

# FAFSA Filing Tips



## **File the FAFSA no matter your financial situation.**

Even if you do not think you will qualify for need-based financial aid, you should still file the FAFSA. Many colleges (including HCC) require that you file the FAFSA to be considered for institutional aid. In addition, you are required to complete a FAFSA to be eligible for federal Stafford loans and completing the FAFSA does not obligate a student to accept any of the aid offered.



## **Never pay to file the FAFSA.**

You can file the FAFSA for free at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Reputable resources, including HCC, are available to help you for free.



## **Meet MD and HCC deadlines.**

Many states, including Maryland, have a FAFSA filing deadline for state-funded scholarships and grants. To be eligible for several HCC and State of Maryland financial aid programs your FAFSA must be completed and received at the federal processing center prior to **March 1, 2011**. If you haven't completed your taxes by then, use estimated information. You can always go back and make corrections.



## **Double check information to avoid delays.**

Review your FAFSA information before you submit it for processing. Make sure the student's Social Security number and the parent's Social Security number are typed in the correct spaces. Mix-ups like these will cause processing delays.



## **Electronically sign your FAFSA.**

The electronic application is not complete until both the student and parent electronically sign the FAFSA using their Federal Student Aid Personal Identification Numbers (PIN). You can apply for student and parent PINs while completing the FAFSA online, or you can go to the Federal Student Aid PIN website, [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov), to obtain your PIN prior to starting the FAFSA.