

Verification of Financial Aid Application Data

Each year, the Central Processing System (CPS) of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) selects approximately 22% of all applicants for a process called verification. They determine which data elements that were reported on the FAFSA that must be confirmed. FMC will notify you if you are selected for Verification by ED, or by the school, and which data elements must be verified.

Utilizing the IRS data retrieval tool during the FAFSA application or correction process will reduce the amount of information required to be verified. If you are chosen to verify the information provided on your FAFSA, documentation will be required to complete your file before aid can be disbursed.

How You Will Be Notified

If your FAFSA is selected for verification, you will be notified as follows:

1. When the Department of Education sends you the Student Aid Report (SAR), it will include an asterisk (*) next to the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The asterisk lets you know that FMC will ask for documentation for the verification process.
2. FMC will notify you by e-mail. Notifications will begin as soon as FMC receives the FAFSA selected for verification. Notifications will continue until you have submitted all documents required for verification or the deadline for submission has passed. The notifications from FMC will include information about required documentation. After you submit documents for review, the Financial Aid (FA) Office may reach out to you again to resolve the conflicting information by requesting additional documentation.

If you are selected, the steps below will help you to provide accurate and complete information:

- Carefully read the Verification Worksheet provided with the email from the FA office. When completing the worksheet respond to every question. Do not leave any lines blank. If the correct answer is zero, write in 0.
- Submit all documentation requested such as the Verification worksheet and student and/or parent W-2 forms (if requested). Submit your tax data by using the IRS data Retrieval Tool if you are eligible, or an IRS Tax transcript if you are not eligible to use the IRS data retrieval tool if requested to do so.
- Do not submit incomplete materials. Wait until you have all your verification materials before submitting your verification packet.

- Do not submit unrequested documents such as copies of tax returns, tax schedules, tax year comparison reports, or state tax returns.
- If W-2s are requested, make sure you keep your originals and only send us copies.
- If you are a dependent student, make sure the Verification Worksheet is signed by the student and one of the parents whose information is reported on the FAFSA.
- Make sure that you provide all of the W-2 earning statements, you received from employers. The total earnings shown in box 1 of the student W-2's must match the Wages, Salaries and Tips line of the IRS tax transcript. The same goes for parents (if requested to do so).
- Provide all verification information promptly.

Correcting Errors on the FAFSA

Upon receipt of the Student Aid Report (SAR), you should review all the information listed and submit for correction any errors reported on the original FAFSA. The CPS will send FMC an electronic summary of the selected student's original FAFSA and any corrected FAFSA information.

Once received, all FAFSA data, verification worksheets, and any supplemental verification documents will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Office to verify the accuracy of the student's FAFSA information and to calculate the student's eligibility for FSA. If the FAFSA information changes as a result of the verification process, Financial Aid staff will:

- Submit the FAFSA changes and corrections to CPS for processing
- Recalculate the Federal Pell Grant based on the student's recalculated EFC
- Notify you via e-mail of any changes to that academic year's FSA package
- Adjust that academic year's FSA package based on the recalculated EFC

Verification Deadline and Failure to Submit

If you do not provide the verification documentation, you are not eligible for federal, state or institutional financial aid. If you are selected, please submit the requested verification information promptly to avoid a delay in your financial aid application processing. It must be submitted no later than 30 days after notification by the Financial Aid office to ensure no delay in completion of the awarding process.

Subsequent FAFSA Transactions

Making changes or updates to your FAFSA will result in a subsequent transaction being sent to FMC. If the subsequent transaction is selected for verification after FSA has been awarded or disbursed, you will be notified via email. You have 15 calendar days after the date of notification to submit all requested documentation for review.

Failure to submit the requested documents within the 15-day timeframe will result in the cancellation of all need-based FSA.

Referral of Fraud Cases

Students and parents are advised that FMC must and will refer to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) any credible information indicating that an applicant for FSA may have engaged in fraud or other criminal misconduct in connection with FAFSA applications. Common misconduct includes false claims of independent status, false claims of citizenship, use of false identities, forgery of signatures of certifications, and false statements of income. Note that fraud is the intent to deceive as opposed to a mistake on an application.

