

Verification

Your application was selected by the Department of Education for review in a process called "Verification." In this process, your school will be comparing financial information from your FAFSA with signed copies of your most recently filed federal tax forms, or with W-2 forms or other financial documents.

If you are classified as a dependent student, then your parent(s)' financial information on the FAFSA will also be compared to signed copies of their most recently filed federal tax forms, or with W-2 forms or other financial documents. Your parent(s) will receive an email request to enter a similar online application where they will be able to complete their portion of the verification process. Once they have finished, you will be able to view that information in your Required Documents List. Your parent, however, will not be able to view any information in your Required Documents List.

The law says we have the right to ask you for this information before awarding federal aid. If there are differences between your application information and your financial documents, you or your school may need to make corrections electronically or by using your Student Aid Report (SAR).

Complete the requests for information associated with the Verification Worksheet link in the Required Documents List. You may be asked to add the names, ages, and relationships of people in your household. Foster children should not be included in this list because they are financially supported by the government.

You will also be asked to indicate whether or not you filed a federal tax return. If you did file a return, you have the option of attaching the return to your application now, attaching it in the future, or faxing the document to your financial aid office in the future. If you did not file or were not required to file a federal tax return, you should indicate this by selecting the appropriate option in step C. You must then enter any non-taxed income you received during the year and the source of that income into the corresponding boxes in step C.

How to request a Copy of Your Federal Tax Return Transcript

If you are requested to submit a copy of your federal tax return and do not have a copy, you may request a tax return transcript from the IRS. Visit www.irs.gov for more information.

What you should do

1. If a dependent student, collect your and your parent(s) financial documents (signed Federal income tax forms, W-2 forms, etc.) If an independent student, collect your and your spouse's (if applicable) financial documents.
2. Talk to your financial aid administrator if you have questions about completing the Verification information in this application by selecting 'Contact' in the upper right hand corner of your screen.
3. Complete the requests for information associated with the Verification Worksheet link in the Required Documents List. If you are a dependent student, your parent should do the same using their own online application link received via email.
4. Submit the tax forms and any other documents your school requests to your financial aid administrator by attesting to this application at the end of the process. This action will electronically submit your application.
5. Your financial aid administrator will compare the submitted information and any supporting documents with the information you submitted on your FAFSA. You or your school may need to make corrections electronically or by using your SAR. If a correction needs to be made, you will be notified via email after your application is reviewed.

New for 2012-13

What documentation must be collected from a student who was selected for verification when the applicant or the applicant's parent(s) filed an amended tax return with the IRS?

The Department's objective is to ensure that Title IV aid eligibility determinations are made based on the most accurate information possible. However, the FAFSA on the Web IRS Data Retrieval Process will only transfer information from an original tax return and not from an amended tax return. Similarly, the **IRS Tax Return Transcript** only includes information from the original tax return. While the **IRS Tax Account Transcript** does include tax return items that were changed when an amended return was filed, it does not include any of the data that did not change. Therefore, both an **IRS Tax Return Transcript** and an **IRS Tax Account Transcript** are needed for verification to be completed when an amended return was filed. The IRS does provide another option for tax filers who filed an amended tax return – the **Record of Account** which includes the required information from both the **IRS Tax Return Transcript** and the **IRS Tax Account Transcript**. The **Record of Account** can only be requested using a paper IRS Form 4506-T and, as a paper request, it could take up to 30 days for the tax filer to receive the **Record of Account**.

In summary, when the school is aware that the student or the student's parent(s), filed, or will file, an amended tax return with the IRS, it may obtain from the applicant both an **IRS Tax Return Transcript** and an **IRS Tax Account Transcript** and use the information from both transcripts to complete verification. Alternatively, the tax filer could request a **Record of Account** from the IRS (using IRS Form 4506-T) and submit the **Record of Account** to the school. Note, if the tax filer chooses to request the transcripts from the IRS using a paper form, they should not use the IRS Form 4506T-EZ. Instead they must use IRS Form 4506-T, carefully following the instructions on the form.