

# **2024-2025 FAFSA Delay Response and Student Loan Services in Other Languages**

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## **Issue**

This report (1) summarizes the 2024-2025 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form implementation delay and how Connecticut higher education institutions are responding to it and (2) gives information on the availability of services in different languages for federal and state student loan services.

## **Summary**

The 2024-2025 FAFSA delay is caused by problems with the redesigned FAFSA form. As of March 2024, the federal Department of Education (DOE) began sending some FAFSA applications to colleges for financial aid packages to be created. Most Connecticut universities and colleges have kept their May 1 deposit deadline, although the timing of the release of financial aid information varies among schools.

Federal student loan services are offered in a variety of languages. The Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA) is working to implement translation services for its application and marketing material, with more services available in more languages beginning in late spring 2024.

## 2024-2025 FAFSA Delay

DOE redesigned the 2024-2025 FAFSA form to simplify the application process and maximize student eligibility for financial aid. Among [other things](#), the new form changes the formula for student aid eligibility and expands Pell Grant eligibility. Congress required the redesign through the [FAFSA Simplification Act](#).

The effort to redesign the form has experienced problems. Among them were a failure to account for historic inflation, formula errors that would have mistakenly expanded Pell eligibility or awarded lower aid to certain applicants, and an error that prevented students in mixed-citizenship status families from filling out the form.

Although the FAFSA form is usually released annually on October 1, its release for the 2024-2025 academic year was delayed until a soft launch with limited applications began on December 30, 2023. The soft launch ended January 18, 2024, and the federal application process is now available to all students.

DOE has since received completed FAFSA forms from students. For colleges to put together financial aid packages, DOE must share the students' data from the new form. The deadline for DOE to send data to colleges has passed. Reportedly, as of March 21, [colleges had received some but not all student data](#), meaning that they are delayed in creating and sending out financial aid offers.

### *Connecticut Higher Education Response*

According to the [University of Connecticut](#) (UConn), the delay in receiving FAFSA data is resulting in it issuing aid offers by late April 2024. [Connecticut State Colleges and Universities](#) (CSCU) similarly anticipates assigning financial aid packages by the end of April.

[Yale](#) reports that the FAFSA delay will not negatively affect its financial aid process and decision release. [The Yale Daily News](#) reports that the university expects to release initial financial aid offers with regular admissions decisions. After Yale receives the FAFSA applications, families will receive a follow-up financial aid package, specifying how much aid will come from Yale and how much will come from federal Pell Grants.

Despite the delayed financial aid offers, [it has been reported that](#) many Connecticut colleges and universities, like Yale, UConn, and the University of Hartford, are keeping May 1 as their deadline for acceptance and deposit.

# Student Loan Services in Other Languages

## *Federal Loan Services*

The FAFSA form, administered by DOE, is available in both English and Spanish and [interpretation services](#) are available for additional languages. For other department information that is available to the public, there are [language assistance services](#), free of charge, upon request.

Student loan services for federal loans are administered through DOE-contracted third-party student loan serving companies. While the language services offered by DOE do not extend to their third-party contractors, student loan servicing companies may be required to follow the U.S. Department of Justice's [Limited English Proficiency \(LEP\) requirements](#) under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d), which requires recipients of federal funds to offer meaningful access to LEP individuals.

## *Connecticut Loan Services*

[CHESLA](#) is a quasi-public state agency that provides programs and information resources to help Connecticut students, alumni, and their families finance the cost of higher education ([CGS § 10a-221 et seq.](#)).

Although CHESLA does not currently offer its application in languages other than English, it plans to do so. According to CHESLA, it is also implementing the following processes:

1. creating a new website that can be translated into other languages;
2. asking Campus Door and Foundant (the third-party vendors that accept CHESLA loan and scholarship applications) about the possibility of translating the applications; and
3. developing flyers and other materials in Spanish, which are expected to be ready in May or June 2024 (once the new interest rates are set).

***State Services in Other Languages.*** The state's [Student Loan Repayment Guide](#) (a collaboration between the departments of consumer protection and banking and the Office of the Attorney General) is available in seven different languages.

It does not appear that there is a general requirement for all state agencies to produce materials in multiple languages. Even though recipients of federal funds must follow the LEP requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, based on certain factors such as the number or portion of LEP persons likely to be served by the program and the resources available, this does not apply to CHESLA as it generally does not use federal funds.

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