



Lamar University Verification Guide for Students

Award Year: 2022-2023

What is Verification?

When completing the FAFSA, students may be selected for a process called “Verification”. This process requires Lamar to collect documents to verify certain information listed on the FAFSA is correct and make any required corrections to inaccurate information. Institutions that participate in Federal Title IV aid programs are required to perform verification on selected students.

Selection Process

Usually, the Central Processing System (CPS) selects which applications are to be verified, however, the school also has the authority to verify additional students. If selected for verification by CPS or the school, you are required to submit the documentation requested to complete the verification process.

► **CPS Selection:** The CPS sets a Verification Flag on the student’s processed FAFSA report to indicate that the student’s record has been selected for verification. The processed FAFSA is also known as the Student Aid Report (SAR).

► **Update or Correction Selection:** An update or correction your FAFSA may trigger the CPS to select the application or additional data elements for verification. In this case, the University must require you to submit any additional documentation needed to complete the verification process.

► **Institutional Selection:** The University has the authority and responsibility to select an application for verification if there is reason to believe that an applicant’s FAFSA information is inaccurate and/or contains conflicting information. If selected, you will be required to submit documentation to confirm the accuracy of the FAFSA data and/or to resolve the conflicting information and/or to verify specific data elements deemed necessary.

Exclusions from Verification

Federal regulations stipulate that the University need not verify an applicant's FAFSA information if:

- a) the applicant dies;
- b) the applicant does not receive assistance under the title IV, HEA programs for reasons other



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- than failure to verify FAFSA information;
- c) the applicant is eligible to receive only unsubsidized student financial assistance (the student institution is still required to verify the identity/statement of educational purpose); or
 - d) the applicant who transfers to the institution, had previously completed verification at the institution from which he or she transferred, and applies for assistance based on the same FAFSA information used at the previous institution, if the current institution obtains a letter from the previous institution—
 - (1) stating that it has verified the applicant's information; and
 - (2) providing the transaction number of the applicable valid ISIR.

Further, unless the University has reason to believe that the information reported by a dependent student is incorrect, it need not verify the applicant's parents' FAFSA information if:

- a) the parents are residing in a country other than the United States and cannot be contacted by normal means of communication;
- b) the parents cannot be located because their contact information is unknown and cannot be obtained by the applicant; or
- c) both of the applicant's parents are mentally incapacitated.
- d) both parents or the custodial parent has died

Lastly, unless the institution has reason to believe that the information reported by an independent student is incorrect, it need not verify the applicant's spouse's information if:

- a) the spouse is deceased;
- b) the spouse is mentally incapacitated;
- c) the spouse is residing in a country other than the United States and cannot be contacted by normal means of communication; or
- d) the spouse cannot be located because his or her contact information is unknown and cannot be obtained by the applicant.

► **Lamar University policy regarding federal exclusions:** Verification requirements may be waived for the federal exclusions listed above provided the University receives supporting documentation pertaining to the applicable exclusion by our published verification deadlines.

Notification

If your FAFSA is selected for verification by the Central Processing System (CPS), you will be notified of your status as follows:

- a) CPS will notify you on the 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 you that you will be asked by the University to provide documentation for verification; and
- b) Lamar will send an email to you, notifying you that you have outstanding requirements that



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- need to be submitted to complete your financial aid file.
- c) Your requirements will be outlined in your Self-Service Banner Account with detailed instructions, informing you of your verification status.

All emails sent from Lamar are sent to your LU student email account. University email notifications sent to a student whose FAFSA information is selected for verification will include:

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

Deadlines to Complete Verification

If selected for verification for the 2022-2023 award year, documents must be received by the institution no later than 120 days after your last date of enrollment for the 2022-2023 award year or September 16, 2023, whichever is earlier.

To allow time for accurate processing, we encourage you to complete the verification process as soon as possible but no later than two weeks before your last date of enrollment for the 2022-2023 award year. Completing verification after you are no longer enrolled may disqualify you from receiving certain types of financial assistance.

Please Note: The school must have a valid ISIR on file for you prior to your last date of enrollment to qualify for any financial aid.

Consequences for Failure to Submit Documentation

If the University requests documents or information, you must provide the requested items to complete the verification process or resolve conflicting information by the deadline. Consequences for failure to submit documentation includes:

- Aid that was previously disbursed for the award year may be canceled
- Aid that has been offered will not disburse and may be canceled
- You may not be able to receive all the aid you would have received had you completed verification prior to the deadline.



Information to be Verified and Acceptable Documentation

For each award year, the Secretary of Education publishes in the [Federal Register](#) a notice announcing the FAFSA information that an institution and an applicant are required to verify, and specifies what documentation is acceptable for verifying this information.

The individual verification items that you must verify are based on the Verification Tracking Group to which you are assigned, as listed in the chart below. The documentation required for verification varies according to the specific FAFSA information being verified. The University has created verification worksheets to verify certain information. If selected for verification, you will need to submit acceptable documentation, as listed in the chart below, to the University to complete the verification process. If you are unable to submit the documentation requested, contact the Financial Aid Office to discuss possible alternative acceptable documentation.

NOTE: Federal regulations stipulate that an institution may require an applicant to verify any FAFSA information that it specifies. Therefore, as necessary, the University may require a student to verify FAFSA information other than what is listed in the chart below.

Verification Tracking Group	Verification Tracking Group Name	FAFSA Information Required to be Verified	Acceptable Documentation
V1	Standard Verification Group	<p>The information required to be verified differs between tax filers and non-tax filers.</p> <p>Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adjusted Gross Income b. U.S. Income Taxes Paid c. Untaxed Portions of IRA Distributions & Pensions d. IRA Deductions & Payments e. Tax Exempt Interest Income f. Education Credits g. Number of Household Members h. Number in College <p>Non-Tax Filers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Income earned from Work b. Number of Household 	<p>Tax Filers</p> <p>Items a-f:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successful transfer of the 2020 tax account information using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool with information unchanged; or 2. The assigned Lamar University Verification Worksheet; and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) A 2020 Tax Return Transcript obtained at no cost from the IRS or other relevant tax authority of a U.S. territory (Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands) or commonwealth (Puerto Rico and the Northern Mariana Islands), or a foreign government that



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		<p>members</p> <p>c. Number in College</p>	<p>lists 2020 tax account information of the tax filer; or (2) A signed copy of the income tax return and the applicable schedules that were filed with the IRS or other relevant tax authority of a U.S. territory, or a foreign government that lists 2020 tax account information of the tax filer.</p> <p>Items g-h The assigned Lamar University Verification Worksheet (Household Verification Worksheet)</p> <p>Non-Tax Filers Item a</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The assigned Lamar University Verification Worksheet certifying that the individual has not filed and is not required to file a 2020 income tax return and list the sources of 2020 income earned from work and the amount of income from each source; and W-2 Forms for each source of 2020 employment income received; and For independent students or parents of a dependent student, a “Verification of Non-filing Letter” from the IRS dated on or after October 1, 2021 <p>Item b-c The assigned Lamar University Verification Worksheet (Household Verification Worksheet)</p>
V4	Custom	a. Identity and Statement of	1. Original unexpired



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	Verification Group	Educational Purpose	government-issued photo identification (ID) such as a passport or a driver's license; and 2. The Assigned Lamar University Verification Worksheet (Identity and Statement of Educational Purpose worksheet) completed in person or with a notary. If completed with a notary, the original worksheet must be mailed in.
V5	Aggregate Verification Group	All items in required for V1 and V4	All documents required for V1 and V4

*****IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT):**

The IRS DRT is the fastest, easiest, and most secure method of meeting verification requirements. To verify tax data, the U.S. Department of Education and the University encourage students and parents to use the IRS DRT to import data from their tax return directly to the FAFSA, either at the initial FAFSA filing or through the FAFSA correction process. For the retrieved data to be acceptable documentation of tax data, it is necessary that neither the student nor the parents change the data after it is transferred from the IRS.

► For assistance with the IRS DRT process, click [here](#).

Under the following conditions the IRS DRT is NOT available:

- The student/parent is married, and either the student/parent or his/her spouse filed as Married Filing Separately.
- The student/parent is married, and either the student/parent or his/her spouse filed as Head of Household.
- The parents' marital status is "Unmarried and both legal parents living together."
- The student/parent filed a Puerto Rican, foreign tax return, or an IRS Form 1040-NR or 1040NR-EZ.

******IRS Tax Return Transcript:** If you are a tax filer and are unable to submit a signed copy of your tax return, you may request a Tax Return Transcript from the IRS by visiting <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript>.



*****IRS Wage and Income Transcript:** If you are unable to locate your W2, you may request a Wage and Income Transcript form the IRS by visiting <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript>.

*****Verification of Non-Filing Letter:** You may obtain a Verification of Non-Filing Letter from the IRS by visiting <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript>.

Number in the Household and Number in College

Number in Household: When completing verification, who to include in the household is determined by your dependency status. The following persons may be listed in the household:

- If you are an independent student, per [federal student aid rules](#), include the following in the household.
 - Yourself
 - Your spouse, excluding a spouse not living in your household as a result of death, separation, or divorce.
 - Your dependent children if they will receive more than half of your support from you or your spouse.
 - Your unborn child, if the child will be born before or during the award year and you will provide more than half of the child's support from the projected date of birth to the end of the award year. Documentation from a medical practitioner with the expected delivery date may be required if the University has reason to believe this information is not valid.
 - Other persons, if they live with you and receive more than half of their support from the student at the time of application and will continue to receive support for the entire award year.

- If you are considered a dependent student, [per federal student aid](#), list the following persons living in your parent's household.
 - Yourself, even if you do not live with your parent.
 - Your parent(s), excluding a parent not living in the household as a result of death, separation, or divorce.
 - Your sibling(s), if they will receive more than half of their support from your parent(s) or the sibling would also be considered a dependent for financial aid purposes.
 - Your children if they will receive more than half of their support from your parent(s)
 - Your parent's unborn child and/or your unborn child if the child will be born before or during the award year and your parent(s) will provide more than half of the child's support from the projected date of birth until the end of the award year. Documentation from a medical practitioner with the expected delivery date may be required if the University has reason to believe this information is not valid.
 - Other persons, if they live with and receive more than half of their support from the student or parent(s) at the time of application and will continue to receive support for the entire award year.



Number in College: The number in college includes all those in the household (see above) who are attending a post-secondary educational institution for at least half-time in at least one term in the award year (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023), except parents of dependent students.

Acceptable Documentation to Verify Income Information for Tax Filers with Special Situations

Joint Income Tax Filers (Separated, divorced, widowed at the time the FAFSA was completed)

For a student, or the parent(s) of a dependent student, who filed a 2020 joint income tax return and whose income is used in the calculation of the applicant's expected family contribution and who at the time the FAFSA was completed, was separated, divorced, widowed, or married to someone other than the individual included on the 2020 joint income tax return—

- A 2020 tax return transcript obtained from the IRS; or
- A copy of the income tax return and the applicable schedules that were filed with the IRS or other relevant tax authority that lists 2020 tax account information of the tax filer(s); and
- A copy of IRS Form W-2 for each source of 2020 employment income received or an equivalent document such as a wage and income transcript.

Victims of Identity Theft

Victims of tax related identity theft must provide:

- A Tax Return DataBase View (TRDBV) transcript; and
- A signed and dated statement indicating that they were victims of tax-related identity theft and that the IRS has been made aware of it.

Note: Tax Filers may inform the IRS of the tax-related identity theft and obtain a TRDBV transcript by calling the IRS's Identity Protection Specialized Unit (IPSU) at 800-908-4490. If our office has reason to doubt the TRDBV transcript's authenticity, we will request a TRDBV transcript that has an IRS signature or stamp or other official validation.

Filers of an Amended Return

Individuals who filed an amended income tax return with the IRS must provide a signed copy of the IRS Form 1040X that was filed with the IRS for tax year 2020 or documentation from the IRS that includes the change(s) made to the tax filer's 2020 tax information, in addition to one of the following—

- IRS Data Retrieval Tool information on an ISIR record with all tax information from the original 2020 income tax return;
- A transcript obtained from the IRS that lists 2020 tax account information of the tax filer(s); or
- A signed copy of the 2020 IRS Form 1040 and the applicable schedules that were filed with the IRS.



Tax Filing Extensions

Individuals who file an extension with the IRS must provide the Extension Request Form 4868, a copy of the IRS's extension approval (beyond the automatic six-month extension), Verification on Non-Filing form from the IRS dated on or after October 1, 2021 and provide all 2020 W-2 Forms. If self-employed, the individual must provide a signed statement certifying the amount of AGI and U.S. income tax paid for tax year 2020.

Foreign Tax Filers

A student or parent who filed an income tax return other than an IRS form, such as a foreign or Puerto Rican tax form, must use the income and tax information (converted to U.S. dollars) from the lines of that form that correspond most closely to the income information reported on a U.S. income tax return to complete the FAFSA. Foreign tax filers cannot use the IRS DRT and, therefore, must submit signed copies of their 2020 foreign tax returns translated into English with U.S. dollar equivalencies to the Financial Aid Office.

Updating FAFSA Information

► Generally, you 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 your family’s financial situation as of that date. For example, if your family sold some stock after signing the FAFSA and spent the proceeds on an automobile or home improvement, you 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 your dependency status changes at any time during the award year, you must update FAFSA information, except when the update is due to a change in your marital status.
- (2) **Verification of Household Size or Number in College:** If selected for verification of household size or number in college, you must update those items to be correct as of the date of verification, except when the update is due to a change in your marital status.
- (3) **Marital Status Change:** The University may require you to update FAFSA information under items (1) or (2) of this section, for a change in the marital status if the University determines that the update is necessary to address an inequity or to reflect more accurately your ability to pay.

You should contact our office at financialaid@lamar.edu before making any updates to your FAFSA.



Correcting Errors on FAFSA Information

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

Once you submit the FAFSA to the Central Processing System (CPS), you will receive an electronic summary of your processed FAFSA known as the Student Aid Report (SAR) from CPS.

Upon receipt of the SAR, you should review all information listed on the SAR and correct any errors reported on the original FAFSA to the CPS. You may make corrections to your FAFSA using FAFSA on the web or using the SAR. You should speak with our office before making corrections to your FAFSA. In addition, customized Lamar University Verification Worksheets will be listed in the Self-Service Banner if selected for federal verification. You and/or your parent(s) should complete the documentation as soon as possible and return it to the Financial Aid Office.

An electronic summary of your 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 your FAFSA information and to calculate your eligibility for need-based financial aid.

▶ If your FAFSA information changes as a result of the University's verification process, the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid will:

- a) submit for processing corrections to the FAFSA information determined to be in error*;
- b) recalculate your Federal Pell Grant on the basis of the recalculated EFC;
- c) adjust your financial aid package on the basis of the recalculated EFC; and
- d) notify you via email and Self-Service Banner of any change to your financial aid package.

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

Any corrections or updates must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Central Time on **September 10, 2023.**



Verification Completed 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 correcting. You and/or your parents are encouraged to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool because of its accuracy and ease of use.

Selection After Disbursement

If as a result of a correction or update, you are selected for verification and aid has already been awarded or disbursed you must complete verification before any additional disbursements are made. If receiving grants, your grants may be cancelled until verification has been completed and eligibility for the grants can be determined based on your verified EFC. If the results of the completed verification does not justify aid already disbursed, you are responsible for repaying all aid for which you are no longer eligible, though you may keep any Direct Loan money received and FWS wages earned. If you are selected for verification after ceasing to be enrolled for the award year (with no plans to re-enroll), you may be excused from completing verification.

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 email financialaid@lamar.edu to inquire. If you are selected for verification, you must complete verification before the institution exercises professional judgment.

Referral of Fraud Cases

Lamar University 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; 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.

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.