

## What is Verification?

Verification is the process by which schools review student financial aid applications for accuracy. Institutions that participate in Federal Title IV aid programs are required to perform verification on a selection of students. Verification is done by collecting the documents the student used to complete the FAFSA and comparing them with the information the student provided on the FAFSA. You will not be able to receive financial aid until the verification process is complete. To receive maximum consideration for aid such as grants and/or work study, turn in all documents as quickly as possible.

## Who Is Selected For Verification?

Tennessee State University follows U.S. Department of Education guidelines and completes verification on all records that they select for the verification process. Additionally, TSU selects a number of students for institutional verification based on the answers provided to certain FAFSA questions.

## What Is The Verification Process?

If you are selected for Verification, you will find out in a couple of ways:

1. When you receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) from the Department of Education, you will see a comment stating "Your FAFSA has been selected for a review process called verification. Your school has the authority to collect certain financial documents from you.
2. Once our financial aid office receives your processed FAFSA, a Missing Information Letter will be sent to you indicating what information and documents are needed. After all requested information is submitted to the financial aid office, your file will be reviewed. If the financial aid office has further questions regarding your file, you will be contacted for additional clarification or document requests. It is your responsibility to respond to these requests. If you do not turn in the required information, your file will be held until all missing information has been received. You are encouraged to contact the financial aid office at any time with verification questions.
3. You can also view required documents via your [myTSU](#) account.

## What Documents Does TSU Need to Complete Verification and what is Verified?

### Signed IRS Tax Transcript

**Dependent Verification Form** - must be signed by the student and parent which verifies:

**Independent Verification Form** - must be signed by the student which verifies:

- ❖ Household Size – anyone for whom you will provide more than more than half of their support from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013.
- ❖ Number In College – anyone in your household who is attending at least half time between July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013.
- ❖ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, commonly known as Food Stamps statement starting amount received in 2011.
- ❖ Child Support Paid – statement signed by the individual who paid child support, listing the amount paid, child support recipient and the name of the child (children) for whom support was paid in 2011.

- ❖ Adjusted gross income (AGI)
- ❖ Federal income taxes paid
- ❖ Untaxed IRA distributions
- ❖ Untaxed pensions
- ❖ Education credits
- ❖ IRA deductions
- ❖ Tax exempt interest income

## Acceptable Documentation for Verification in 2012-2013 (Tax Filers)

For the 2012 – 2013 FAFSA, students (and/or parents of dependent students) who indicate they filed a 2011 federal income tax return, are encouraged to authorize 2011 IRS information to be imported into the FAFSA application. This will eliminate the need to later request a tax transcript from the IRS. However, there are some situations that will prevent the student/parent from importing IRS information into the FAFSA such as “married filing separately”, or “recently separated though a joint tax return was filed”.

**Prior to the 2012-13 award year, students /parents were allowed to provide a signed copy of their prior year federal tax return. Based on changes to federal regulations, students selected for verification will be required to request a tax transcript from the IRS. We are no longer allowed to accept signed copies of individual federal tax returns. Per federal regulations, the 2011 Federal Income Tax Return (1040 – 1040A or the 1040EZ) can no longer be used for verification purposes.**

**IMPORTANT:** If the IRS data retrieval process is not utilized, tax filers must request a 2011 tax transcript from the IRS (by calling **1-800-908-9946**) or requesting on line at **[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)**.

Note: If you electronically complete your 2011 federal tax return, it is approximately two weeks before such data can be imported into your FAFSA application.

## Acceptable Documentation for Verification in 2012-2013 (Non-Tax Filers)

For any earned income

- ❖ Copy of all W2s for each source of employment in 2011.

## My parents do not claim me on their taxes; why am I still considered a dependent?

For state and federal financial aid purposes, a student is only considered independent if one or more of the following are true: you are 24 years old; you are enrolled in a graduate degree program; you are married; you have children or other dependents who receive more than half of their support from you; both of your parents are deceased; you are (or were until age 18) a ward/dependent of the court; or you are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces. If none of these statements apply to you, **you must provide parent information** on your FAFSA and other financial aid documents. Extenuating circumstances may be reviewed by the financial aid office on a case by case basis to determine whether or not a professional judgment is necessary. If you are an independent student, you will need to complete the [2012-13 Independent Verification Form](#). If you are a dependent student, you will need to complete the [2012-13 Dependent Verification Form](#). If you have been selected for verification for the 2010-2011 school year, and you are a dependent student, you will need to complete the [2011-12 Dependent Verification Form](#). If you have been selected for verification for the 2011-12 school year, and you are an independent student, you will need to complete the [2011-12 Independent Verification Form](#).

## When Will I Receive My Award Notification?

Because the verification documents must be reviewed by the verification counselor, the verification process may take longer than if you were not selected for verification. Once you have turned in the required documents, your file will be reviewed. If it is determined that more information is needed, you will be contacted for this information. Once you turn in any subsequent documentation or clarification, your file will be complete. If your file is accurate, your award notification will be generated and sent to you within a week from when the file is reviewed. If an error is found in the documentation, a correction will be sent to the U.S. Department of Education. Once the correction is processed and sent back to our financial aid office, your award notification will be generated and sent to you. Correction processing can take several additional days.

When completing the verification requirements be sure to:

**Complete all sections of the Verification Worksheet**

**Sign the Verification Worksheet**

**Sign tax transcript being submitted (Student, Spouse, Parent)**

**Keep copies of all documents you turn into the financial aid office**

**Include your TSU student id or social security number on all forms you turn in to the financial aid office**