

## 1. APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

- Create a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID with the United States Department of Education at <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch>. **BOTH STUDENT AND PARENT NEED AN FSA ID.**
- Complete the **2024-2025** Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at [www.studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa](http://www.studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa), include **USC Aiken school code 003449**, and **CONSENT** to the transfer of your federal tax information.
- USC Aiken** will download **2024-2025** FAFSA. Check your **USC Aiken email** and **Self Service Aiken (SSA)** for notification stating USC Aiken has received your FAFSA. (If completing the FAFSA after January, students will receive an email 5-7 business days after submitting the application.)
- View your financial aid award status and any outstanding requirements.
  1. Log into **Self Service Aiken** at: <https://my.sc.edu/>
  2. Select the **Financial Aid** tab
  3. Select the **Financial Aid Dashboard** tab
  4. Verify the Aid Year in the top right corner
  5. Complete any **Unsatisfied Requirements**

## 2. COMPLETING SC SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENTS – SC RESIDENTS ONLY

SC residents who meet the requirements to receive the SC HOPE Scholarship, SC LIFE Scholarship, Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, or SC Need-based Grant must sign the State Scholarship/Grant Certification each year in order to receive the fund. The certification outlines the general eligibility requirements and renewal requirements of the fund.

- Sign Terms and Conditions for **State Scholarship/Grant Certification**:
  1. Log into your **Self Service Aiken** account at: <https://my.sc.edu/>
  2. Select the **Financial Aid** tab, select **Financial Aid Dashboard**
  3. Select the **Resources** tab
  4. Select the **Accept Award Offer** tab
  5. Accept the award and **Submit**

## 3. ACCEPTING YOUR FINANCIAL AID

Once USC Aiken has received your FAFSA and all requirements have been completely satisfied, the Financial Aid Counselors will package your financial aid.

- View and accept your financial aid:
  1. Log into your **Self Service Aiken** account at: <https://my.sc.edu/>
  2. Select the **Financial Aid** tab, select **Financial Aid Dashboard**
  3. Select the **Accept Award Offer** tab to accept awards
  4. Accept/Decline awards and click **Submit**
    - *You can accept a partial amount, accept the full amount, or decline.*
- If you choose to accept Federal Direct Student Loans, you must complete a **Master Promissory Note (MPN)** and **Entrance Counseling**. Go to <https://studentaid.gov/>, use your FAFSA login information to complete these loan requirements under the **Complete Aid Process** tab.
  - *When you have completed your **MPN** and **Entrance Counseling**, allow 24-48 hours for the system to update your account. Loans will not disburse until the week before classes begin.*

- Complete the **Title IV Fee Authorization**:
  1. Log into your **Self Service Aiken** account at: <https://my.sc.edu/>
  2. Select the **Financial Aid** tab, select **Financial Aid Dashboard**
  3. Under the **Student Requirement** section, scroll to the **Title IV Fee Authorization**
  4. Choose **Agree/Disagree**

## 4. COMPLETING LEGAL STATE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

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### For South Carolina Residents:

All new students who are residents of South Carolina must complete the Residency Certification Form to confirm residency status. Until the Residency Certification Form is completed, students are considered non-residents and will be charged out-of-state tuition rates.

- Complete your **SC Residency Certification Form**:
  1. Log into your **Self Service Aiken** account at: <https://my.sc.edu/>
  2. Select the **Admissions** tab, then **Residency Certification Form**
  3. Select **USC Aiken**
  4. Under **Start a New Certification**, complete for the correct term

### For Legal Residents of Richmond County or Columbia County, Georgia:

Legal residents of Richmond County or Columbia County, Georgia, may qualify to pay in-state tuition rates per the Registrar's determination. If you believe you may qualify, complete the Residency Certification Form as outlined below, and answer **Yes** to the **Reciprocity Agreement** question.

- Complete your **SC Residency Certification Form**:
  1. Log into your **Self Service Aiken** account at: <https://my.sc.edu/>
  2. Select the **Admissions** tab, then **Residency Certification Form**
  3. Select **USC Aiken**
  4. Under **Start a New Certification**, complete for the correct term
  5. Be sure to answer **Yes** to the **Reciprocity Agreement** question

## 5. ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

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- Business Services Payment Plan** - An option for paying tuition, fees, and on-campus housing charges through regularly scheduled payments. More information and enrollment details are online at <https://www.usca.edu/business-services/payments/payment-plans>.
- Apply for a Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)** - A credit-based loan from the Department of Education that a parent can apply for to help supplement their student's financial aid offer. More information and the application are online at <https://studentaid.gov/plus-app/parent/landing>.
- Apply for a Private Educational Loan** – A credit-based loan offered by a private bank or credit union that can supplement your financial aid offer. Most students will need a credit-worthy cosigner to be approved. More information and a comparison tool are online at <https://www.usca.edu/financialaid/types-of-financial-aid/loans/private-education-loans>.