the federal definition of an eligible noncitizen (and should complete the FAFSA®) if any of the below apply to you:

- U.S. permanent resident with a Permanent Resident Card (I-551);
- Conditional permanent resident (I-551C);
- The holder of an Arrival/Departure Form (I-94) from the Department of Homeland Security showing any one of the following designations: “Refugee,” “Asylum Granted,” “Cuban-Haitian Entrant;” or “Humanitarian Parolee;”
- Hold a T nonimmigrant status (“T-Visa”) (for victims of human trafficking) or your parent holds a T-1 nonimmigrant status;
- A “battered immigrant-qualified alien” who is a victim of abuse by your citizen or permanent resident spouse, or you are the child of a person designated as such under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA);
- A citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia (FM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (MH), or Republic of Palau (PW).

U.S. citizens or eligible federal noncitizens who are eligible to file the FAFSA® application should do so at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov). Students should not complete both an Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid and a FAFSA®.

## Documentation needed to complete the 2026-2027 Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid:

- 2024 federal income tax returns, W-2s, and other records of money earned in 2024
- Bank statements and records of investments (if applicable)
- Records of untaxed income (if applicable).

If you or your family have had special circumstances affecting your financial situation, such as loss of employment, complete the Alternative Application to the extent you can and consult with the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend.

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Use it only to collect information before completing the Alternative Application online at [www.isac.org](http://www.isac.org).

**Section 1: Student Information** – You will be asked to provide your full legal name, an e-mail address, your permanent mailing address, date of birth, state of residence and the date (month and year) you became a resident of the state. You will also be asked to provide your marital status and information about your education background.

**Your full legal name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix
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**E-mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

To begin the online application process, you will need to create a Student Profile which requires that you provide your own, individual e-mail address. You are encouraged to use a personal e-mail address rather than a school-provided e-mail address that could change if you change schools. Your e-mail address is also included in the 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)  Remarried  Separated  Divorced  Widowed

**Education Background** – This section of the application will ask:

*When the student begins the 2026-27 school year, what will their college grade level be?*

- First year undergraduate (freshman)
- Second year undergraduate (sophomore)
- Other undergraduate (junior year and beyond)
- Master's, doctorate, or graduate certificate program (MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD, etc.)

*When the student begins the 2026-27 school year, will they already have their first bachelor's degree?*

Yes  No

*Will the student be pursuing an initial teaching certification at the elementary or secondary level?*

Yes  No

*Did either of the student's parents attend or complete college? (This is asked because some financial aid is offered based on the level of schooling your parents completed; this does not apply to the Illinois MAP grant.)*

- 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 2026-27 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 the high school name, city and state.





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## Section 2 – Student Additional Financial Information

### Annual Child Support Received –

Enter the total amount the student received in child support for the last complete calendar year. If you indicated that you are “Married” or “Remarried,” enter the combined amount the student and their spouse received.

\$

## Section 2 – Student’s Untaxed Financial Information

These questions ask about the student’s financial information in 2024. **If you are married and filed a joint tax return with your spouse, answer these questions about both you and your spouse in the first set of boxes provided for each question. If you are married and did not file a 2024 joint tax return with your spouse, enter the additional information about your spouse in the second set of boxes for each question.** This information may be found on W-2 forms or on the tax return you may have filed. Convert all currency to U.S. dollars. If the answer is zero or does not apply, enter 0.

*Tax exempt interest income*  
(IRS Form 1040: line 2a)

\$

\$

*Untaxed portions of IRA distributions* (IRS Form 1040: line 4a minus 4b).

\$

\$

*IRA rollover into another IRA or qualified plan*

\$

\$

*Untaxed portions of pensions*  
(IRS Form 1040: line 5a minus 5b).

\$

\$

*Pension rollover into an IRA or other qualified plan*

\$

\$

*IRA deductions and payments to self-employed SEP, SIMPLE, and qualified plans* (IRS Form 1040 Schedule 1: total of lines 16 + 20).

\$

\$

*Foreign earned income exclusion*  
(IRS Form 1040 Schedule 1: line 8d).

\$

\$

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## Section 3 – Student’s Dependency Status

This section will ask about the student’s personal circumstances to determine if the student will need to provide parent information. If the student was born before January 1, 2001, is married, or can answer yes to any of these questions, the student will be considered an independent student and does not need to provide parental data.

- *The student is currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training.*
- *The student is a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces.*
- *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, 2026, and June 30, 2027.*
- *At any time since the student turned 13, they were an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent).*
- *At any time since the student turned 13, they were a ward of the court.*
- *At any time since the student turned 13, they were in foster care.*
- *The student is or was a legally emancipated minor, as determined by a court in their state of residence.*
- *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.*
- *At any time on or after July 1, 2024, was the student unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of homeless?*
  - *If the answer is “Yes” to this question, the applicant will be asked if any of the following determined the student was homeless or at risk of being homeless?*
    - Director or designee of an emergency or transitional shelter, street outreach program, homeless youth drop-in center, or other program serving those experiencing homelessness
    - The student’s high school or school district homeless liaison or designee
    - Director or designee of a project supported by a federal TRIO or GEAR UP program grant
    - Financial aid administrator (FAA)

## Student Unusual Circumstances

On the application, the student will be asked the following :

- *Do unusual circumstances prevent the student from contacting their parents or would contacting their parents pose a risk to the student?*
  - Yes
  - No

A student may be experiencing unusual circumstances if they: left home due to an abusive or threatening environment; are abandoned by or estranged from their parents; have refugee or asylee status and are separated from their parents, or their parents are displaced in a foreign country; are a victim of human trafficking; are incarcerated, or their parents are incarcerated, and contact with the parents would pose a risk to the student; or are otherwise unable to contact or locate their parents.

Students who answer “yes” will be able to complete and submit the application without providing information about their parent, however, they will be directed to contact the financial aid office at the school they plan to attend to discuss their unusual circumstances. The financial aid office will evaluate the student’s situation and let the student know if, based on their school policies, they can override the need for parent information.

Please note that these situations on their own are **not** considered unusual circumstances:

- You do not live with your parents.
- Your parents do not provide you with financial support.
- Your parents refuse to contribute to your college expenses.
- Your parents do not claim you as a dependent on their income tax return.
- Your parents do not want to provide their information on your Alternative Application.

# 2026-27 Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid Worksheet

## Section 4 – Parent Information

You will be asked to provide your parent's full legal name, date of birth, an e-mail address, a permanent mailing address, their marital status, state of residence and the date the parent(s) became a resident of the state.

**E-mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

ISAC will send an e-mail to this address to provide your parent with the Personal Identification Number (PIN) they will need to sign your application. The parent's e-mail address cannot be the same as the student's e-mail address.

### Parent's Current Marital Status:

- Single (never married)     Unmarried and both legal parents living together     Married (not separated)  
 Remarried     Separated     Divorced     Widowed

*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, 2026, and June 30, 2027.

*How many people in the parent's family, including the parent, will be in college between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027?*

*At any time during 2024 or 2025, did the parent or anyone in their family receive benefits from any of the following federal programs? Check all that apply.*

- Earned income credit (EIC)
- Federal housing assistance
- Free or reduced-price school lunch
- Medicaid
- Refundable credit for coverage under a qualified health plan (QHP)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

## Section 4 -- Parent's Tax Information

*Did or will the parent file a 2024 IRS Form 1040 or 1040-NR?*     Yes     No

- *If the answer is "No," indicate which one of the following situations applies to the parent for 2024:*
  - The parent filed or will file a tax return with Puerto Rico or another U.S. territory.
  - The parent filed or will file a foreign tax return.
  - The parent 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.
  - The parent, 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.
  - The parent did not and will not file a U.S. tax return for reasons other than low income.
  - The parent did not and will not file any tax return because they did not earn any income.

*Did or will the parent file a 2024 joint tax return with their current spouse?*     Yes     No

*Parent's 2024 tax filing status:*

- Single     Head of household     Married filed jointly     Married filed separately     Qualifying surviving spouse





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## Section 4 – Parents Untaxed Financial Information

These questions ask about the parent’s financial information in 2024. **If the parent is married and filed a joint tax return with their spouse, provide information in the first set of boxes for both parents for each question. If the parents are married and did not file a 2024 joint tax return with their spouse, enter the parent spouse’s information in the second set of boxes for each question.** This information may be found on W-2 forms or on the tax return you may have filed. Convert all currency to U.S. dollars. If the answer is zero or does not apply, enter 0.

*Tax exempt interest income*  
(IRS Form 1040: line 2a)      \$                  \$

*Untaxed portions of IRA distributions* (IRS Form 1040: line 4a minus 4b)      \$                  \$

*IRA rollover into another IRA or qualified plan*      \$                  \$

*Untaxed portions of pensions* (IRS Form 1040: line 5a minus 5b)      \$                  \$

*Pension rollover into an IRA or other qualified plan*      \$                  \$

*IRA deductions and payments to self-employed SEP, SIMPLE, and qualified plans* (IRS Form 1040 Schedule 1: total of lines 16 + 20)      \$                  \$

*Foreign earned income exclusion* (IRS Form 1040 Schedule 1: line 8d)      \$                  \$

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## Section 5 – Student Household Information (for an Independent Student)

- *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 college 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, 2026, and June 30, 2027.
- *How many people in the student's family, including the student, will be in college between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027?*
- *At any time during 2024 or 2025, did the student or anyone in their family receive benefits from any of the following federal programs? Check all that apply.*
  - Earned income credit (EIC)
  - Federal housing assistance
  - Free or reduced-price school lunch
  - Medicaid
  - Refundable credit for coverage under a qualified health plan (QHP)
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
  - Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

## Section 6 – School Choices

This section is where you will select the Illinois colleges that you are most interested in attending and to which you would like your financial data sent so that they can determine your eligibility for the Monetary Award Program (MAP). You may select up to 10 schools. You should include your top choices, even if you haven't applied for admission or been accepted yet. The list of colleges that you can select from on the online application is the complete list of schools in Illinois that are approved to participate in MAP.

## Section 7 – Review & Signatures

Once all required sections have been completed on the application, you will be able to review the information before submitting it. You can navigate back to an appropriate section if a correction or update is needed.

This section is also where students and parents of dependent students will review certification statements about the information they've provided on the application and electronically sign the application.

Both the student and the parent (for a dependent student) will each need the four-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) that ISAC will send to the e-mail addresses provided on the application. The student and the parent must have separate e-mail addresses.

Once all required signatures have been provided, the Submit button will be activated and the student can submit the application to complete the process.

After your Alternative Application has been processed, your college will receive your information and determine your eligibility. If you need to make corrections or updates to your Alternative Application, you may login as a Returning Applicant and access your Alternative Application. If you make a change to your data, you will need to re-sign the Application, and if parental data is changed, the parent will need to re-sign the Application as well.

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## 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 on oath 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 other 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 that 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 other 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](http://www.isac.org) and complete the Alternative Application.  
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