

Verification, Updates, and Corrections

Because students sometimes make errors on their application, there is a process for verifying applications and making corrections. The Central Processing System (CPS) selects which applications are to be verified, but you also have the authority to verify additional students.

You must verify applications selected by the CPS of students who will receive (or have received) subsidized student financial assistance, as defined in the margin. Verification is not required if the student will only receive unsubsidized student financial assistance (see *Verification exclusions* later in this chapter), though a student can't avoid verification by accepting only unsubsidized aid. If he tries to do this, continue with verification.

REQUIRED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Your school must have written policies about

- the time period in which students must submit verification documentation,
- the consequences for failing to submit those documents in time,
- the method you will use to notify students if their EFC and Title IV aid amounts change,
- the procedures you or students will follow to correct FAFSA data,
- the procedure you will follow to refer a student to the Office of Inspector General (OIG see *Chapter 5*).

Your school must provide, in a timely manner, students selected for verification a clear explanation of their role, including what documents they must submit, the deadlines they must meet, and the consequences of failing to meet them.

You must complete verification for a selected student before you exercise professional judgment to adjust any values that are used to calculate the EFC. But making a PJ adjustment does not require you to verify an application that isn't selected.

Verification regulations

34 CFR 668.51–61

Definitions

668.52

Subsidized student financial assistance programs—Title IV programs for which eligibility is determined by the EFC. These include the Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study (FWS), Perkins Loan, and Direct Subsidized Loan programs.

Unsubsidized student financial assistance programs—Title IV programs for which eligibility is not based on the EFC. These include the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant, Direct Unsubsidized Loan, and Direct PLUS Loan programs.

The Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant is a non-need-based grant and is not subject to verification.

Policies and procedures

668.53

Verification items for 2013–2014

668.56

See the July 12, 2012, *Federal Register*

- Adjusted gross income (AGI)
- U.S. income tax paid
- Education credits
- Untaxed IRA distributions
- Untaxed pensions
- IRA deductions and payments
- Tax-exempt interest
- Income earned from work
- Household size
- Number in college
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps)
- Child support paid
- High school completion status
- Identity/statement of educational purpose

Verification questions/answers

The Department posted online a list of questions and answers pertaining to verification. See the webpage at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2009/verification.html>.

APPLICATIONS AND INFORMATION TO BE VERIFIED

The Department's long-term goal is for a customized approach to verification. A menu of potential verification items for each award year will be published in the *Federal Register*, and the items to verify for a given application will be selected from that menu and indicated on the student's output documents. Output documents will continue to include only one verification flag to show students who were selected, and they will need to verify all the FAFSA items shown in the margin that apply to them.

The verification flag will have a value of "Y," and next to the EFC will be an asterisk referring to a comment in the student section of the SAR that tells applicants they will be asked by their schools to provide documentation. For 2013–2014, verification tracking flags will place the student in one of five verification tracking groups, which are explained later.

You must verify any information you have reason to believe is incorrect on any application. Students with these applications are considered to be selected for verification by your school even though you may not be verifying the same data as for CPS-selected applications.

You may, at your discretion, require a student to verify any FAFSA information and to provide any reasonable documentation in accordance with consistently applied school policies.

Regardless of whether you or the CPS selected the application, all other verification requirements, such as deadlines and allowable tolerances and interim disbursement rules, apply equally to all students who are being verified.

If you want to learn more about verification results, you can use the ISIR Analysis Tool, which provides a variety of reports and analyses that can help you identify potentially faulty applications that discretionary verification or the CPS edits might be missing. They can also help you develop discretionary verification edits that focus on student changes that affect the EFC and Pell eligibility. The 2013–2014 edition will be available in June 2013.

Verification tracking groups

Students who are selected for verification will be placed in one of the five following groups. The group determines which FAFSA information must be verified for the student.

Standard Verification Group. Tracking flag V1. Students in this group must verify the following if they are tax filers:

- adjusted gross income
- U.S. income tax paid
- untaxed portions of IRA distributions
- untaxed portions of pensions
- IRA deductions and payments
- tax-exempt interest income

- education credits
- household size
- number in college
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits
- child support paid

Students who are not tax filers must verify the following:

- income earned from work
- household size
- number in college
- SNAP benefits
- child support paid

SNAP Verification Group. Tracking flag V2. Students in this group must verify the receipt of SNAP benefits.

Child Support Paid Verification Group. Tracking flag V3. Students must verify child support paid by them or their spouse, their parents, or both.

Custom Verification Group. Tracking flag V4. Students must verify high school completion status and identity/statement of educational purpose in addition to receipt of SNAP benefits and payment of child support.

Aggregate Verification Group. Tracking flag V5. Students must verify high school completion status and identity/statement of educational purpose in addition to the items in the Standard Verification Group.

Verification exclusions

There are times when you don't need to verify a student's application. **Except in the case of the student's death, however, none of the exemptions excuse you from the requirement to resolve conflicting information.** You should document the basis for an exclusion. Other information not excluded must still be verified according to all other requirements. You don't have to verify FAFSA information of a student in the following situations:

- **Death of the student.** You don't have to continue verification if you made an interim disbursement and the student died before verification was completed. You cannot make any additional disbursements, except for FWS funds already earned, to any of the student's beneficiaries. You cannot originate or disburse his Direct Subsidized Loan or consider any interim disbursement you made of Pell, Perkins, or FSEOG funds or provisional FWS employment to be an overpayment. See *Chapter 2 of Volume 5*.
- **Not an aid recipient.** The student won't receive Title IV aid for reasons other than a failure to complete verification. This includes being ineligible for that aid and withdrawing without receiving it.
- **The applicant is eligible to receive only unsubsidized student financial assistance.**

Online verification assessment module

<http://ifap.ed.gov/qahome/qaassessments/fsaverification.html>

Verification exclusions

668.54(b)

Verification following disasters

Dear Colleague Letter GEN-10-16 gives general guidance for when federally-declared disasters affect the awarding of aid. The DCL states that the Secretary will not enforce the verification requirements during the award year for applicants whose records were lost or destroyed because of a disaster. The school must document when it does not perform verification for this reason and use status code "S" when reporting the disbursement of Pell Grants to affected students.

Timing of signature

Any required signatures, such as signatures on worksheets or on copies of tax returns, must be collected at the time of verification—they can't be collected after the verification deadline for that award year.

Spouse unavailable example

Ursula is attending Lem Community College, and her application is selected for verification. She provided her husband's information on the application but now explains that her husband has recently moved out, and she can't locate him. Ursula also gives Lem some documents to show that she's tried to locate her husband. Lem determines that Ursula doesn't need to provide verification of her husband's tax and income information, but she still needs to verify her own information.

- **Applicant verified by another school.** The student completed verification for the current award year at another school before transferring. Her FAFSA data must be the same as it was at the previous school, and you must get a letter from that school stating that it verified her application and providing the transaction number of the pertinent valid ISIR.
- **Post enrollment.** The student was selected for verification **after** ceasing to be enrolled at your school and all (including late) disbursements were made.

Unless you have reason to believe it is inaccurate, you don't have to verify the reported FAFSA information of the parents of a dependent student if any of the following apply:

- **Both of the parents are mentally incapacitated.**
- **They are residing in a country other than the United States and can't be contacted by normal means.**
- **They can't be located because the student does not have and cannot get their contact information.**

Unless you have reason to believe it is inaccurate, you don't have to verify the reported FAFSA information of the spouse of an independent student if any of the following apply:

- **The spouse has died.**
- **He is mentally incapacitated.**
- **He is residing in a country other than the United States and can't be contacted by normal means.**
- **He can't be located because the student does not have and cannot get his contact information.**

Acceptable documentation

The required documentation for application information that is selected for verification for 2013-2014 is in the *Federal Register* published on July 12, 2012. See DCL GEN-12-11 for guidance about verifiable information for 2013–2014.

DOCUMENTATION

The documentation you will need for verification varies according to the item verified, as explained in this section. The Department encourages students and parents to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) to import data from their tax return and not change it. It is the fastest, easiest, and most secure method of meeting verification requirements. Also, this chapter includes the verification suggested text developed by the Department, which can be used to verify non-tax items, such as household size and number in college. The text is also available on the IFAP website at www.ifap.ed.gov.

AGI, taxes paid, and other tax data

As already noted, the importation of IRS tax data via the DRT is the best way to document that information. Students and parents do this either when initially filling out the FAFSA on the Web (FOTW) application or later as a correction. (The DRT is available beginning February 3, 2013, for those who have filed a return.) For the retrieved data to be acceptable documentation of tax data, it is necessary that neither students nor parents change the data after it is transferred from the IRS—if the data was changed or if you have reason

to believe the data transferred is incorrect, the student will need to provide other documentation as explained below. The IRS request field(s) on the ISIR will have a value of “02” when the data is unchanged.

If students cannot or will not use IRS Data Retrieval, either at initial FAFSA filing or through the FOTW correction process, they must document AGI, taxes paid, and untaxed income by providing an IRS tax return transcript for the student and spouse or parents, as applicable. Under the following conditions, the IRS Data Retrieval is **not** available in FOTW (all apply to both students and parents unless otherwise noted):

- The person did not indicate on the FAFSA that the tax return has been completed.
- The marriage date is January 2013 or later.
- The first three digits of the SSN are 666.
- The tax return was amended.
- The person filed a Puerto Rican or foreign tax return.
- The person is married and filed the tax return either as head of household or married but filing a separate return.
- Neither married parent entered a valid SSN.
- A non-married parent or both married parents entered all zeroes for the SSN.

While encouraged, tax transcripts submitted to your school for verification do not need to be signed by the tax filer.

When dependent students’ parents filed a joint return and have separated, divorced, married someone else, or been widowed, the students must submit a copy of each W-2 form for the parent whose tax information is on the FAFSA. Similarly, an independent student must submit a copy of each of her W-2 forms if she filed a joint return and is separated, divorced, or a widow.

AGI and income tax documentation

668.57(a)

Requesting a tax transcript

There are a few ways to request a tax transcript: online at www.irs.gov, by calling 1-800-908-9946, or by mailing or faxing the paper Form 4506T-EZ, which can be printed out from the IRS website. See the attachment to DCL GEN-11-13 on www.ifap.ed.gov for specific instructions.

Filing an amended return

Students or parents who file an amended return cannot use the IRS DRT, and if they amend the return after using the DRT to fill out the FAFSA, you cannot rely on that data. Instead, you will need to use information from these documents to complete verification:

1. a signed copy of the IRS Form 1040X that was filed **and**
2. a signed copy of the original tax return that was filed, a tax return transcript (which does not have to be signed), or any IRS transcript (such as a return transcript for taxpayer or RTFTP) that includes all the income and tax information required to be verified: AGI, income tax paid, education credits, etc.

Line items from the 2012 tax return			
	1040	1040A	1040EZ
AGI	37	21	4
Income Tax Paid	55	35	10
Deductible IRA/SEP	28 plus 32	17	
Tax-exempt Interest Income	8b	8b	
Untaxed Portions of IRAs and Pensions (excludes rollovers)	15a minus 15b and 16a minus 16b	11a minus 11b and 12a minus 12b	

HEROES Act modifications

The Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students (HEROES) Act provides for the modification and waiving of some statutory and regulatory provisions related to students who receive financial aid and who are on active duty during a war or other military operation or who reside or are employed in a declared disaster area. These adjustments apply to return of funds and signature requirements for verification and application, among other things. The most recent update to the HEROES Act authorized its provisions through September 30, 2017. See pages 59311–59318 of the *Federal Register* dated September 27, 2012, for the details on the act and a list of the eligible students.

Parent remarriage after applying

While the applicant does not typically update household size or number in college because of a change in his marital status, if he is a dependent student and his parent remarries between application and verification, he must update household size to include the new stepparent. However, the student would not count the new stepparent's income and assets. The school could use professional judgment to include the stepparent's income or to otherwise account for the change.

HEA Sec. 475(f)(3)
34 CFR 668.55(b)

Electronic signatures

For verification documentation, a school may collect an electronic signature for an applicant, parent, or spouse if the process includes an assurance of the identity of the person signing. This is often accomplished with a PIN or password that is assigned only after the identity of the person receiving the PIN or password has been authenticated.

For students and parents who have been granted a tax filing extension, you must accept a copy of IRS Form 4868, *Application for Automatic Extension of Time to File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return*. They must also provide a copy of all their W-2 forms or, if they are self-employed, a signed statement with the amount of their AGI and their U.S. income taxes paid. You may request those with a filing extension to use the DRT or submit to your school a tax transcript after the return has been filed. If you do that, you must reverify the income information.

For non-tax filers you must receive a W-2 form for each source of employment income. You must also get a signed statement giving the sources and amounts of the person's income earned from work not on W-2s and certifying that the person has not filed and is not required to file a tax return. For residents of the Freely Associated States (the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, or the Federated States of Micronesia), a copy of the wage and tax statement from each employer and a signed statement identifying all of the person's income and taxes for the year is acceptable. Persons from a foreign country who are not required to file a tax return can provide the signed statement certifying their income and taxes paid.

If a person must provide a W-2 form but can't do it timely, you may permit her to submit a signed statement with the amount and source of the income earned from work and the reason the W-2 is not available in time.

When a person filed a non-U.S. tax return, obtaining an IRS tax return transcript is not possible. In those cases you may accept instead of the transcript a copy of the tax return, which must be signed by the filer or one of the filers of a joint return, and you must document the circumstances. Use the income and tax information that most closely corresponds to the information on the IRS tax return, and convert monetary amounts into U.S. dollars as appropriate.

On the few occasions that you use a tax return to complete verification, you can accept an electronic copy of the return that has been electronically signed, provided your school's process for accepting such signatures complies with the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce (ESIGN) Act. But a signature on Form 8879, the IRS e-file Signature Authorization, is not an acceptable substitute for a signature on the tax return.

For persons who have a tax professional prepare their return, instead of a copy of the return with the filer's signature, you may accept one that has the name and Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) of the preparer or has his SSN or EIN and has been signed, stamped, typed, or printed with his name and address. Note that the IRS requires paid preparers to have a PTIN.

Be sure that the institutional verification document is signed, that all required sections are completed, and that the relevant tax or alternative documents are attached. Copies are acceptable, and unless specifically noted in this chapter, a signature on a copy is as valid as an original signature (i.e., a handwritten or "wet" signature). If an acceptable copy is of an unsigned tax return, the filer (or at least one of the filers of a joint return) must sign it. You can accept a tax form that was completed to duplicate the filed return; this duplicate must have at least one filer's signature.

Acceptable Documentation

	<i>IRS Data Retrieval</i>	<i>Institutional Verification Document</i>	<i>Other Documentation</i>
<i>Household Size</i>		✓	Signed statement
<i>Number in College</i>		✓	Signed statement or institutional certification
<i>AGI and Taxes Paid</i>	✓		Tax return transcript, copy of the tax return, Form W-2, Form 4868, or a signed statement
<i>Untaxed Income and Benefits</i>	✓		Tax return transcript, copy of the tax return, Form W-2, Form 4868, or a signed statement
<i>SNAP Benefits</i>		✓	Signed statement or agency documentation
<i>Child Support Paid</i>		✓	Signed statement
<i>Income Earned from Work for Non-tax Filers</i>		✓	Signed statement and Form W-2
<i>High School Completion</i>			High school diploma or transcript, GED certifi- cate or transcript, transcript showing 2-year program completion, or home school credential or transcript
<i>Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose</i>		✓	Original government-issued ID and signed statement of educational purpose or a copy of that ID and the statement notarized

The chart on page 79 shows the tax form line numbers for the most commonly reported items. This chart is a reference only; it is not a list of all the items the school must check on a tax return.

Household size

To document the household size, the student needs to provide a statement signed by him and, if dependent, at least one parent that gives the name, age, and relationship to the student of each person in the household.

You don't have to verify household size in the following situations:

- For a dependent student, the household size reported is three for married parents or two for a single, divorced, separated, or widowed parent.
- For an independent student, the household size reported is two if he is married or one if he is single, divorced, separated, or widowed.

Household size documentation

668.57(b)

Number in college documentation

668.57(c)

Number in college

You can document this item with a statement signed by the student (and, if she is dependent, at least one parent) that gives the name and age of each person in the household who is enrolled at least half time in an eligible college (excluding, of course, the parents of dependent students). The statement must also give the name of each college, and it can be written to document household size as well. Completion of the Department’s verification suggested text can satisfy both items.

If you have reason to doubt the enrollment information reported, you must obtain from each school a statement that the named person will attend there on at least a half-time basis. You don’t have to get such a statement if the person has not yet registered, is attending less than half time, or will be attending your school.

If you have reason to doubt whether a reported school is Title IV-eligible, you must insure it is, such as by checking to see if it has a federal school code.

You don’t have to verify the number in college if the reported number enrolled is one (the student only).

Unreported SNAP benefits

Charlie is married and has one child. He and his wife report an AGI of \$52,000 on FAFSA on the Web, and because this exceeds the income thresholds to qualify for either of the alternate EFC calculations, none of the relevant questions were presented to him when he filled out his FAFSA online. He is selected for the Standard Verification Group, and verification reveals that he made a mistake in reporting his AGI, which should have been \$22,000. He also indicates that he received SNAP benefits. Therefore, because he would be eligible for an auto zero EFC, his school must indicate the receipt of SNAP on his application as well as correct his AGI.

SNAP benefits (food stamps)

If the ISIR shows that someone in the parents’ or student’s household received SNAP benefits in 2011 or 2012, the student must provide a signed statement indicating receipt of the benefit. If you have reason to doubt the receipt of SNAP benefits, you may require the student to show documentation from the agency that supplied the benefit or alternative documentation you find sufficient.

In some instances an ISIR will not show receipt of SNAP benefits—even though someone in the household did receive those benefits—because the question was not presented to the student in FAFSA on the Web. This occurs when the question is not pertinent for the student; either she is not eligible for an automatic zero EFC or the simplified needs test (the reason for the question about SNAP), or she is eligible for one of those alternative EFC calculations by meeting another criterion. In such cases you don’t need to correct the SNAP field. However, if correcting the response to the SNAP question to “Yes” makes the student eligible for one of the alternate EFC calculations, you must make the change. See the example in the margin.

Child support paid

If the ISIR shows that the student or parent paid child support in 2012, the student must provide a statement signed by her or, if she is dependent, either parent and giving the annual amount of the support, the names of those who paid it and whom it was paid to, and the name(s) of the child(ren) for whom it was paid.

If you believe the information in that signed statement is inaccurate, the student must provide documentation, such as a copy of the separation agreement or divorce decree that shows the amount of child support to be provided, a statement from the person receiving the child support showing the amount provided, or copies of the child support checks or money order receipts.

Verification selection after PJ

When professional judgment (PJ) is used (and coded correctly) to adjust an application that is not selected for verification, the CPS prevents the subsequent transaction from being selected for verification.

Tax documents: special situations and alternatives

Electronic filing (e-file)

There are a variety of methods for filing the tax return electronically, which include do-it-yourself methods as well as having a tax preparer complete the return. Each method should permit printing of a paper copy of the return in those cases where the IRS Data Retrieval was not used and a tax return transcript is not available. Returns in the e-file format might not contain every line item, showing instead only the data the tax filer provided. For example, if Item 8a, “Taxable interest income,” does not appear on such a return, that means no taxable interest income was reported.

Non-filers

An AGI figure won’t be available for someone who isn’t required to file a tax return. A non-filer would instead report on the FAFSA income earned from work, which includes any income reported on the individual’s W-2 forms plus any other earnings from work not reported on those forms. Even if no taxes were paid on this income earned from work, it **should not** be reported as untaxed income on the FAFSA.

As mentioned earlier, non-filers must provide a signed statement, e.g., the institutional verification document, certifying their non-filer status and listing all the sources and amounts of income earned from work, and they must also provide any W-2 forms they have for that income.

Financial aid professionals are not expected to have special knowledge or expertise regarding the U.S. tax code. If someone whose data were required on the FAFSA submits a signed statement claiming non-filer status and you have reason to believe that person would have been required to file a U.S. tax return, this constitutes conflicting information and must be resolved. (For more on conflicting information, see *Chapter 5*.) For example, in such a case, you might require a letter from the IRS, a copy of the applicable tax provision, or other documentation supporting the claim to non-filer status. **Conflicting information must be resolved before you can disburse federal student aid.**

Immigrants are not exempt from tax filing. The IRS is concerned whether a person is a **resident alien**—legal or illegal does not matter—and a resident alien’s income is generally subject to tax in the same manner as a U.S. citizen’s. Immigrants who do not have an SSN and are unable to get one can apply with the IRS for an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN). The ITIN is only for tax purposes. It does not authorize a person to work, endorse his legal status, or entitle him to the earned income credit or Social Security benefits.

Filing extensions

See the guidance on page 80 if any of the persons required to report information on the FAFSA haven’t filed a tax return by the time of verification and a filing extension was granted by the IRS.

Fiscal year tax returns

For a fiscal (not calendar) year return, a person should report the AGI and U.S. income tax paid from the return that includes the greater number of months in the base year (see *Chapter 2* for an example). To order a fiscal year tax transcript for verification, the person must use Form 4506-T rather than Form 4506T-EZ.

Nonresident filers

Certain nonresidents, mostly those holding temporary visas such as an F-1 or H-1, file a 1040NR return, which is acceptable documentation for verification. Such persons are neither permanent residents nor U.S. citizens.

Foreign income

As noted in Step 2 in *Chapter 2*, information from non-IRS tax returns would be reported on the FAFSA, with the value of the foreign income and taxes reported in U.S. dollars, using the exchange rate at the time of application. For verification these returns are considered equivalent to IRS Form 1040. If the student (or his parents) earned foreign income but did not pay any taxes on it, it should be reported as untaxed income.

Victims of identity theft

When the IRS determines a tax filer has been or likely was a victim of identity theft, it will not allow him to use the IRS DRT or get a tax return transcript until the matter has been resolved, which can take up to a year for complex cases. For a tax filer who is a victim of identity theft, you may accept for verification a signed copy of the paper tax return he filed, as well as a copy of IRS Form 14039, Identity Theft Affidavit, if he submitted that form to the IRS.

Sometimes the IRS does not require the tax filer to submit a Form 14039, or if he did submit the form, he might not have saved a copy. In these cases he must give you, in addition to the signed copy of the tax return, either a copy of a police report that he filed about the theft or a signed and dated statement that he was a victim of identity theft, that the IRS is investigating the matter, and that he either did not keep a copy of Form 14039 or the IRS did not require him to submit the form.

If the student reports on verification documents that he, his spouse, or his parent paid child support but did not report that on his FAFSA, you must resolve the conflict. However, if he was eligible for an automatic zero EFC, the child support paid question would not have been presented on FAFSA on the Web; as long as he is still eligible for an auto zero EFC, there is no need to correct the child support field on the application.

High school completion

Students must provide one of the following documents that indicate their high school completion status at the beginning of the 2013–2014 year:

- A copy of a high school diploma.
- A copy of a final, official high school transcript that shows the date when the diploma was awarded.
- A copy of a General Educational Development (GED) certificate or GED transcript.
- An academic transcript that indicates the student successfully completed at least a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree.
- A copy of a secondary school completion credential for homeschool (other than a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent) if state law requires homeschooled students to obtain that credential.
- A transcript or the equivalent, signed by the parent or guardian of a homeschooled student, that lists the secondary school courses the student completed and documents the successful completion of a secondary school education in a homeschool setting.

If your school has already received one of the documents above as part of the admission process, you do not need to ask for another. Students who are unable to get one of these documents must contact your financial aid office.

Identity and statement of educational purpose

Students should appear in person at the school and present a valid, government-issued photo identification (ID) such as a passport or a driver's license or other state-issued ID. You must maintain an annotated copy of that ID that includes the date it was received and the name of the person your school authorized to receive it.

Students must also sign a statement of educational purpose that certifies who they are and that the federal student aid they may receive will only be used for educational purposes and for the cost of attending the school for the 2013–2014 year.

A student who is unable to appear at the school must sign and submit the statement of educational purpose, and he must submit a copy of his ID with the statement signed by a notary public confirming that the student appeared before her and presented the ID confirming his identity.

UPDATING INFORMATION

Updating information

668.55

Generally, a student cannot update information that was correct as of the date the application was signed because the FAFSA is considered to be a “snapshot” of the family’s financial situation as of that date. For example, if the student’s family sold some stock after she signed the FAFSA and spent the money on a non-reported asset such as a car, she can’t update her information to show a change in assets. After the FAFSA is signed, only certain items can be updated under the following conditions:

1. **All applicants whose dependency status changes** must update that status and the associated FAFSA information throughout the award year except when the update is caused by a change in the student’s marital status.
2. **All applicants selected by the Department or a school for verification of household size or number in college** must update those numbers to be correct as of the date of verification unless the update is due to a change in the student’s marital status.

At your discretion you may update under either 1 or 2 even when the update is due to a change in the student’s marital status if you deem it necessary to address an inequity or to reflect more accurately the applicant’s ability to pay. Such a decision must be on a case-by-case basis, and you must document your reasons for it. You must also update all other pertinent information, such as spousal income and taxes paid. Your school may have a policy of not considering such updates after a specific census date. Note, however, that you cannot update the marital status of an already independent student whose dependency status has not changed because of her marriage or divorce and who was not selected for verification. In such a case you must select the student for verification if you want to exercise your discretion to update her marital status and all other associated information.

Documenting household size or number in college is not required in a subsequent verification in the same year if the information has not changed.

CORRECTING ERRORS

As explained in the last section, you only make updates in specified situations, but for students who are not selected for verification, you or they must correct and submit for processing any errors reported on the original FAFSA that would change the EFC or that determine the students’ eligibility for aid.

For students who are selected for verification and receiving subsidized student aid, changes that result to any non-dollar item and to any dollar item of \$25 or more must be submitted for processing. See the section on changes to an applicant’s FAFSA.

Interim disbursements

668.58

INTERIM DISBURSEMENTS

Interim disbursements are allowed either prior to verification or after verification but before receiving the corrected SAR or ISIR. If you have no reason to question the accuracy of the information on the FAFSA, prior to completing verification you may at your discretion

1. make one disbursement of Pell, Perkins, and FSEOG funds for the applicant's first payment period,
2. permit FWS employment for the first 60 consecutive days after the student enrolls for the award year, or
3. originate but not disburse a Direct Subsidized Loan.

Recovery of funds from interim disbursements

668.61

If verification results in changes to the FAFSA information that you determine will not alter award amounts, you may at your discretion take actions 1–3 as well as disburse a Direct Subsidized Loan prior to receiving the corrected valid SAR or ISIR.

Overpayments from interim disbursements

If prior to verification you make an interim disbursement of Pell, Perkins, or FSEOG funds, your school is liable for any overpayment that results. If you can't eliminate it by reducing subsequent disbursements or having the student return the money, your school must use its own funds to reimburse the appropriate program by the earlier of 60 days after the student's last day of attendance or the last day of the award year.

Disbursing unsubsidized aid

A school may disburse Direct Unsubsidized and PLUS Loans prior to completing verification for an applicant who is eligible for both subsidized and unsubsidized aid. But to avoid exceeding the student's financial need, the school must consider the subsidized aid the student will receive and adjust the aid amounts after verification if necessary.

If prior to verification your school permits provisional FWS employment of students for up to 60 days, it is liable for any overpayment it can't recover by adjusting other aid, and it must reimburse the FWS account from its own funds. Students must be paid for all work performed out of your school's payroll account—they can't be required to repay FWS wages earned except when they are proven guilty of fraud.

If you make an interim disbursement after completing verification but prior to receiving a correct valid SAR or ISIR, and you fail to receive the SAR or ISIR within the deadlines discussed later in this chapter, your school must use its own funds to reimburse the appropriate program and ensure that the student is paid under its own payroll account for all work performed.

CHANGES IN A SELECTED APPLICANT'S FAFSA

To receive subsidized student aid, students or the school must submit for processing any changes resulting from verification to a non-dollar item or a single dollar item of \$25 or more.

Campus-Based and DL changes

When students receive subsidized student aid other than Pell Grants and there is a change, adjust the package on the basis of the EFC on the corrected valid SAR or ISIR. If there was an interim disbursement, comply with the relevant rules if the package must be reduced. If there was a regular disbursement and the package must be reduced, comply with Perkins or FSEOG overpayment rules or with the rules for dealing with excess loan proceeds for Direct Subsidized Loans.

Pell changes

When the data on the FAFSA change, recalculate the student's Pell Grant on the basis of the EFC on the corrected valid SAR or ISIR. You can only pay an increased Pell grant if you have that output document and it supports an increased Pell award.

If the Pell Grant is reduced and the student received an interim disbursement, adjust following disbursements as necessary. Failing that, the student should reimburse the Pell Grant Program, or, if he does not return the overpayment, your school must reimburse the Pell program with its funds. If the student received Pell Grant money as a regular disbursement, he is responsible for repaying the overpayment. See *Volume 5, Chapter 1* of the Handbook for information on overpayments.

Selection after disbursement

A student's application might be selected for verification after corrections are submitted and the student has been paid based on the previous unselected CPS transaction. You must verify his application before making further disbursements. If verification does not justify aid already disbursed, then the student is responsible for repaying all aid for which he is not eligible, though he may keep any Stafford Loan money he received and FWS wages he earned. See page 89 for what happens if he fails to complete verification.

After documentation is complete

When you've obtained all necessary verification documents from the student, you should compare them to the SAR or ISIR you are reviewing for payment. If all the student's information is correct and there are no outstanding issues or conflicting information, you may award and disburse aid for which the student is eligible.

HOW TO SUBMIT CORRECTIONS AND UPDATES

Corrections and updates can be submitted by the student on the SAR or the Web or by the school using FAA Access to CPS Online or the Electronic Data Exchange (EDE).

Using FAFSA on the Web (FOTW)

Any student who has a PIN—regardless of how he originally applied—may correct any of his own data by using FAFSA on the Web at www.fafsa.gov. If dependent students need to change parental data, a parent must either sign electronically with her own PIN or print out and sign a signature page.

Submitting changes via FAA Access to CPS Online or EDE

Your school can submit corrections and updates electronically through FAA Access to CPS Online or EDE even if the original application wasn't submitted with that method. If your school isn't listed on the transaction you want to correct, the student will have to give you the DRN printed on the SAR or SAR Acknowledgement so that you can add your school in the next available institution field and then get electronic access to the resulting corrected transaction. If all the fields are filled, the student will have to tell you which school to replace with yours.

Changes to FAFSA information

668.59

When there is an overaward from a regular disbursement, the following individual program regulations apply:

Pell grants: 690.79

Perkins and FSEOG: 673.5(f)

Subsidized DL: 685.303(e)

Example: selection after disbursement

Owen is attending Guerrero University. His application isn't selected for verification, and he receives aid in the fall. In December, Owen submits a correction on his SAR that causes the ensuing transaction to be selected for verification. The aid administrator at Guerrero tells Owen he needs to submit verification documents if he wants his aid for the spring and if he wants to keep the Pell funds he received for the fall, but Owen doesn't turn in the documents. Owen doesn't have to repay the Stafford loan he got in the fall, but he does have to return the Pell grant, and Guerrero must cancel his aid package for the spring.

Using a joint return to figure individual AGI and taxes paid

If the filer of a joint return has become widowed, divorced, or separated since filing the return, it may be necessary to determine the individual's income and taxes paid using the joint return and W-2 forms. If a filer is self-employed or if a W-2 is not available, the school may accept a signed statement from the filer that certifies the base year AGI and U.S. taxes paid. If the filer has divorced and married someone new (see the margin note on page 80 if this occurred after completion of the application), then the new spouse's income and assets would also need to be included.

Add the income amounts from the individual's W-2 forms to any other income that can be extracted from the joint return. Any interest or business income earned on joint accounts or investments should be assessed at 50%. The same procedure should be used to divide business or farm losses. Also, if the AGI listed on the joint return was adjusted, you should reduce the individual's AGI by the portion of the adjustment that applies solely to him or her. For example, if an adjustment was made for moving expenses, which applies to the couple jointly, only 50% of the adjustment amount can be applied against the individual's income. An AGI figure can be calculated for the individual filer. A signed statement from the filer certifying that the data from the joint return were accurately assessed is sufficient documentation for this method.

Use one of the following methods to figure the individual's taxes paid:

- **Tax table (preferred method).** Using the IRS Tax Table or Tax Rate Schedule for the appropriate year, calculate the amount of tax that would have been paid if a separate return had been filed. Use the deduction and number of exemptions the individual could have claimed if he or she had filed a separate return. (If itemized deductions were taken, count only the portion of those deductions that could have been claimed on a separate tax return.)
- **Proportional distribution.** Determine what percentage of the joint AGI was attributable to the individual, and then assess the joint taxes paid by that same percentage.

Example 1: Calculating individual AGI from joint return example

Eddy's application is selected for verification. He and his wife filed a joint return for 2012 and have since separated. The AGI on Eddy's FAFSA matches the AGI of \$48,000 on the 2012 tax return, which means it's wrong because it includes his wife's income.

Eddy's W-2 shows that his income for 2012 was \$19,800, and the tax return shows \$400 in interest. Because it was interest on a joint savings account, the aid administrator adds \$200 of it to Eddy's income and submits \$20,000 as the corrected income via FAA Access.

Example 2: Calculating individual taxes paid from a joint return

The aid administrator determines that Eddy's part of the \$48,000 AGI he and his wife reported is \$20,000. Eddy and his wife claimed four exemptions on their tax return (themselves, one child, and Eddy's nephew). Eddy's wife has custody of the child and will claim him as her dependent when she files her tax return for 2012. Eddy's nephew still lives with him. Therefore, Eddy would have had two exemptions (himself and his nephew), totaling \$7,600. In the new situation, Eddy's filing status is "head of household" instead of "married." Therefore, his standard deduction is \$8,700 (instead of the \$11,900 for married filers). Eddy's income of \$20,000 minus the \$7,600 for exemptions and the \$8,700 standard deduction results in \$3,700 in taxable income.

The aid administrator uses the tax table to determine how much tax Eddy would have paid on this amount, taking into account any applicable credits reported on the original return. With a taxable income of \$3,700, the amount of tax paid from the tax schedule would be \$373.

To use the proportional distribution method instead, the aid administrator figures out what percentage of the joint AGI Eddy's income represents. The percentage is 42% (20,000 divided by 48,000 is .4167). The aid administrator then multiplies the income tax paid as reported on the tax return (\$1,269 for this example) by this percentage. Therefore, Eddy's income tax paid would be \$533 (.42 x \$1,269).

If you send a correction or update for a student, you must first have signed documentation from the student and parent. This can be signatures on Part 2 of the SAR, a signed copy of the correction or update, or a signed verification document. Unlike those for the original application, these do not have to be wet signatures. See *Chapter 2* for more on signature requirements.

The CPS will process the change, send an ISIR to the school, and send the student a one-page SAR acknowledgement or, if the CPS has her e-mail address, an e-mail with a link to her SAR information on the Web.

Using the Student Aid Report (SAR) to make corrections

Students who received a paper SAR may make corrections or updates on it, then sign and return it to the FAFSA processor at the address given at the end of the SAR (of course, students with PINs can instead use FOTW). One parent must also sign if the student is dependent and parent data was changed, unless the only corrections are to the institution or housing codes, the address, or telephone number.

If the student applied electronically through a school or received an e-mail link to SAR information on the Web but would like to make corrections with a paper SAR, she can have one mailed to her by calling the FSAIC at 1-800-433-3243 and providing her name, SSN, and date of birth.

Adding schools and changing a student's address

As with other changes, a student can add schools or change her address, e-mail address, or telephone number on the Web or on a paper SAR. But she can also update these items over the phone by calling 1-800-4-FED-AID and providing her DRN. You can submit those changes for her through FAA Access, although, as noted before, if your school was not listed on the student's application, you will need her DRN to add your school.

The FAFSA has limited space for a student to list schools that will receive the application data: four schools can appear on the paper application, 10 with either FAFSA on the Web, FAA Access, or EDE. If the student wants information sent to more schools, he can use any of the methods listed previously to replace some or all of the original schools, though the replaced schools will not receive an ISIR. For example, if the student originally listed 10 schools on the application and then used FOTW to replace two schools with two new ones, those that were replaced would not receive an ISIR from this correction or any subsequent correction on which they did not appear.

DEADLINES AND FAILURE TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION

You must require students selected for verification—whether by your school or by the Department—to submit to you the documentation by the date specified by your school (for Campus-Based and DL) or the Department (for Pell).

Making corrections and updates

FAFSA on the Web
www.fafsa.gov

FAA Access to CPS Online
<http://faaaccess.ed.gov/>
or via EDE
by the school aid office

Student aid report
paper corrections sent by mail

By phone
Change schools listed or student address (DRN required)
Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC)
1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)

Corrections by phone limited to processor errors

As we've discussed, a student with a DRN can change his address and school listings by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center.

Most other corrections can't be made over the phone—they have to be done on the SAR or through FOTW or FAA Access. There is only one exception, and that's when the information the student submitted on a paper FAFSA or SAR was not scanned or input correctly.

If a student contacts the FSAIC and an operator can verify by viewing the image file of the document that an answer to an item was not correctly recorded by the FAFSA processor, the operator can correct that error.

The correction will be transmitted to the CPS, a corrected ISIR will be available to the student's schools within 72 hours, and he will receive a corrected SAR in the mail within 10 days. The student doesn't have to sign for this correction because he has already signed the original paper document that has the correct information.

Failure to submit documentation

Pell Grants 668.60(c)
C-B/DL 668.60(b)

Campus-Based and DL

If a student doesn't provide verification documentation within a reasonable time period that your school has established, you cannot

- disburse more Perkins or FSEOG funds,
- employ or permit further FWS employment, or
- originate or disburse any additional Direct Subsidized Loans.

Additionally, the student must repay any Perkins or FSEOG funds she received that year.

If she fails to complete verification within the time period established by your school and if you received any Direct Subsidized Loan funds for the student that you did not disburse, you must return some or all of those funds under the excess cash tolerance regulation [see 34 CFR 668.166(b) and *Volume 4, Chapter 2*].

Notwithstanding this, if the student provides the documentation after your school's deadline, you may, at your discretion, still provide aid.

Pell Grants

A student selected for verification may submit a valid SAR or a school can receive a valid ISIR after the Pell deadline published in the *Federal Register* but before the verification deadline established by the Department and also published in the *Federal Register*. If the student does not provide the verification documentation or you do not receive the valid SAR or ISIR (if necessary) within this additional time, the student forfeits his Pell Grant for the award year and must return any Pell money already received for that award year.

Other considerations

The Department may determine not to process the FAFSA of an applicant who has been requested to provide documentation until he does so or the Department decides there is no longer a need for it.

A Pell applicant selected for verification must complete the process by the deadline published in the *Federal Register*. As of this writing the notice for 2013–2014 has not been published, but the deadline is expected to be September 26, 2014, or 120 days after the last day of the student's enrollment, whichever is earlier. Campus-Based and Stafford Loan applicants must complete verification by the same deadline or by an earlier one established by your aid office.

Verification is complete when you have all the requested documentation and a valid ISIR or SAR (one on which all the information is accurate and complete). This includes any necessary corrections, which must be made by the deadlines published in the *Federal Register* for the submission of paper or electronic corrections.

Late disbursements

Generally a student ceases to be eligible for aid once he has finished the term and is no longer enrolled. However, he may submit verification documentation and receive a late disbursement after that time if the Department processed a SAR or ISIR with an official EFC while he was still enrolled. For information on *post-withdrawal* disbursements, see *Volume 5*.

Verification status codes

When you disburse a Pell Grant, you must report the student's verification status through Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) even if he wasn't selected for verification.

V—You have verified the student. This includes students selected by the CPS and those your school chose to verify based on its own criteria.

W—The student was selected for verification by the CPS or your school, and you chose to pay a first disbursement of Pell without documentation. **This code must be updated once verification is complete, or COD will reduce the Pell Grant to zero.**

S—The CPS selected the student for verification, but you did not verify him because he satisfied one of the exclusions described earlier in the chapter (except the post-enrollment exclusion; see below) or because your school participates in the Quality Assurance Program and the student's application did not meet your school's verification criteria.

Blank—Report a blank if you have not performed verification because neither the CPS nor your school selected the student or because the student was selected by the CPS after ceasing to be enrolled at your school and all (including late) disbursements were made.

SUGGESTED VERIFICATION TEXT

We are providing suggested text for the 2013–2014 verification items that were identified in the July 12, 2012, *Federal Register* notice and in Dear Colleague Letter GEN-12-11. While this suggested text fulfills verification requirements, schools do not have to use it, except as noted below. Instead, they may develop and use their own (or someone else's) text, forms, documents, statements, and certifications that are specific to the items required to be verified for a particular student or group of students. The one exception is that schools must use the exact language provided in the "Statement of Educational Purpose" for students who are placed in Verification Tracking Groups V4 or V5. Also, schools must not affix the seal of the Department of Education to any verification documents.

After the suggested text, we have appended an example of how schools may use the text to develop their own verification document. The example is for a dependent student selected for Verification Tracking Group V4 whose ISIR indicates child support paid but not the receipt of SNAP benefits.

For more information, including copies of the suggested text and sample institutional verification document in Microsoft Word, see the electronic announcement dated January 18, 2013, on the IFAP website.

Verification completed within additional time period for Pell
34 CFR 668.60(c)(1)

Late disbursements
668.164(g)

Quality Assurance (QA) Program

Schools participating in the QA Program develop a quality improvement approach to their administration of the FSA programs. They design a verification program that fits their population, and they have flexibility regarding the following verification regulations:

34 CFR 668.53(a)(1)–(4): QA schools are exempt from these paragraphs in the section on policies and procedures, though they must document the process they will use instead.

668.54(a)(1), (2), and (4): QA schools are exempt from having to verify records selected by the CPS. Instead, QA schools use the ISIR Analysis (IA) Tool to analyze applicant data and determine what the verification criteria will be.

668.56: QA schools determine which ISIR items to verify.

668.57: QA schools determine the acceptable documentation for the ISIR items they choose for verification.

668.60(a): QA schools establish the time frame in which students must submit verification documents.

QA schools are not exempt from resolving conflicting information.

To help with the design of verification criteria, QA schools must use the IA Tool to test the the criteria's effectiveness. The tool shows which application elements changed when verified and reveals the impact that those changes have on the EFC. This tool is available to all schools on the main menu of FAA Access to CPS Online. For more information, go to <http://ifap.ed.gov/qahome/Default.html>.

You can use the IA Tool Web demo at <http://fafsademo.test.ed.gov>; type in **eddemo** for the user name and **fafsatest** for the password. For the FAA login information for the IA Tool, use destination code **TG99999** and your actual federal school code.

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Verification of 2012 IRS Income Tax Return Information for Student Tax Filers

Important Note: The instructions below apply to the student and spouse, if the student is married. Notify the financial aid office if the student or spouse filed separate IRS income tax returns for 2012 or had a change in marital status after the end of the 2012 tax year on December 31, 2012.

Instructions: Complete this section if the student and spouse filed or will file a 2012 IRS income tax return(s). *The best way to verify income is by using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT) that is part of FAFSA on the Web at FAFSA.gov.* In most cases, no further documentation is needed to verify 2012 IRS income tax return information that was transferred into the student's FAFSA using the IRS DRT if that information was not changed.

In most cases, for electronic filers, 2012 IRS income tax return information for the IRS DRT is available within 2–3 weeks after the 2012 electronic IRS income tax return has been accepted by the IRS. Generally, for filers of 2012 paper IRS income tax returns, the 2012 IRS income tax return information is available for the IRS DRT within 8–11 weeks after the 2012 paper IRS income tax return has been received by the IRS. Contact the financial aid office if more information is needed about using the IRS DRT.

Check the box that applies:

- The student has used the IRS DRT in *FAFSA on the Web* to transfer 2012 IRS income tax return information into the student's FAFSA.
- The student has not yet used the IRS DRT in *FAFSA on the Web* but will use the tool to transfer 2012 IRS income tax return information into the student's FAFSA once the 2012 IRS income tax return has been filed.
- The student is unable or chooses not to use the IRS DRT in *FAFSA on the Web* and instead will provide the school a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript(s)**. (Signature not required.)

To obtain a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript**, go to www.irs.gov and click on the "Order a Return or Account Transcript" link, or call 1-800-908-9946. Make sure to request the "IRS Tax Return Transcript" and not the "IRS Tax Account Transcript." Use the Social Security Number and date of birth of the first person listed on the 2012 IRS income tax return, and the address on file with the IRS (normally this will be the address used on the 2012 IRS income tax return). In most cases, for electronic filers, a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript** may be requested from the IRS within 2–3 weeks after the 2012 IRS income tax return has been accepted by the IRS. Generally, for filers of 2012 paper IRS income tax returns, the **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript** may be requested within 8–11 weeks after the 2012 paper IRS income tax return has been received by the IRS.

If the student and spouse filed separate 2012 IRS income tax returns, **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcripts** must be provided for both.

_____ Check here if a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript(s)** is provided.

_____ Check here if a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript(s)** will be provided later.

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Verification of 2012 IRS Income Tax Return Information for Parent Tax Filers

Important Note: The instructions below apply to each parent included in the household. Notify the financial aid office if the parents filed separate IRS income tax returns for 2012 or had a change in marital status after the end of the 2012 tax year on December 31, 2012.

Instructions: Complete this section if the parents filed or will file a 2012 IRS income tax return(s). *The best way to verify income is by using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT) that is part of FAFSA on the Web at FAFSA.gov.* In most cases, no further documentation is needed to verify 2012 IRS income tax return information that was transferred into the student's FAFSA using the IRS DRT if that information was not changed.

In most cases, for electronic filers, 2012 IRS income tax return information for the IRS DRT is available within 2–3 weeks after the 2012 electronic IRS income tax return has been accepted by the IRS. Generally, for filers of 2012 paper IRS income tax returns, the 2012 IRS income tax return information is available for the IRS DRT within 8–11 weeks after the 2012 paper IRS income tax return has been received by the IRS. Contact the financial aid office if more information is needed about using the IRS DRT.

Check the box that applies:

- The parents have used the IRS DRT in *FAFSA on the Web* to transfer 2012 IRS income tax return information into the student's FAFSA.
- The parents have not yet used the IRS DRT in *FAFSA on the Web*, but will use the tool to transfer 2012 IRS income tax return information into the student's FAFSA once the 2012 IRS income tax return has been filed.
- The parents are unable or choose not to use the IRS DRT in *FAFSA on the Web*, and instead will provide the school a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript(s)**. (Signature not required.)

To obtain a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript**, go to www.IRS.gov and click on the "Order a Return or Account Transcript" link, or call 1-800-908-9946. Make sure to request the "IRS Tax Return Transcript" and not the "IRS Tax Account Transcript." Use the Social Security Number and date of birth of the first person listed on the 2012 IRS income tax return, and the address on file with the IRS (normally this will be the address used on the 2012 IRS income tax return). In most cases, for electronic filers, a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript** may be requested from the IRS within 2–3 weeks after the 2012 IRS income tax return has been accepted by the IRS. Generally, for filers of 2012 paper IRS income tax returns, the **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript** may be requested within 8–11 weeks after the 2012 paper IRS income tax return has been received by the IRS.

If the parents filed separate 2012 IRS income tax returns, **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcripts** must be provided for both.

____ Check here if a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript(s)** is provided.

____ Check here if a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript(s)** will be provided later.

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Verification of 2012 IRS Income Tax Return Information for Individuals with Unusual Circumstances

Verification of 2012 IRS Income Tax Return Information for Individuals Granted a Filing Extension by the IRS

If an individual is required to file a 2012 IRS income tax return and has been granted a filing extension by the IRS, provide the following documents:

- A copy of the IRS Form 4868, “Application for Automatic Extension of Time to File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return,” that was filed with the IRS for tax year 2012; and
- A copy of IRS Form W–2 for each source of employment income received for tax year 2012 and, if self-employed, a signed statement certifying the amount of the individual’s AGI and the U.S. income tax paid for tax year 2012.

Verification of 2012 IRS Income Tax Return Information for Individuals Who Filed an Amended IRS Income Tax Return

If an individual filed an amended IRS income tax return for tax year 2012, provide both of the following:

- A signed copy of the original 2012 IRS income tax return that was filed with the IRS or a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript** (signature not required) for the 2012 tax year; and
- A signed copy of the 2012 IRS Form 1040X, “Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return,” that was filed with the IRS.

Verification of 2012 IRS Income Tax Return Information for Individuals Who Were Victims of IRS Identity Theft

A victim of IRS identity theft who has been unable to obtain a **2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript** or use the IRS DRT must provide a signed copy of the 2012 paper IRS income tax return that was filed with the IRS and a signed copy of IRS Form 14039 “Identity Theft Affidavit” if one was submitted to the IRS. If the individual did not keep a copy of Form 14039 or the IRS did not require him or her to submit one, he or she may provide one of the following:

- A statement signed and dated by the individual indicating that he or she was a victim of IRS identity theft and that the IRS is investigating the matter. The statement must also indicate that the individual submitted a Form 14039 to the IRS but did not keep a copy of it or that he or she was not required to file the form; or
- A copy of a police report if it was filed related to the IRS identity theft.

Verification of 2012 Income Tax Return Information for Individuals Who Filed Non-IRS Income Tax Returns

If an individual filed or will file a 2012 income tax return with Puerto Rico, another U.S. territory (e.g., Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Northern Marianas Islands), or with a foreign country, provide a signed copy of that 2012 income tax return(s).

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Verification of 2012 Income Information for Student Nontax Filers

The instructions and certifications below apply to the student and spouse, if the student is married. Complete this section if the student and spouse will not file and are not required to file a 2012 income tax return with the IRS.

Check the box that applies:

- The student and spouse were not employed and had no income earned from work in 2012.
- The student and/or spouse were employed in 2012 and have listed below the names of all employers, the amount earned from each employer in 2012, and whether an IRS W-2 form is provided. (Provide copies of all 2012 IRS W-2 forms issued to the student and spouse by their employers). List every employer even if the employer did not issue an IRS W-2 form.

If more space is needed, provide a separate page with the student's name and ID number at the top.

Employer's Name	2012 Amount Earned	IRS W-2 Provided?
<i>Suzy's Auto Body Shop (example)</i>	<i>\$2,000.00</i>	<i>Yes</i>

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Verification of 2012 Income Information for Parent Nontax Filers

The instructions and certifications below apply to each parent included in the household. Complete this section if the parents will not file and are not required to file a 2012 income tax return with the IRS.

Check the box that applies:

- Neither parent was employed and neither had income earned from work in 2012.
- One or both parents were employed in 2012 and have listed below the names of all employers, the amount earned from each employer in 2012, and whether an IRS W-2 form is provided. (Provide copies of all 2012 IRS W-2 forms issued to the parents by their employers). List every employer even if the employer did not issue an IRS W-2 form.

If more space is needed, provide a separate page with the student's name and ID number at the top.

Employer's Name	2012 Amount Earned	IRS W-2 Provided?
<i>Suzy's Auto Body Shop (example)</i>	<i>\$2,000.00</i>	<i>Yes</i>

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Number of Household Members and Number in College (Independent Student)

List below the people in the student's household. Include:

- The student.
- The student's spouse, if the student is married.
- The student's or spouse's children if the student or spouse will provide more than half of their support from July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014, even if the children do not live with the student.
- Other people if they now live with the student and the student or spouse provides more than half of their support and will continue to provide more than half of their support through June 30, 2014.

For any household member who will be enrolled at least half time in a degree, diploma, or certificate program at an eligible postsecondary educational institution any time between July 1, 2013, and June 30, 2014, include the name of the college.

If more space is needed, provide a separate page with the student's name and ID number at the top.

Full Name	Age	Relationship	College	Will be Enrolled at Least Half Time (Yes or No)
		<i>Self</i>		

Note: We may require additional documentation if we have reason to believe that the information regarding the household members enrolled in eligible postsecondary educational institutions is inaccurate.

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Number of Household Members and Number in College (Dependent Student)

List below the people in the parents' household. Include:

- The student.
- The parents (including a stepparent) even if the student doesn't live with the parents.
- The parents' other children if the parents will provide more than half of their support from July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014, or if the other children would be required to provide parental information if they were completing a FAFSA for 2013–2014. Include children who meet either of these standards even if the children do not live with the parents.
- Other people if they now live with the parents and the parents provide more than half of their support and will continue to provide more than half of their support through June 30, 2014.

For any household member, excluding the parents, who will be enrolled at least half time in a degree, diploma, or certificate program at an eligible postsecondary educational institution any time between July 1, 2013, and June 30, 2014, include the name of the college.

If more space is needed, provide a separate page with the student's name and ID number at the top.

Full Name	Age	Relationship	College	Will be Enrolled at Least Half Time (Yes or No)
		<i>Self</i>		

Note: We may require additional documentation if we have reason to believe that the information regarding the household members enrolled in eligible postsecondary educational institutions is inaccurate.

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Receipt of SNAP Benefits (Independent Student)

The student certifies that a member of the student's household received benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) sometime during 2011 or 2012. SNAP may be known by another name in some states. For assistance in determining the name used in a state, please call 1-800-4FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

The student's household includes:

- The student.
- The student's spouse, if the student is married.
- The student's or spouse's children if the student or spouse will provide more than half of their support from July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014, even if the children do not live with the student.
- Other people if they now live with the student and the student or spouse provides more than half of their support and will continue to provide more than half of their support through June 30, 2014.

Note: If we have reason to believe that the information regarding the receipt of SNAP benefits is inaccurate, we may require documentation from the agency that issued the SNAP benefits in 2011 or 2012.

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Receipt of SNAP Benefits (Dependent Student)

The parents certify that a member of the parents' household received benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) sometime during 2011 or 2012. SNAP may be known by another name in some states. For assistance in determining the name used in a state, please call 1-800-4FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

The parents' household includes:

- The student.
- The parents (including a stepparent) even if the student doesn't live with the parents.
- The parents' other children if the parents will provide more than half of their support from July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014, or if the other children would be required to provide parental information if they were completing a FAFSA for 2013–2014. Include children who meet either of these standards even if the children do not live with the parents.
- Other people if they now live with the parents and the parents provide more than half of their support and will continue to provide more than half of their support through June 30, 2014.

Note: If we have reason to believe that the information regarding the receipt of SNAP benefits is inaccurate, we may require documentation from the agency that issued the SNAP benefits in 2011 or 2012.

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Child Support Paid (Independent Student)

The student or spouse, who is a member of the student's household, paid child support in 2012. List below the names of the persons who paid the child support, the names of the persons to whom the child support was paid, the names of the children for whom the child support was paid, and the total annual amount of child support that was paid in 2012 for each child.

If more space is needed, provide a separate page that includes the student's name and ID number at the top.

Name of Person Who Paid Child Support	Name of Person to Whom Child Support Was Paid	Name of Child for Whom Support Was Paid	Amount of Child Support Paid in 2012

Note: If we have reason to believe that the information regarding child support paid is not accurate, we may require additional documentation, such as:

- A copy of the separation agreement or divorce decree that shows the amount of child support to be provided;
- A statement from the individual receiving the child support certifying the amount of child support received; or
- Copies of the child support payment checks or money order receipts.

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

Child Support Paid (Dependent Student)

One of the parents included in the household or the student paid child support in 2012. List below the names of the persons who paid the child support, the names of the persons to whom the child support was paid, the names of the children for whom the child support was paid, and the total annual amount of child support that was paid in 2012 for each child.

If more space is needed, provide a separate page that includes the student's name and ID number at the top.

Name of Person Who Paid Child Support	Name of Person to Whom Child Support Was Paid	Name of Child for Whom Support Was Paid	Amount of Child Support Paid in 2012

Note: If we have reason to believe that the information regarding child support paid is not accurate, we may require additional documentation, such as:

- A copy of the separation agreement or divorce decree that shows the amount of child support to be provided;
- A statement from the individual receiving the child support certifying the amount of child support received; or
- Copies of the child support payment checks or money order receipts.

2013–2014 Suggested Verification Text

High School Completion Status

Provide one of the following documents that indicate the student's high school completion status when the student will begin college in 2013–2014:

- A copy of the student's high school diploma.
- A copy of the student's final official high school transcript that shows the date when the diploma was awarded.
- A copy of the student's General Educational Development (GED) certificate or GED transcript.
- An academic transcript that indicates the student successfully completed at least a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree.
- If state law requires a homeschooled student to obtain a secondary school completion credential for homeschool (other than a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent), a copy of that credential.
- If state law does not require a homeschooled student to obtain a secondary school completion credential for homeschool (other than a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent), a transcript or the equivalent, signed by the student's parent or guardian, that lists the secondary school courses the student completed and documents the successful completion of a secondary school education in a homeschool setting.

If the student is unable to obtain the documentation listed above, he or she must contact the financial aid office.

2013-2014 Required Verification Text
(Note: Institutions must use the exact language in the Statement of Educational Purpose as provided below)

Identity and Statement of Educational Purpose
(To Be Signed at the Institution)

The student must appear in person at _____ to
(Name of Postsecondary Educational Institution)

verify his or her identity by presenting a valid government-issued photo identification (ID), such as but not limited to a driver's license, other state-issued ID, or passport. The institution will maintain a copy of the student's photo ID that is annotated with the date it was received and the name of the official at the institution authorized to collect the student's ID.

In addition, the student must sign, in the presence of the institutional official, the following:

Statement of Educational Purpose

I certify that I, _____, am the individual signing this
(Print Student's Name)

Statement of Educational Purpose and that the federal student financial assistance I may receive will only be used for educational purposes and to pay the cost of attending _____ for 2013-2014.

(Name of Postsecondary Educational Institution)

(Student's Signature)

(Date)

(Student's ID Number)

2013-2014 Required Verification Text
(Note: Institutions must use the exact language in the Statement of Educational Purpose as provided below)

Identity and Statement of Educational Purpose
(To Be Signed With Notary)

If the student is unable to appear in person at _____
(Name of Postsecondary Educational Institution)
to verify his or her identity, the student must provide:

- (a) A copy of the valid government-issued photo identification (ID) that is acknowledged in the notary statement below, such as but not limited to a driver's license, other state-issued ID, or passport; and
- (b) The original notarized Statement of Educational Purpose provided below.

Statement of Educational Purpose

I certify that I, _____,
(Print Student's Name)
Statement of Educational Purpose and that the federal student financial assistance I may receive will only be used for educational purposes and to pay the cost of attending _____ for 2013-2014.
(Name of Postsecondary Educational Institution)

(Student's Signature) (Date)

(Student's ID Number)

Notary's Certificate of Acknowledgement

State of _____
City/County of _____
On _____, before me, _____,
(Date) (Notary's name)
personally appeared _____ and proved to me
(Printed name of signer)
on basis of satisfactory evidence of identification, _____,
(Type of government-issued photo ID provided)
to be the above-named person who signed the foregoing instrument.

WITNESS my hand and official seal
(seal)

(Notary signature)

My commission expires on _____
(Date)

2013-2014 Suggested Verification Text

**Certification and Signature
(Independent Student)**

Certification and Signature

Each person signing below certifies that all of the information reported is complete and correct.

WARNING: If you purposely give false or misleading information, you may be fined, be sentenced to jail, or both.

Print Student's Name

Student's ID Number

Student's Signature (Required)

Date

Spouse's Signature (Optional)

Date

2013-2014 Suggested Verification Text

Certifications and Signatures (Dependent Student)

Certifications and Signatures

Each person signing below certifies that all of the information reported is complete and correct. The student and one parent whose information was reported on the FAFSA must sign and date.

WARNING: If you purposely give false or misleading information, you may be fined, be sentenced to jail, or both.

Print Student's Name

Student's ID Number

Student's Signature

Date

Parent's Signature

Date

2013–2014 Institutional Verification Document

Your 2013–2014 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) was selected for review in a process called verification. The law says that before awarding federal student aid, we may ask you to confirm the information you reported on your FAFSA. To verify that you provided correct information, we will compare your FAFSA with the information on this institutional verification document and with any other required documents. If there are differences, your FAFSA information may need to be corrected. You and a parent whose information was reported on the FAFSA must complete and sign this institutional verification document, attach any required documents, and submit the form and other required documents to us. We may ask for additional information. If you have questions about verification, contact us as soon as possible so that your financial aid will not be delayed.

A. Student's Information

Student's Last Name	First Name	M.I.	Student's Identification (ID) Number
Student's Street Address (include apt. no.)			Student's Date of Birth
City, State, Zip Code			Student's E-mail Address
Student's Home Phone Number (include area code)			Student's Alternate or Cell Phone Number

B. High School Completion Status

Provide one of the following documents that indicate the student's high school completion status when the student will begin college in 2013–2014:

- A copy of the student's high school diploma.
- A copy of the student's final official high school transcript that shows the date when the diploma was awarded.
- A copy of the student's General Educational Development (GED) certificate or GED transcript.
- An academic transcript that indicates the student successfully completed at least a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree.
- If state law requires a homeschooled student to obtain a secondary school completion credential for homeschool (other than a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent), a copy of that credential.
- If state law does not require a homeschooled student to obtain a secondary school completion credential for homeschool (other than a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent), a transcript or the equivalent, signed by the student's parent or guardian, that lists the secondary school courses the student completed and documents the successful completion of a secondary school education in a homeschool setting.

If the student is unable to obtain the documentation listed above, he or she must contact the financial aid office.

Student's Name _____ Student's ID Number _____

C. Identity and Statement of Educational Purpose (To Be Signed at the Institution)

The student must appear in person at _____ to
(Name of Postsecondary Educational Institution)
verify his or her identity by presenting a valid government-issued photo identification (ID), such as but not limited to a driver's license, other state-issued ID, or passport. The institution will maintain a copy of the student's photo ID that is annotated with the date it was received and the name of the official at the institution authorized to collect the student's ID.

In addition, the student must sign, in the presence of the institutional official, the following:

Statement of Educational Purpose

I certify that I, _____, am the individual signing this
(Print Student's Name)
Statement of Educational Purpose and that the federal student financial assistance
I may receive will only be used for educational purposes and to pay the cost of attending
_____ for 2013–2014.
(Name of Postsecondary Educational Institution)

(Student's Signature)

(Date)

(Student's ID Number)

Student's Name _____ Student's ID Number _____

D. Child Support Paid

One of the parents included in the household or the student paid child support in 2012. List below the names of the persons who paid the child support, the names of the persons to whom the child support was paid, the names of the children for whom the child support was paid, and the total annual amount of child support that was paid in 2012 for each child.

If more space is needed, provide a separate page that includes the student's name and ID number at the top.

Name of Person Who Paid Child Support	Name of Person to Whom Child Support Was Paid	Name of Child for Whom Support Was Paid	Amount of Child Support Paid in 2012

Note: If we have reason to believe that the information regarding child support paid is not accurate, we may require additional documentation, such as:

- A copy of the separation agreement or divorce decree that shows the amount of child support to be provided;
- A statement from the individual receiving the child support certifying the amount of child support received; or
- Copies of the child support payment checks or money order receipts.

E. Certifications and Signatures

Certifications and Signatures

Each person signing below certifies that all of the information reported is complete and correct. The student and one parent whose information was reported on the FAFSA must sign and date.

WARNING: If you purposely give false or misleading information, you may be fined, be sentenced to jail, or both.

Print Student's Name

Student's ID Number

Student's Signature

Date

Parent's Signature

Date

EXAMPLE