



## **Lamar University Verification Guide for Students 2019-2020**

### **What is Verification?**

Verification is a process used to validate certain information you entered on your FAFSA. Because students sometimes make errors on their application, this process verifies applications and makes any required corrections to the application. Institutions that participate in Federal Title IV aid programs are required to perform verification on selected students.

### **Selection Process**

The Central Processing System (CPS) selects which applications are to be verified. The school also has the authority to verify additional students.

### **Notification**

A student whose FAFSA information is selected for verification will be notified of his/her selected status as follows:

- a) the CPS will notify the student on his/her Student Aid Report (SAR). Next to the EFC will be an asterisk referring to a comment in the student section of the SAR that tells the applicant that he/she will be asked by the University to provide documentation for verification; and
- b) Lamar will send an email notification to students regarding any outstanding requirements and these requirements are outlined in the student's Self-Service Banner Account. Additionally, first-time freshman students are sent a Missing Information Letter in the mail.

University email notifications sent to a student whose FAFSA information is selected for verification will include:

- a) a link to the student's Self-Service Banner login screen:  
[https://ssbprod.lamar.edu:9000/btdb/twbkwbis.P\\_WWWLogin](https://ssbprod.lamar.edu:9000/btdb/twbkwbis.P_WWWLogin). This site allows the student to view all documentation needed to satisfy the verification requirements and complete any additional financial aid requirements; and
- b) the student's responsibilities with respect to completing all requirements for financial aid, including the consequences of failing to complete any required action or delaying their completion of any requirements.



## Deadlines to Complete Verification

A student whose FAFSA information has been selected for verification must submit all documentation required for verification to the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid. Please allow three weeks for the verification process to be completed, once all items have been submitted. The process might take longer if the University receives incomplete documents or require additional information.

For Title IV Aid programs, excluding the Federal Pell Grant program: A student must complete the verification process no later than two weeks before the last day of the student's enrollment. Verification is complete once the school has all the requested documentation and a valid FAFSA.

A Pell eligible student selected for verification must complete the process for the 2019-2020 aid year by September 19, 2020 or 120 days after the last day of the student's enrollment, whichever is earlier.

## Consequences for Failure to Submit Documentation

If verification is not complete by the deadline:

- Aid that has been previously awarded for the award year could be canceled
- Students will not receive a financial aid award or any disbursement until verification is complete.
- Students may lose out on the State of Texas programs (i.e. Texas Grant).

## Updating FAFSA Information

► *Generally, a student cannot update FAFSA information that was correct as of the date the application was signed because the FAFSA is considered to be a "snapshot" of the family's financial situation as of that date.* For example, if a student's family sold some stock after signing the FAFSA and spent the proceeds on an automobile or home improvement, the student cannot update the FAFSA to reflect a change in assets. After the FAFSA is signed, only certain items can be updated under the conditions listed below.

- (1) **Dependency Status Change:** If a student's dependency status changes at any time during the award year, the student must update FAFSA information, except when the update is due to a change in the student's marital status.
- (2) **Verification of Household Size or Number in College:** An applicant whose FAFSA information is selected for verification of household size or number in college must update those items to be correct as of the date of verification, except when the update is due to a change in the student's marital status.
- (3) **Marital Status Change:** The University may require a student to update FAFSA information



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under paragraph (1) or (2) of this section for a change in the student's marital status if the University determines that the update is necessary to address an inequity or to reflect more accurately the student's ability to pay.

## Correcting Errors on FAFSA Information

► ***Although a student cannot update FAFSA information that was filed correctly, except under limited conditions as listed-above, errors made on the original FAFSA must be corrected.***

To apply for federal aid, a student submits a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to the Central Processing System (CPS). Generally, the FAFSA is submitted through the online process and the student receives from the CPS an electronic summary of his/her processed FAFSA known as the Student Aid Report (SAR).

***Upon receipt of the SAR, the student should review all information listed on the SAR and submit for processing any errors reported on the original FAFSA to the CPS. In addition, customized Lamar University Verification Worksheets will be listed in the Self-Service Banner for students selected for federal verification. The student and parent(s) should complete the documentation as soon as possible and return it to the Financial Aid Office. Please note the deadlines listed above.***

An electronic summary of a student's original FAFSA and any corrected FAFSA information will be sent from the CPS to the University. Once received, all FAFSA data, Lamar University Verification Worksheets, and any supplemental verification documents will then be reviewed by the Financial Aid Office to verify the accuracy of the student's FAFSA information and to calculate his/her eligibility for need-based financial aid.

► ***If a student's FAFSA information changes as a result of the University's verification process, the Office of Student Financial Assistance will:***

- a) submit for processing changes to the FAFSA information determined to be in error\*;***
- b) recalculate the student's Federal Pell Grant on the basis of the recalculated EFC;***
- c) adjust the student's financial aid package on the basis of the recalculated EFC; and***
- d) notify the student via Self-Service Banner of any change to his/her financial aid package.***

***\*Note: Although the University will be able to submit most changes to FAFSA information, on occasion it may be necessary for the student to submit changes directly to the CPS. These events include a correction to the student's biographical information, marital status, or dependency status or a correction to a parent's biographical information or marital status. In such cases, the University will notify the student by phone, mail, or email as to which data items must be corrected by the student and submitted for processing to the CPS. Additionally, some corrections, such as incorrect tax return filing statuses, will need to be addressed by the student and/or parent before we will be able to continue processing the student's application.***

**Any corrections or updates must be submitted by midnight Central Time, September 12, 2020.**



## **Applicant Verification With No Corrections Necessary**

In many situations, applicants who have been selected for verification do not have any errors on their application and therefore no information reported on their FAFSA needs updating. Applicants and their parents are encouraged to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool because of its accuracy and ease of use.

## **Selection After Disbursement**

A student's application may be selected for verification after corrections are submitted and the student has been paid based on the previous unselected CPS transaction. The student is required to complete verification before receiving any further disbursements. If verification does not justify aid already disbursed, the student is responsible for repaying all aid for which he is not eligible, though he may keep any Direct Loan money he received and FWS wages he earned. See the section titled "Consequences for Failure to Submit Documentation" above for what happens if verification is not complete.

## **Professional Judgments**

Professional judgment is the discretionary action available to a financial aid administrator to address unusual circumstances that affect a student's ability to pay education expenses. Financial aid administrators may make adjustments on a case-by-case basis, and documentation must be collected. Students may [contact their financial aid counselor](#) to inquire.

## **Referral of Fraud Cases**

The Lamar University Office of Student Financial Assistance will report any suspected fraud or falsified information (on the part of the student, the parent, and preparer of financial aid applications or related parties) to the U. S. Department of Education and all other related parties for immediate action. Examples of such information include false claims of independent student status, false claims of citizenship, use of false identities, forgery of signatures or certificates, and false statements of income. This information will be forwarded to authorized agencies in addition to the U.S Department of Education for investigation such as the Office of Inspector General at 1-800-MIS-USED (1-800-647-8733) or by email at [oig.hotline@ed.gov](mailto:oig.hotline@ed.gov); web: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/hotline.html>. Anyone who suspects fraud or abuse may make a confidential report contacting the Office of Inspector General. Noncompliance issues follow the University administrative chain of command. Should an issue remain unresolved, complainants can call the State Hotline at 1-800-TXAUDIT. Complainants can also report suspected instances of noncompliance to the Department of Education, Office of the Ombudsmen, or report the complaint to [www.ethicspoint.com](http://www.ethicspoint.com)



## Definitions of Common Terms

▶ **Central Processing System (CPS):** The primary business function of the CPS is student application processing and eligibility determination for federal student financial assistance for postsecondary education.

▶ **Federal Expected Family Contribution (FM EFC):** A measure of how much the student and his/her family can be expected to contribute to the cost of the student's education for the award year based on the federal need analysis formula. Note: The University determines a student's eligibility for need-based federal aid based on a student's FM EFC.

▶ **Institutional Expected Family Contribution (IM EFC):** A measure of how much the student and his/her family can be expected to contribute to the cost of the student's education for the award year based on the institutional need analysis formula. Note: The University determines a student's eligibility for need-based institutional aid based on a student's IM EFC.

▶ **Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR):** One of two output documents created by the CPS after processing a student's FAFSA. The ISIR is made available electronically to the institutions listed on the student's FAFSA and his/her state agency.

▶ **Federal subsidized student financial assistance programs:** Title IV, HEA programs for which eligibility is determined on the basis of an applicant's FAFSA EFC. These programs include the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study (FWS), Federal Perkins Loan, and Direct Subsidized Loan programs.

▶ **Federal unsubsidized student financial assistance programs:** Title IV, HEA programs for which eligibility is not based on an applicant's FAFSA EFC. For students attending Lamar University, these programs include the Direct Unsubsidized Loan and Direct PLUS Loan programs.

▶ **Student Aid Report (SAR):** One of two output documents created by the CPS after processing a student's FAFSA. The SAR is made available electronically to the student.