A Parent PLUS Loan is a loan from the federal government to the parents of dependent undergraduate students. Parent PLUS loans are credit based using the provided parent’s financial information to determine if the loan will be approved. Parents who are not approved for the Parent PLUS Loan may appeal the credit decision or apply with a co-signer (also called an endorser).

Who is eligible to apply for a Parent PLUS Loan?

To be eligible to apply for a Parent PLUS Loan an individual must be:

- Student’s biological or adoptive parents (regardless of if they have custody of the student or not)
- Stepparents if the stepparent’s financial information is required to be reported on the FAFSA

Who is not eligible to apply for a Parent PLUS Loan?

The following individuals are not eligible to apply for a Parent PLUS Loan

- Legal Guardians
- Non-Citizens
- Individuals who are in default on a federal student loan or owes a federal student grant overpayment
- Individuals whose property is held in a lien by the federal government or who are incarcerated
- Individuals with adverse credit history as determined by the Department of Education

How do I apply for a Parent PLUS Loan?

To apply for a Parent PLUS loan:

1. The Parent borrower must go to studentaid.gov and "Log In" using their FSA ID and password. 
   Note: if the student logs in using their information, the student will be the borrower and will not be eligible for the loan
2. Move your mouse to the top of the page and hover over the “APPLY FOR AID” dropdown. Click on the link that says: “Apply for a Parent Plus Loan” when it appears.

3. Click the "Start" button under Apply for a Plus Loan.

4. Select the award year that the student will be attending. For example, if your student is starting in the Fall of 2020, Spring of 2021, or Summer of 2021, the award year will be 2020-2021.
5. Enter the student’s Name, Personal Information, and Contact Information. You may be able to select a student and have the system fill in the data fields for you. Verify the information entered is correct before moving on.

6. Select if you wish to defer payment of the PLUS loan while the student is in school.

Do you want to defer repayment of your Direct PLUS Loan while the student on whose behalf you obtained the loan is enrolled at an eligible school on at least a half-time basis?

- Yes
- No

7. Select if you wish to defer payment of the PLUS loan for 6 months after the student is no longer enrolled.

Do you want to defer repayment of your Direct PLUS Loan for 6 months beginning on the date the student ceases to be enrolled on at least a half-time basis?

- Yes
- No
8. Check the box if you want to authorize the loan to pay for additional charges.

- [ ] I authorize the school to use my Direct PLUS Loan to pay for other educationally related charges that I incur at the school, as described above.

9. Select who should receive any payments if the student has a credit balance; parent or student. (see Step 19 for Direct Deposit Options)

If there is a credit balance after your Direct PLUS Loan has been applied to the student's school account, to whom do you want the school to pay the credit balance?

- [ ] Me
- [ ] The Student

10. Search for the school by selecting “Illinois” as the state and “Northern Illinois University” as the school name. When the school has been selected your screen should look like the one below on the right.

Select School to Notify

- [ ] U.S. Schools/U.S. Territory Schools
- [ ] Non U.S. Schools

Choose a state:

- Select -

Search school by name:

Select or type

The school you selected is participating in the Direct PLUS Loan application process through StudentAid.gov.

School Name:
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

School Code/Branch:
G01737

School Address:
ALTGELD HALL - ROOM 300A
DEKALB, IL 601152854

Remove this school
11. Select the “Loan Amount Requested” as either:

- "I want to borrow the maximum Direct PLUS for which I am eligible, as determined by the school”
  
  Note: Selecting this option may result in a reduction of federal work study.

- “I would like to specify a loan amount” then type in the loan amount you want. (You can contact the financial aid office for a recommended amount based on your student’s other aid and charges.)
  
  Note: An amount must be specified or the application process will be delayed while the school requests this information from the parent.

- "I do not know the amount I want to borrow. I will contact the school”
  
  Note: if you choose this option, it is important you contact the school or the application process will be delayed while the school requests the information from the parent.

12. Select the Loan Period from the drop down list:

- For most borrowers we recommend choosing a full year loan if the student will be enrolled in both the Fall and Spring semesters.

- If the student is graduating in Fall 2020 or you only want a Fall semester loan — select Fall only

- If the student is starting in the Spring 2021 or you only want a Spring semester loan — select Spring only

Note: Contact the Student Financial Aid Office if you are unsure when you will be attending.

Click "Continue" at the bottom to move on to the next step.
13. Enter your (The Parent) information into the Borrower section. Some of the data fields may be populated with information that is already on file for you. Verify the information is correct before moving on.

14. Enter your (The Parent) employer information into the fields. If you are not employed check the box. Click "Continue" at the bottom to move on to the next step.
15. Review the student and borrower information and update if necessary.

16. Review the “IMPORTANT NOTICES” by selecting the link

17. Certify the accuracy of the information on the application

18. Authorize the Department of Education to check the credit of the parent borrower.

Upon selecting “Continue” the results of the PLUS application will be displayed.

19. Loan funds are disbursed to the Bursar account after the add/drop period is closed. If the Federal Direct Parent PLUS disbursement generates a refund after University charges are paid, the refunded amount will go to the parent unless the parent borrower indicates on the PLUS application that they authorize any refund to be sent to the student.

If the disbursement generates a parent refund, the parent borrower has the option of signing up for direct deposit. Direct Deposit offers a timely, reliable and safe way to deliver your refund to your checking or savings account. Complete the Direct Deposit PDF and return it to the Bursar Office. For more information on refunds, please see the Bursar Office Website.
What happens if the Parent PLUS Loan is denied?

If the Parent PLUS Loan is denied, there are four options available:

- **Apply with an endorser**—allows the borrower to reapply with a co-signer. If after reapplying with an endorser, the borrower is still denied, or the parent decides not to pursue an endorser, the student may receive additional Direct Unsubsidized loans up to the independent amount for the student’s grade level.

- **Appeal the credit decision**—allows the borrower to provide documentation to the Department of Education to prove extenuating circumstances that may override the initial credit decision. If after appealing the credit decision, the borrower is still denied or the parent decides not to appeal the credit decision, the student may receive additional Direct Unsubsidized loans up to the independent amount for the student’s grade level.

- **Do not pursue the Parent PLUS Loan**—the borrower acknowledges the denial of a Parent PLUS loan. Using this option allows the student to receive additional Direct Unsubsidized loans up to the independent amount for the student’s grade level.

- **Undecided**—NIU will offer the additional Direct Unsubsidized loans if this option is selected. NIU will be automatically notified if an endorser or credit appeal is approved at a later date and will make adjustments to the loans as necessary.

Based on the results of your credit check, we are unable to approve your request for a Direct PLUS Loan. However, you may still receive a Direct PLUS Loan if you obtain an endorser, or if you document to the satisfaction of the U.S. Department of Education that there are extenuating circumstances related to your adverse credit history.

Under federal law, you’re entitled to a free credit report if a company takes adverse action against you, such as denying your application for credit, insurance, or employment, and you ask for your report within 60 days of receiving notice of the action. The notice will give you the name, address, and phone number of the credit reporting company. Otherwise, a credit reporting company may charge you up to $11.00 for another copy of your report within a 12-month period.

To obtain a copy of your credit report, contact:
- Equifax: 1-800-685-1111; equifax.com
- Experian: 1-888-397-3742; experian.com
- TransUnion: 1-800-916-8800; transunion.com

**View Credit Check Details**

Indicate how you want to proceed by checking the appropriate box below and click ”Submit”. Your response will be reported to the school that you selected on the Direct PLUS Loan Request.

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How would you like to proceed?

- I want to obtain an endorser.
- I want to provide documentation of extenuating circumstances.
- I do not want to pursue a Direct PLUS Loan at this time.
- Undecided.