

What Is EFC?

EFC stands for Expected Family Contribution.

It's the number that the federal government expects you to contribute toward the cost of college and it helps determine how much financial aid you may qualify for. The number is based on the information in your submitted.

Your EFC number is used by your school to help calculate how much financial aid you are eligible to receive. Once your FAFSA is processed, you will receive a [Student Aid Report \(SAR\)](#) with your official EFC figure.

How your EFC affects your cost of college

Your EFC helps determine your *financial need*. Typically, the lower your EFC, the more financial aid you will receive. Your *financial need* can be found by subtracting your EFC from a school's Cost of Attendance (COA) which is typically: tuition, books, supplies, transportation, room, and board.

$COA - EFC = \text{Your financial need}$

Based on this formula, your school's financial aid office will prepare a financial aid package. You will be notified with a financial aid award letter detailing your financial aid award, and how much you will be expected to pay out of pocket.

While the cost of attendance varies from school to school, your EFC does not change based on the school you attend.

Keep in mind that it's possible that the most expensive school on your list might not cost you the most. Don't let a school's sticker price sway your decision to apply. The fact is, most students receive some kind of financial aid including grants, scholarships, and/or work-study. It all depends on the total financial aid package awarded by each school. This information is available in your [financial aid award letter](#).