
2024–25

FAFSA[®] Specifications Guide

Volume 8 – Agency Matches

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**U.S. Department of Education's
Federal Student Aid**



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|------------|
| Acronyms | ii |
| Change History Table | iii |
| Agency Match Results | 1 |
| How to Use the Tables | 1 |
| Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Primary Match Status | 2 |
| Department of Homeland Security Secondary Match | 3 |
| Third-Step Verification Process | 4 |
| Student Social Security Administration (SSA) Citizenship Status Match | 5 |
| Student Social Security Administration Match | 6 |
| Student Spouse Social Security Administration Match | 7 |
| Parent Social Security Administration Match | 8 |
| Parent Spouse or Parnter Social Security Administration Match | 9 |
| Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veteran Status Match | 10 |
| National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS®) Match | 11 |
| NSLDS® Unusual Enrollment History Flag | 12 |
| NSLDS® Fraud Loan Flag | 13 |
| Drug Abuse Hold | 14 |
| Verification Selection Edits | 15 |

Acronyms

Table 8-1: Acronyms

| Acronym | Definition |
|----------------|---|
| DHS | Department of Homeland Security |
| DOB | date of birth |
| ED | U.S. Department of Education |
| FAFSA® | Free Application for Federal Student Aid |
| FPS | FAFSA Processing System |
| ISIR | <i>Institutional Student Information Record</i> |
| NSLDS® | National Student Loan Data System Match |
| SAI | Student Aid Index |
| SAVE | Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements |
| SSA | Social Security Administration |
| SSN | Social Security number |
| VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs |

Change History Table

The change history table below is updated each time the “Agency Matches” volume of the *FAFSA Specifications Guide* is updated providing you with a cumulative list of revisions made to the document.

The footer is updated to include the revised date. For example, if a change is made to page 5 in January 2024, the footer will show “Rev 1/24.”

Table 8-2: Change History

| Date | Page(s) | Changes/Notes |
|-------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 7/23 | All | Volume 8 is released |
| 12/23 | All | Volume 8 is updated |

Agency Match Results

How to Use the Tables

The information in this section is provided for you to use as a quick reference. The [Federal Student Aid Handbook](#), *Volume 1—Student Eligibility* contains detailed information about student eligibility and the action needed to resolve discrepancies found in the data matches. The handbook can be found in the Knowledge Center.

A flag of **C** is an indicator that institutional resolution is required. The former CPS C Flag is now called the FPS C Flag and serves the same purpose. The FPS C Flag is printed on the FAFSA Submission Summary next to the Student Aid Index (SAI) if any of the conditions described in the tables are met.

The following comments will have the FPS C Flag set:

018 to 020, 040, 076, 096, 127, 155, 158 to 160, 162 to 165, 216, 217, 221 to 253, 255, 256, 258, 260, 261, 264, 265, 276, 277, 288, 289, 293, 294, 303, 325, and 326.

Note: Some of these data match results generate rejected records. Comments associated with a match-results reject do not generate the FPS C Flag. However, an FPS C Flag could be generated by another match-result comment and is printed on a FAFSA Submission Summary rejected for other than match-results reasons.

The SAI is not provided on any rejected records except for when a student has unusual circumstance, then a Provisional SAI is calculated. The FAA must confirm the student's unusual circumstance situation, obtain the necessary documentation, and if valid, perform a professional judgement. This will suppress the reject and an official SAI will be calculated for the student. If the unusual circumstance is not valid for a professional judgement, the student must provide parental information in order for an SAI to be calculated and the reject removed.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Primary Match

Identifying information is sent to DHS for eligible noncitizen matching when an applicant provides an A-Number on the FAFSA form.

Table 8-3: DHS Primary Match Status

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | DHS Primary Match Status |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 154 | None | Y = Confirmed eligible noncitizen |
| 155 | FPS C Flag | N = Not confirmed eligible noncitizen |
| No comment | None | P = Pending |
| 288 | FPS C Flag | D = Duplicate case |
| 289 | FPS C Flag | I = Invalid A-number |
| No comment | None | S = Not sent |
| 326 | FPS C Flag | Edit 4022 |
| 326 | FPS C Flag | Blank and A-Number is non-blank |

Department of Homeland Security Secondary Match

When a record fails the DHS Primary Match, FPS holds the record for up to three processing days to receive results from the DHS secondary match.

After three days, if DHS does not return a response, FPS generates an *Institutional Student Information Record* (ISIR), which shows the student's eligible noncitizen status as "P" or pending in the DHS Secondary Match Status field. Once a response is available, a system-generated transaction will be created indicating one of the other codes in the following table.

Table 8-4: DHS Secondary Match

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | DHS Secondary Match Status |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| No comment | None | P = Pending results of secondary confirmation |
| 292 | None | Y = Confirmed Eligible Noncitizen |
| 293 | FPS C Flag | N = Not Confirmed Eligible Noncitizen |
| 294 | FPS C Flag | C = Continue to Process |
| No comment | None | Blank |

Third-Step Verification Process

For information about how to access and navigate the web-based DHS-SAVE system, see the “SAVE Instructions for U.S. Department of Education (School) Users” document at: fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/topics/dhs-save-eligible-noncitizen/dhs-save-electronic-third-step-verification.

Student Social Security Administration (SSA) Citizenship Status Match

A match is conducted with the Social Security Administration to confirm the applicant's identity and SSA citizenship status, as well as the contributor's identity information.

Table 8-5: Student SSA Citizenship Status Match

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/ Reject | Student SSA Citizenship Flag Results |
|--|--------------------|---|
| No comment | None | A = U.S. citizen N = Unable to confirm citizenship due to no match on SSN, name, or date of birth Blank = Domestic born (U.S. citizen) if SSN Match Flag equals 4 (SSN, name, and date of birth match) or Blank = No match conducted if SSN Match Flag does not equal 4 |
| 018 Comment displays if the student selected U.S. Citizen on the FAFSA and SSA Match comes back with one of these values. | FPS C Flag | B = Legal alien, eligible to work C = Legal alien, not eligible to work D = Other E = Alien, student restricted, work authorized F = Conditionally legalized alien * = Foreign |

Student Social Security Administration Match

A match is conducted with the Social Security Administration to confirm the student's identity and SSA citizenship status, as well as the contributor's identity information.

Table 8-6: Student SSA Match

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | Student SSA Match Status |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 006 | Reject 2 | 1 = Not found by SSA 6 = SSN not verified |
| 008 | Reject 4 | 2 = DOB mismatch |
| 007 | Reject 3 | 3 = Name mismatch |
| None | None | 4 = Full match |
| 009 | Reject 5 | 5 = Deceased |
| No comment | None | 8 = Not sent |
| None | None | 9 = Not needed |

Student Spouse Social Security Administration Match

A match is conducted with the Social Security Administration to confirm the student's identity and SSA citizenship status, as well as the contributor's identity information.

Table 8-7: Student Spouse SSA Match

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | Student Spouse SSA Match Status |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 115 | Reject 19 | 1 = Not found by SSA 6 = SSN not verified |
| 117 | Reject 21 | 2 = DOB mismatch |
| 116 | Reject 20 | 3 = Name mismatch |
| None | None | 4 = Full match |
| 118 | Reject 22 | 5 = Deceased |
| No comment | None | 8 = Not sent |
| None | None | 9 = Not needed |

Parent Social Security Administration Match

A match is conducted with the Social Security Administration to confirm the student's identity and SSA citizenship status, as well as the contributor's identity information.

Table 8-8: Parent SSA Match

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | Parent SSA Match Status |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 054 | Reject 28 | 1 = Not found by SSA 6 = SSN not verified |
| 056 | Reject 30 | 2 = DOB mismatch |
| 055 | Reject 29 | 3 = Name mismatch |
| None | None | 4 = Full match |
| 057 | Reject 31 | 5 = Deceased |
| No comment | None | 8 = Not sent |
| None | None | 9 = Not needed |

Parent Spouse or Partner Social Security Administration Match

A match is conducted with the Social Security Administration to confirm the student's identity and SSA citizenship status, as well as the contributor's identity information.

Table 8-9: Parent Spouse or Partner SSA Match

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | Parent Spouse or Partner SSA Match Status |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 084 | Reject 39 | 1 = Not found by SSA 6 = SSN not verified |
| 086 | Reject 41 | 2 = DOB mismatch |
| 085 | Reject 40 | 3 = Name mismatch |
| None | None | 4 = Full match |
| 087 | Reject 42 | 5 = Deceased |
| No comment | None | 8 = Not sent |
| None | None | 9 = Not needed |

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veteran Status Match

When an applicant indicates that they are a veteran, the record is sent to VA for confirmation of the applicant's veteran status.

Table 8-10: VA Veteran Status Match

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | VA Match Flag |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| No comment | None | 1 = Confirmed |
| 159 | FPS C Flag | 2 = Not qualifying veteran |
| No comment | None | 2 = Not qualifying veteran Note: Student considered independent for other reasons |
| 158 | FPS C Flag | 3 = Not found by VA |
| No comment | None | 3 = Not found by VA Note: Student considered independent for other reasons |
| 160 | FPS C Flag | 4 = Active duty |
| No comment | None | 4 = Active duty Note: Student considered independent for other reasons |
| No comment | None | 8 = Not sent |
| No comment | None | Blank = Match not performed |

National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS®) Match

An applicant's information is sent to the NSLDS to determine if they are eligible for Title IV aid. If they have previously received aid, their information will be included in the ISIR file.

Table 8-11: NSLDS Match

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | NSLDS Database Results Flag | NSLDS Match Status |
|--|-------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| No comment | None | 1 = Record matched; data sent | 1 = Eligible for Title IV Aid |
| No comment | None | 3 = SSN not found in NSLDS | 1 = Eligible for Title IV Aid |
| No comment | None | 4 = Full match; no relevant data to send | 1 = Eligible for Title IV Aid |
| 162 | FPS C Flag | 2 = SSN match, no name or date of birth match, no data sent | 7 = Match and no data provided |
| 163 Comment 327 will be printed in conjunction with comment 163 and will include up to three names and phone numbers of Guaranty Agencies, Federal Loan Servicers, or ED Regions that are holding the student's defaulted loan(s) will be listed. | FPS C Flag | 1 = Record matched; data sent | 2 = Default |
| Comment 164 will be provided with one of the following comments: 221 to 250, 264, and 265. | FPS C Flag | 1 = Record matched; data sent | 3 = Overpayment |
| Comment 165 will be provided with one of the following comments: 166 to 179, 181, 183 to 209 or 221 to 250, 264, and 265. | FPS C Flag | 1 = Record matched; data sent | 4 = Default and overpayment |
| 251, 252 | FPS C Flag | 1 = Record matched; data sent | 1 = Eligible for Title IV Aid |
| No comment | None | None | 8 = Not sent |
| 253, 255, 256, 258, 260, 261, 264, or 265 | FPS C Flag | None | None |

NSLDS[®] Unusual Enrollment History Flag

This flag identifies an applicant whose record contains unusual enrollment information.

Table 8-12: NSLDS Unusual Enrollment History Flag

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | NSLDS Unusual Enrollment History Flag |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 276 | C Flag | 2 = Possible enrollment pattern problem, school may need to resolve |
| 277 | C Flag | 3 = Questionable enrollment pattern, school must resolve |
| No comment | None | N = Enrollment pattern not unusual, no school action required |
| No comment | None | Blank = Record not sent for match |

NSLDS[®] Fraud Loan Flag

This flag identifies an applicant who may have obtained loans fraudulently.

Table 8-13: NSLDS Fraud Flag

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/Reject | NSLDS Fraud Loan Flag |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 050 | Reject 15 | Y = Yes |
| No comment | None | N = No |
| No comment | None | Blank = Record not sent for match |

Drug Abuse Hold

Table 8-14: Drug Abuse Hold

| Comment Number | FPS C Flag/ Reject | Drug Abuse Hold Indicator |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 047 | Reject 13 | J = Record placed on hold by the Department of Justice |
| 280 | None | S = Record released from hold |
| None | None | Blank = Not on hold |

Verification Selection Edits

If the applicant's record is selected for verification, variable text is printed on the first page of the FAFSA Submission Summary. If the school requests it, the student must complete the verification process and submit all necessary documentation within the necessary timeframe. More information can be found in *The Application and Verification Guide*, which is part of the *Federal Student Aid Handbook* and is available in the Knowledge Center.