



Understanding Citizenship and Immigration Status with Financial Aid Eligibility

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FAFSA

(Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

WHY The FAFSA?

- ❑ Filing the FAFSA is one of the first steps for the postsecondary process.
- ❑ FAFSA results determine financial aid offers.
- ❑ Indiana High School Seniors must file the FAFSA.
- ❑ Indiana state deadline to file the FAFSA is **APRIL 15** to qualify for most state financial aid.
- ❑ Some Scholarships require filing the FAFSA.

studentaid.gov



FAFSA Aid Available?

FAFSA Eligibility

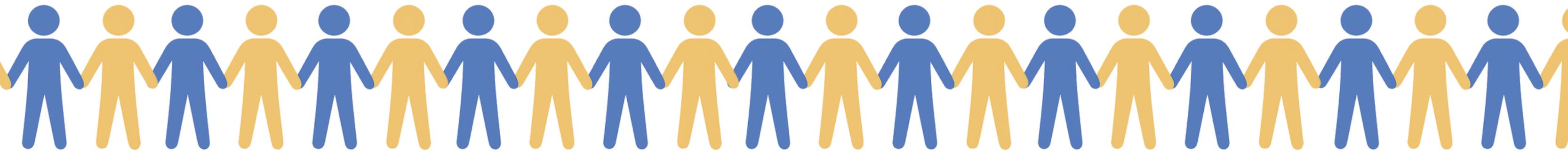
FAFSA Eligible

Citizens
U.S. Permanent Residents
Eligible Noncitizens with I-94
Arrival-Departure Record
Refugees
Asylum Granted
Cuban-Haitian Entrant
Parolee
Survivors of Trafficking or Violence
T-Visa Holder
VAWA-Designated

Not FAFSA Eligible

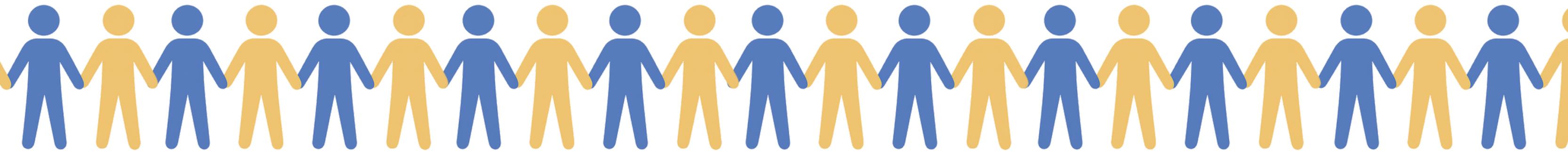
Undocumented (with or without
DACA)
Asylum Seeker
Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
(SIJS)
International Student
Temporary Protected Status (TPS)
Employment Authorized
Not Employment Auth.
Application Pending
Unable to verify

**Any citizen or
eligible non-citizen
with a Social Security
Number can submit a
FAFSA.**



U.S. Citizenship or Nationality Documentation

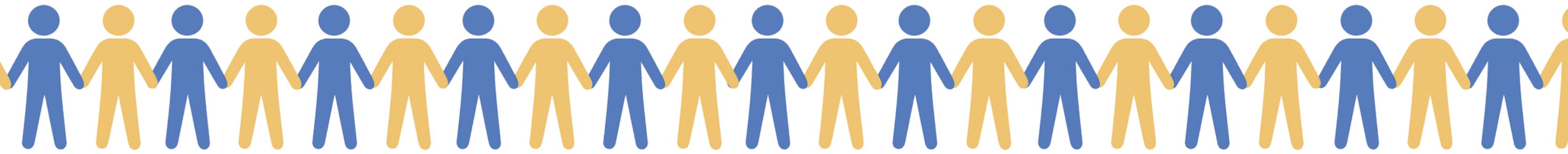
- **A Certificate of Naturalization (Forms N-550 or N-570)** issued by USCIS, the former INS, or a court to individuals who naturalize. You must copy this document for the student's file. If the student presents evidence of U.S. citizenship, but SSA did not identify them as a U.S. citizen, you should advise the student to update their status with SSA.
- **A Certificate of Citizenship (Forms N-560 or N-561)** is issued by USCIS or the former INS to individuals who derive or acquire U.S. citizenship through a parent or naturalize based on having a U.S. citizen parent and meeting certain other requirements.
- **A copy of the student's birth certificate** showing that the student was born in the U.S. or its territories, which includes Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa (including Swains Islands) or the Northern Mariana Islands (on or after November 4, 1986). Birth certificates for a person born to a foreign diplomatic officer accredited to the U.S. or other person with comparable diplomatic status in the United States are not acceptable. If a student has a birth certificate from a U.S. jurisdiction showing that the student was born abroad (i.e., not in the U.S. or its territories), that birth certificate is not acceptable documentation. See below for acceptable State Department documentation.



• **A U.S. passport**, during its period of validity, issued by the Department of State (except for "limited" passports, which are typically issued for shorter periods, such as a year). In the case of U.S. nationals who are not U.S. citizens, the passport will be stamped "Noncitizen National" (U.S. nationals are potentially eligible for *Title IV* aid). Five-year-duration U.S. passports commonly issued to younger travelers are considered acceptable documentation and are not considered "limited." One-year-duration U.S. passports are **not** acceptable documentation. A student may apply for a U.S. passport at the U.S. Department of State's website: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/need-passport.html>.

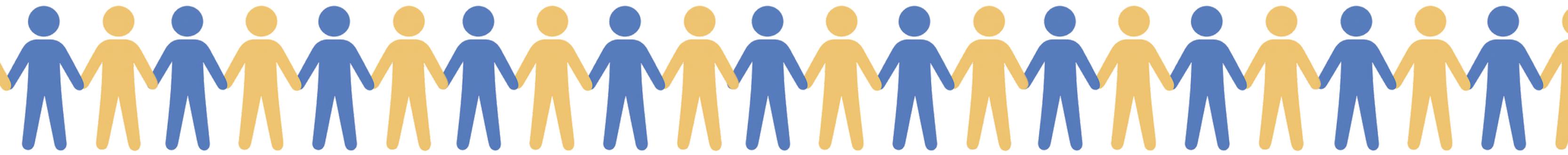
• **A wallet-sized passport card**, during its period of validity, issued by the Department of State, is valid evidence of the U.S. citizenship and identity of the bearer, but can only be used for land and sea travel between the U.S. and Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. A student may apply for a U.S. passport card at the U.S. Department of State's website: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/apply-renew-passport/card.html>. For more detail, see [22 CFR 51.4\(b\)\(2\)](#).

• **A copy of Form FS-240 (Consular Report of Birth Abroad), FS-545 (Certificate of Birth Issued by a Foreign Service Post), or DS-1350 (Certification of Report of Birth)**. These are Department of State documents. The FS-545 and DS-1350 are no longer issued, but all three are still valid. See the [Documentary Evidence of U.S. Citizenship Issued to Persons Born Abroad](#) page of the State Department's Foreign Affairs Manual.

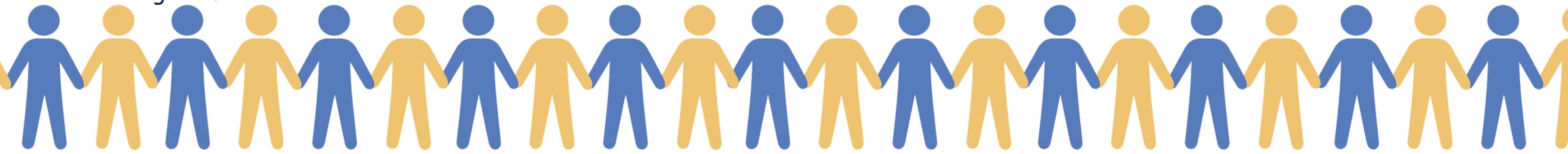


There are several types of documentation that do not substantiate a student's eligibility for *Title IV* aid. If a student provides multiple documents and some do support eligibility, they may be eligible for Title IV aid. However, if a student only provides documentation that does not substantiate their eligibility for *Title IV* aid, they are not eligible. There are a variety of forms and their related statuses which are all ineligible:

- **A Social Security card or driver's license is not acceptable** for documenting U.S. citizenship or national status since ineligible individuals can also have these forms of identification.
- **Notice of Approval to Apply for Permanent Residence (Form I-171 or Form I-464): cannot receive *Title IV* funds.**
- **Employment authorization documents (Form I-766, EAD) alone do not support *Title IV* eligibility.** However, a student with another eligible status and employment authorization can, potentially, be eligible. USCIS can verify an immigration status or category that may be eligible for aid using the information contained on an EAD.
- **Nonimmigrant visas** are generally held by those with work visas, students, visitors, and foreign government officials and **do not convey eligibility for *Title IV* funds** unless the student has a **Form I-94** with one of the endorsements given in the eligible document section, or a **T Visa** as a victim of a severe form of trafficking.
- **Form I-817, Application or approval for Family Unity Benefits** does not prove students are eligible.
- **Temporary residents allowed to live and work in the U.S. under the Legalization or Special Agricultural Worker program** are **no longer** eligible for Title IV funds. This usually is identified on Form I-766, with a notation that indicates Temporary Resident status.

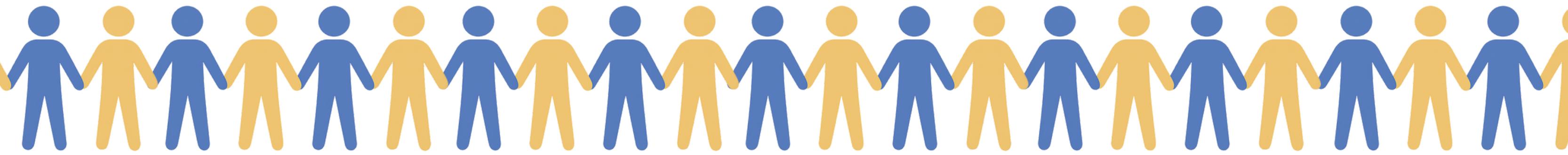


- **Illegal aliens** under the legalization (also called the amnesty) program established by the *Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA)* were given documentation that allowed them to work while their application for lawful permanent resident status was being processed. These students **aren't eligible** for *Title IV* aid unless their application for lawful permanent resident status was approved.
- **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)** allows temporary protection in the United States, due to conditions in a country that temporarily prevent the country's nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances, where the country is unable to handle the return of its nationals adequately. Students may have Approval notice (Form I-797, Notice of Action) for "Temporary Protected Status" or EAD (Form I-766) with A12 or C19 category. TPS **does not** prove students are eligible for *Title IV* aid, without another qualifying status/category.
- **Deferred action** is a discretionary determination to defer a removal action from the United States as an act of prosecutorial discretion for a certain period of time. An individual who receives deferred action is authorized by DHS to be present in the United States for the period deferred action is in effect. However, deferred action does not confer lawful status. Individuals who have deferred action may have an EAD with a C14 category or a Form I-797, Notice of Action, approval notice. Students who received deferred action are **not eligible** for *Title IV* aid. DACA (listed below), is one type of deferred action.
- **Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)** is granted by USCIS. Students who are DACA recipients may have an EAD (Form I-766) with a C33 category or Form I-797, Notice of Action, approval notice reflecting approval of their form I-812D request. Students granted DACA often are assigned an SSN, and they **are not** eligible for *Title IV* aid, but may be eligible for state or institutional aid, and submitting a FAFSA form can help them access those other types of aid. To complete the FAFSA form, DACA recipient students must enter their SSN and answer the citizenship status question as "Neither U.S. citizen nor eligible noncitizen." After submitting the FAFSA form, the student should check with the school's financial aid office to see what types of non-federal financial aid they may be eligible to receive.
- **Withholding of removal or deferral of removal orders** are issued to protect a person from return to a country that threatens the person's life or freedom. Individuals granted **withholding of removal** may have an EAD with an A10 category, in addition to the order from an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration of Appeals. Withholding or deferral of removal, by itself, does **not** make the student eligible for *Title IV* aid.



Ineligible Statuses and Documents - continued

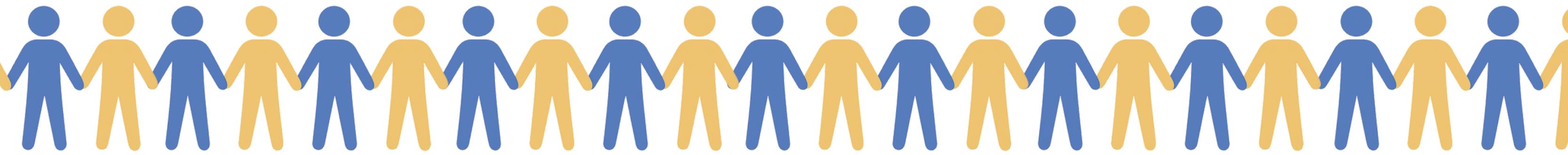
- **U nonimmigrants or U-Visa holders** are not designated as qualified aliens under the *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA)* and are therefore not eligible for *Title IV* program funds. However, U nonimmigrants may adjust to lawful permanent resident (LPR) status after they have been physically present in the U.S. for a continuous period of at least three years since the date of admission as a U nonimmigrant, if they meet other requirements. Documentation of a U nonimmigrant's adjustment to LPR status is usually on a **Form I-797 reflecting approval of Form I-485**. It is important for you to inspect the content of the document since the **Form I-797** is used for a variety of purposes.
- **A Form I-797C, Notice of Action** that shows a **receipt of the student's application**, or instructs the student to **schedule a biometrics appointment** with USCIS, does **not** support eligibility for *Title IV* aid (except for Parolee students who have applied for certain immigration statuses, see the Persons paroled into the U.S. for at least one year section above). These documents indicate "THIS NOTICE DOES NOT GRANT ANY IMMIGRATION STATUS OR BENEFIT" at the top. A Form I-797 (no "C") with Notice Type: "Approval Notice" may be an eligible form of documentation if it approves the student's application for one of the eligible statuses listed above.
- **Advance Parole Documents** allow certain individuals with pending applications for certain immigration benefits to seek parole into the U.S. upon returning to the U.S. after traveling abroad. Proof of Advance Parole may include the following documents issued by DHS: Form I-512L, Authorization of Parole of an Alien Into the United States, Form I-766 EAD with the words "Serves as I-512 Advance Parole," or Form I-512T, Authorization for Travel by a Noncitizen to the United States. The State Department may also issue a travel/boarding foil on behalf of DHS (a travel or boarding foil is a document which allows certain non-U.S. citizens to board a plane for transport to the U.S.). Individuals issued an Advance Parole Document are not parolees unless they were in a period of parole before the Advance Parole Document was issued, or until they are paroled into the United States. Therefore, the issuance of the Advance Parole Document alone does **not** make a person eligible for *Title IV* funds.



Cuban - Haitian Entrants

Cuban-Haitian Entrant as defined by Section 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980. Cuban-Haitian entrant designation relates to benefit eligibility rather than an immigration status. All Cuban-Haitian entrants are potentially eligible for federal student aid. Note that certain documents showing that the holder is a Cuban-Haitian entrant may continue to demonstrate an individual meets the Cuban-Haitian entrants definition even if the expiration date has passed.

Please see <https://www.uscis.gov/save/resources/information-for-save-users-cuban-haitian-entrants> [Information for SAVE Users: Cuban-Haitian Entrants](#) for examples of documentation, SAVE verification procedures, and other information regarding Cuban-Haitian entrants. If you are not sure whether documentation establishes that someone is a Cuban-Haitian entrant, submit it as part of a third-step verification request following the instructions in the SAVE Cuban-Haitian entrant information sheet. The SAVE response will let you know (in the "Cuban/Haitian Immigration Details" section) whether the submitted information and documentation is sufficient to verify that the student is a Cuban-Haitian entrant. **Remember to select the Cuban/Haitian Entrant Button in SAVE to verify whether the individual meets the Cuban-Haitian entrant definition. DHS will not verify Cuban-Haitian entrants if you do not select this button.**



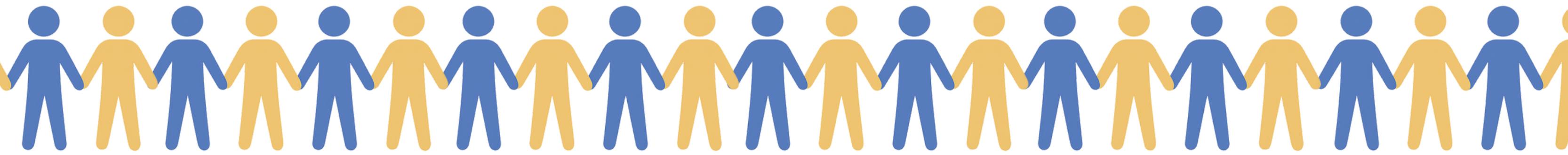
Case Study

Example of eligible noncitizen status not confirmed on his original application, Theo didn't give his ARN and reported that he was a citizen. When the SSA didn't confirm this, Theo told the aid administrator at Fowler University that he was a permanent resident. He added his ARN and changed his citizenship status to eligible noncitizen, but SAVE didn't confirm his status as an eligible noncitizen.

He explained to the aid administrator that he had applied for permanent resident status but didn't have documentation yet. The aid administrator told him that when he received documentation that his application was approved, he should bring it to Fowler so that it could be submitted to the USCIS for confirmation. The aid administrator told him to bring any information supporting his current immigration status to Fowler so that it could be submitted to the USCIS for confirmation.

Depending on the documentation Theo provides, it's possible he will be considered an eligible noncitizen in a class other than permanent resident.

WHAT IF HIS NEW DOCUMENTATION STATES, "PENDING"?



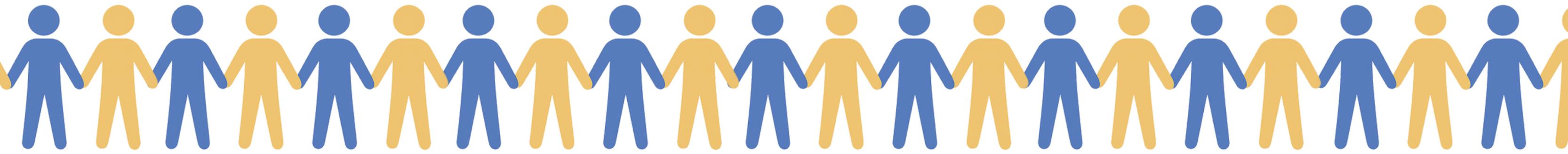
Case Studies

Citizen of the Freely Associated States

- Scenario:** John is a citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia and lives in Hawaii. He is not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- FAFSA Application:** He is eligible to fill out the FAFSA, but his eligibility is limited to specific types of aid (e.g., Pell Grants) depending on his residency status.
- Outcome:** ??? _____

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Thank you!



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**Stronger Together:
Resilience Through Community**