

Frequently Asked Questions about VERIFICATION

Your FAFSA has been selected for verification. We thought it would be helpful to explain what this means.

What is VERIFICATION? “Verification” is a process that requires all colleges and universities participating in federal student aid programs to ‘verify’ or confirm that the data provided on the FAFSA form about family and finances is correct.

Who gets selected for verification? Sometimes factors related to the FAFSA form can ‘trigger’ a request for verification. For example, if there are problems that keep the FAFSA from being processed properly, or if some of the financial data reported by a family is outside expected parameters, the government may ask us to verify the records. Also, we as a school may see something that we need verified. Other times, the selection may be completely random. Overall, about 30% of all student records are selected for verification.

What do I need to do? The verification process requires us to collect documents that confirm the FAFSA data regarding your family and your finances. This includes IRS tax transcripts for both you and your parents (if you are a dependent student) or your spouse (if you are married) unless you use the IRS data retrieval process when completing or updating your FAFSA. We’ll also need a Verification Worksheet (found on our website). If you happen to be one of those families selected for verification, you will usually be notified on your Student Aid Report (SAR) which can be viewed after you submit your FAFSA on the website www.fafsa.gov.

If your SAR indicates you have been selected for verification, you can expedite the process if you click on the “Forms” tab of this website to print off the applicable (dependent or independent) Verification Worksheet, complete, sign, and send it to us as soon as possible. If you didn’t use the IRS data retrieval process when completing the FAFSA, be sure to go back to the FAFSA website and do it a few weeks after you’ve filed your income tax return. We’ll need all of this information in order to complete your financial aid package. We’ll send you an email requesting additional information and/or directing you to use the IRS data retrieval process if the verification worksheet has not been received when your file is reviewed.

How will this affect my aid? It depends. If the figures on the documentation you submit match the figures on the FAFSA form, there will be no impact at all on your aid. If the figures don’t match exactly, your need-based aid could increase or decrease depending on the exact differences found. Either way, since the figures involved are being confirmed, your aid will be correct once verification takes place.

When do I need to take care of this? If you have not already submitted the verification worksheet and documents requested, we will send you an email, telling you what we need to complete your aid package. The sooner you submit these forms, the sooner we’ll be able to tell you exactly what aid to expect.

Does this mean I did something wrong? Not necessarily. Keep in mind that the government puts billions of dollars into the programs providing financial aid to college students. It’s understandable that they’d want to check some records to be sure the dollars are being used properly.