

Federal Verification Process

Verification is a process required by the U.S. Department of Education for some applicants, to ensure the accuracy of information reported on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The verification process requires our office to verify or confirm certain data elements reported by you and/or your parents on your FAFSA.

If you are selected for verification, the Financial Aid Office (OFA) will inform you of the necessary documentation required.

If the verification process is not complete federal financial aid will not be awarded or disbursed until all required documentation has been received and verified by OFA, and the U.S. Department of Education has received and accepted any changes to the FAFSA data.

Why was your FAFSA selected to be verified?

The most common reasons why your FAFSA was selected for verification:

- Random selection – 1 in 3 students are randomly selected for verification
- Your FAFSA includes estimated tax information
- Your FAFSA appears to have inconsistent information, or possibly erroneous information
- When completing your FAFSA, you either were not eligible or chose not to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT), or you did use the tool, but then subsequently changed the data, either intentionally or unintentionally.

How will I know if I am selected for verification?

You will be notified by your Cleveland University-Kansas City (CUKC) email and/or the U.S. Postal Service if you have any outstanding requirements that must be met before a federal financial aid award will be made.

If you were selected for verification, the documentation you submit will be compared to your original FAFSA and corrections may be made. These corrections may change your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) which could affect the amount of aid you may be eligible for. If corrections were made, you will receive a new Student Aid Report (SAR) from the Department of Education.

IRS Data Retrieval Tool

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) allows students and parents access to their Federal Tax Return information needed to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students and parents may be eligible to transfer IRS data directly onto their FAFSA. If eligible to use the IRS DRT, we highly recommend using the tool for several reasons:

- It's the fastest and easiest way to provide tax information.
- You don't have to manually fill in Federal Tax Return data on your FAFSA.
- It's the best way of ensuring your FAFSA has accurate tax information.
- It streamlines the verification process, because you will have fewer documents to submit to our office.

How to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool Step-by-Step:

Students and parents who have filed their taxes for the appropriate year will be given the option to use the IRS DRT when completing the Financial Information portion of the FAFSA application. Please note, there are two separate financial information sections on the FAFSA for dependent students. Students will use the IRS DRT for the Student Financial Information section and parents of dependent students will use the IRS DRT for the Parent Financial Information section.

Applicants will be prompted to use the IRS DRT while completing the FAFSA if you are eligible. Please use the following instructions to complete the process:

1. Log in to fafsa.ed.gov/
2. Click on **Continue** or **Make FAFSA Corrections**, enter your FSA ID and password.
Note: You will need to create an FSA ID in order to retrieve your tax information. Click the 'Create an FSA ID' link and complete the requested information. For help with the FSA ID, visit studentaid.gov.
3. Navigate to the **Financial Information** tab
4. If you can answer "No" to all of the questions, the tax filer will then click on **Link to IRS**
5. Once you are transferred to the IRS website, fill in the information exactly as it was entered on the tax return
6. Click **Transfer Now** to go back to the **Financial Information** screen
Note: To enhance security and protect your privacy, any transferred data will not display on your FAFSA, but will be marked as 'Transferred from the IRS'
7. Navigate to the **Sign & Submit** tab to submit the corrected FAFSA

IRS Tax Return Transcript

Students selected for verification must submit specific documents to our office so that we can review your income information. The tax return transcript is one form of allowable documentation. You can obtain your tax return transcript from the IRS free of charge.

How to request your Tax Return Transcript

- **Online request**
Go to the [IRS website](#) and click “Get Transcripts by Mail”. Enter the requested information and click Continue. For the type of transcript, select Return Transcript for the tax year we are requesting. You will receive the transcript by mail within 5-10 days if successfully validated.
- **Phone request**
Call the IRS at 1-800-908-9946 and follow the prompts. Enter your social security number and the numbers in your street address. Select the option to request your IRS tax return transcript for the tax year we are requesting. You will receive the transcript by mail within 5-10 days if successfully validated.
- **Paper request**
Complete [IRS Form 4506T-EZ](#). Provide your name, social security number and address. Do not enter anything on line 5 of the form. On line 6, enter the tax year we are requesting. Check the box that attests you have the authority to sign the form. Sign, date and provide your phone number. Mail or fax the form to the appropriate place listed on page 2.
Note: For fiscal year filers, use [IRS Form 4506-T](#).

Federal regulations govern what documents are acceptable to complete the verification process. We are **unable** to accept the following tax documents:

- your federal tax return (IRS Form 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ)
- your state tax return
- the IRS tax account transcript

IRS Verification of Non-filing Letter

An IRS Verification of Non-filing Letter provides proof that the IRS has no record of a filed Form 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ for the tax year requested. Non-tax filers can request an IRS Verification of Non-Filing from the IRS free of charge.

Individuals required to submit this letter

As a requirement of the federal verification process, the following individuals must submit the IRS Verification of Non-filing Letter:

- independent students who did not file a federal tax return
- parents of dependent students who did not file a federal tax return

How to request the IRS Verification of Non-filing Letter

- Paper request
 - Complete [IRS Form 4506-T](#).
 - Provide your name, social security number and address.
 - Line 5: Do not enter anything.
 - Line 6: Transcript requested field
 - ENTER “1040”.
 - Line 7: Verification of Nonfiling field
 - CHECK the box located on the right hand side.
 - Line 8: Form W-2, Form 1099 series, etc field
 - CHECK the box located on the right hand side.
 - Line 9: Year of period requested field
 - ENTER “12/31/2016” if we are requesting your 2016 tax return.
 - Check the box that attests you have the authority to sign the form.
 - Sign, date and provide your phone number.
 - Mail or fax the form to the appropriate place listed on page 2, column 2.

Questions about Federal Verification

Who is selected for verification?

The federal government, through a series of edits, selects students whose FAFSA information must be verified. When you receive notification that your FAFSA has been processed, your Student Aid Report (SAR) will indicate if you have been selected for verification. In addition, the Office of Financial Aid (OFA) also reserves the right to select individuals for verification.

For example, individuals who submit a Professional Judgment Appeal Form are typically selected for verification to ensure that the data provided on the FAFSA is accurate before any correction and/or adjustments are made to address an individual's or family's unusual circumstances. FAFSAs with inconsistent or conflicting information may also be selected for verification by the OFA.

What am I supposed to do if I am selected?

If you are selected for verification, you will be notified by the Office of Financial Aid (OFA) via e-mail or via traditional mail that a request for specific information is required before financial aid can be processed and/or disbursed.

Examples of verification documentation may include a request for: a completed Institutional Verification Form, income tax data obtained via the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, W-2 forms, IRS tax returns and/or schedules, etc.

Please be sure to submit the required documentation as quickly as possible as the OFA will not make any further federal aid awards and/or authorize existing federal awards to be disbursed until verification has been completed.

What happens after I submit the requested verification information?

If, after reviewing your submitted information, the Office of Financial Aid (OFA) determines that your [FAFSA](#) information must be corrected, the office will electronically submit the required corrections to the federal processor. You will be informed that corrections have been made to your FAFSA when you receive a revised Student Aid Report (SAR) from the federal processor. Additionally, once the federal processor has confirmed acceptance of the corrections, the OFA will mark your record as having successfully completed verification.

If, after reviewing your submitted information, the OFA determines that no corrections need to be made to your FAFSA information, the office will mark your record as having successfully completed verification.

Students who have completed the verification process will be notified via the Award Letter or with an email sent from the OFA that aid has been awarded.

Note: Sometimes, when you submit the requested information, it can cause us to request further information, which either we previously were unaware that we would need, or because the information submitted conflicts with other information in your financial aid file.

What if I am selected for verification after I have already been awarded federal aid?

If you had a previously unselected application and were awarded federal aid, but a subsequent application is selected for verification, the OFA will cease to authorize any further federal aid disbursements until verification has been completed. Once verification is complete, your awards will be evaluated and adjusted to reflect your verified application. If revisions need to be made, an email indicating that your awards have been revised will be sent to you. The e-mail will instruct you to log into the CUKC Student Portal to view your awards. In some cases, you may no longer be eligible for aid previously awarded and/or disbursed to you. You will be responsible for repaying any aid for which you were ineligible.

What are the verification deadlines that I must observe?

Verification must be completed by the deadline published in the Federal Register.

For the 2017-18 academic year, verification that requires electronic corrections must be completed by September 15, 2018. Verification documents submitted that do not require electronic corrections to the FAFSA need to be submitted by the earlier of: 120 days after your last date of enrollment for the 2017-2018 award year or September 22, 2018. Since the OFA must have the results of a valid, correct [FAFSA](#) by the last date of your attendance, it is important to submit all requested verification documents prior to the end of the term in which you wish to receive federal student aid.

The verification deadline for the 2018-2019 academic year has not been published in the Federal Register, but the latest date to complete verification is anticipated to be late September 2019.

If a student fails to provide the requested verification documentation by the deadline noted above:

- No additional Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant (SEOG), or Federal Perkins Loan (2017-18 only) may be authorized for disbursement to the student
- Federal Work-Study funding will be terminated for student employment
- No Federal Direct Loans may be authorized for disbursement or originated
- If the student already received a Federal Pell Grant, SEOG, or Federal Perkins Loan disbursed prior to being selected for verification, he or she will be obligated to return the funds to the federal government.

What happens if the Financial Aid Office suspects fraud?

If CUKC Financial Aid office suspects that a student, employee, or other individual has misreported information or altered documentation to fraudulently obtain federal funds, we will report our suspicions and provide any evidence to the Office of Inspector General.