

eZ-Audit

Frequently Asked Questions

June 3, 2003

(PLEASE READ...Helpful Hints and NEW FAQs added throughout!)

eZ- Audit is live! REGISTER NOW - - -

We are happy to report that the eZ-Audit website went live on April 1, 2003! We have already heard from many of our users who are in the system, quickly learning their way around, and submitting their audits to us!

What is eZ-Audit?

eZ-Audit will provide schools with a **paperless single point of submission for financial statements and compliance audits through the web**. It will make the reporting process much easier for you and help FSA better service your needs. The application will be easy to use.

A designee from your school will simply sign on to eZ-Audit, enter summary audit and financial data directly from your report into a web form, attach an electronic version of the report, and hit the submit button. Your submission through eZ-Audit will allow for more rapid and efficient processing by the Department of Education and therefore provide you with more immediate feedback.

Is eZ-Audit required?

Yes. eZ-Audit is required, effective June 16, 2003. Please refer to the May 16, 2003 Federal Register Notice implementing the new electronic process for submitting financial statements and compliance audits electronically to the Department of Education.

Please visit www.ifap.ed.gov for more information.

How can I register with eZ-Audit?

eZ-Audit registration is now available! Schools must register in order to gain access to eZ-Audit.

On IFAP you will find detailed instructions for registration. To register, FSA is requesting that you mail in a registration request letter with information such as the First and Last Name of your Institution Administrator (person you designate to manage your access to eZ-Audit), email address, OPE ID, phone and fax number and fiscal year end date.

Again, please consult IFAP at www.ifap.ed.gov for detailed registration instructions.

But, I submit financial statements and compliance audits for multiple schools. Do all of these schools need to register with eZ-Audit? (Please see the special section below for school groups)

No. If you provide ED with a consolidated submission (meaning that you submit on behalf of more than one school), only the submitting institution needs to register with eZ-Audit. Submitting institutions will submit for all schools in their school group. ED does not require that non-submitting institutions register with eZ-Audit.

Registration is ongoing!

How does eZ-Audit work?

1. Your school submits its compliance audit data and summary financial data via an internet web form
2. Your school also attaches an electronic copy of your financial statement and compliance audit in a non-editable pdf format (using Adobe Acrobat)
3. The eZ-Audit system automatically forwards flagged financials and deficient audits to FSA's Case Management Team for resolution
4. Case Teams communicate with you to reach resolution
5. As desired, you can periodically check eZ-Audit for the status of your reports

How does eZ-Audit Benefit You?

- You will receive instant acknowledgement of receipt – no more lost reports!
- You will no longer need to make any copies or send reports in the mail to ED.
- Processing times will be greatly reduced, thus allowing for remediation of findings.
- Web forms will contain pre-populated fields.
- There are no new reporting requirements – data entry will be limited to the same data already contained in the reports.
- The time spent submitting these forms should be less than 1 hour.
- Status of your submissions will be accessible to you online at anytime.
- A Help Desk will be available for assistance.

Do I still need to submit a hard copy to ED?

No, if you use eZ-Audit, ED will no longer need any hard copies from you. *However, please note that if you are an **A-133 school** you will need to **submit to both eZ-Audit and to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse.***

Is training and technical assistance available?

Yes, a "Step-by-Step Guide to Using eZ-Audit" is posted to IFAP. We also have technical assistance available to users through a telephone hotline (1-877-263-0780) and an email address at fsaezaudit@ed.gov.

Helpful Hints for new users of eZ-Audit:

1. Once you have registered, check your email for your user name and temporary password. When typing in your temporary password, we would recommend cutting and pasting (highlight the text only to ensure no extra spaces) it from your email notification – this will prevent any errors in copying the password.
2. When changing your password be cognizant of case sensitivity. Remember to have at least one capital letter, one lower case and one special character.

Who at my school will use eZ-Audit?

- *eZ-Audit Institution/School Administrator*, selected by your school, is responsible for:
 - Registering your school with eZ-Audit
 - Providing/managing access to data entry and submission approval personnel, as identified by your school
 - Maintaining security information regarding schools users as required
- *eZ-Audit Data Entry Users*, selected by your school, are responsible for:
 - Entering data into the eZ-Audit system
 - Attaching non-editable, pdf files of audited financial statements and compliance audits
- *eZ-Audit Submission Approvers*, selected by your school, are responsible for:
 - Reviewing the submission prior to “submit”
 - Approving the submission via the “submit” action

What role should my auditor play in eZ-Audit?

You may choose to ask your auditor to serve as a *Data Entry User* of eZ-Audit. This means that your auditor would complete the fields in the system, and attach the audited documents in the non-editable pdf format.

If your auditor is *not* selected as a Data Entry User, you may request that your auditor electronically send you your financial statements and compliance audits in the non-editable pdf format using Adobe Acrobat.

Please note that attestation of your financial statements and compliance audits will be in the attachments of your documents – additional electronic signatures are not required.

How can I learn more?

To learn more, please stay posted to IFAP.

I have more questions, who should I talk to?

You can send an email to fsaezaudit@ed.gov or contact the eZ-Audit hotline at 1-877-263-0780.

Some frequently asked technical questions about eZ-Audit:

What type of software/technology do I need to support eZ-Audit?

eZ-Audit will be a web-based application so you will not need to load a new application on your computer. You will simply need to ensure that you have an internet browser – either Netscape 4.76 or 6.2 or Internet Explorer 5.0.

Additionally, you will need to ensure that you, or the individual attaching your financial statement and compliance audit, have access to Adobe Acrobat writer, as all submissions must be attached in a non-editable pdf format.

How do I get an Adobe Acrobat, pdf version of my submissions?

eZ-Audit requires you to attach a non-editable pdf version of your annual submissions. Adobe Acrobat must be used to create this attachment. You have several *options* for obtaining Adobe Acrobat:

- Purchase Adobe Acrobat 5.0 software that will allow you to scan paper copies of your submissions and convert them to pdf. (The retail cost of the software is approximately \$250)
- Convert an electronic version of your submission (word, excel, etc) to pdf format using www.adobe.com online. (Adobe provides this conversion capability for \$9.99 for one month with unlimited use.)
- Bring paper or electronic copies of your submissions to your local copying center (Kinkos, etc.) and request that they create a pdf version of your submission. (The cost of this option will vary, however \$30 - \$50 is a reasonable estimate.)

What if my school's firewall prevents me from accessing eZ-Audit?

If you receive an error that does not allow you to access eZ-Audit when you type in the URL from your internet browser, please contact your network administrator and request that he/she do one of the following:

- Open your firewall to allow access to all 165.224.xxx.xxx addresses. This will allow your school access to all ed.gov sites
- Conduct an nslookup on ezaudit.ed.gov which will allow your school access to eZ-Audit

Some frequently asked questions for School Groups (schools/state agencies/corporate entities that complete consolidated submissions):

What is a school group?

ED considers a school group a collection of schools whereby a single school within the group (what ED calls the "submitting institution") or a designated representative (such as a State

Auditor) submits a single consolidated financial statement and compliance audit for all schools in the group or send a consolidated financial statement and multiple audits *together* to ED. (For example: ITT, State of Louisiana (who submits for all state schools in Louisiana), Quest, Inc. etc.)

If you are part of a school group please note the following:

- You will receive an email from ED confirming your school group “membership” to ensure that the “submitting institution” is defined correctly and to ensure that all members of the group are included
- If you provide ED with a consolidated submission (meaning that you submit on behalf of more than one school), **only** the submitting institution needs to register with eZ-Audit. Submitting institutions will submit for all schools in their school group. This single, consolidated submission for the school group will fulfill the reporting requirements for all schools that are part of the group. *ED does not require that non-submitting institutions in the group register with eZ-Audit.*