

## **Verification at Ohio University**

### **Verification Selection Criteria**

Students submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to the Central Processing System (CPS), which processes and transmits the application information to Ohio University. As a result of FAFSA processing, CPS selects some students to complete verification at their institution.

Ohio University verifies all students selected for Federal Verification according to the verification code on the ISIR.

If discrepant information is found or detected during regular processing or review of the student's FAFSA, the student is manually selected for verification. This can occur if a FAFSA item appears inaccurate or a student provides information that shows discrepant data.

### **Required Verification Documents**

Ohio University requests tax and financial documents per federal verification requirements. This includes the Verification Worksheet (all students), federal tax transcript (students/parents not using the IRS DRT), and W-2 forms (students and parents who are non-tax filers). Other documents may be required based on inaccurate or missing FAFSA data or if discrepant data is discovered. Requests for additional documentation are requested by manually posting additional checklist items to the View Financial Aid Status screen.

### **Acceptable Documentation**

For each data element that is verified, specific documentation is requested. The forms that can be used for documentation are specified in the Application and Verification Guide provided by Department of Education.

### **Adjusted Gross Income and Income Tax Liability**

A student or parent's Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and Income Tax Liability are verified with a tax return transcript. Any student not selected for verification, but shows questionable or conflicting data, will be manually selected for verification. For the 2017-18 year, as an exception, federal tax forms were permitted as acceptable documentation.

### **Untaxed Income and Exclusions**

Untaxed income is any income that is excluded from federal income taxation under the IRS code. Exclusions are types of income that may be used to reduce an AGI based on Title IV regulations. While some types of untaxed income or exclusions are listed on the tax transcript or W-2 forms; others are not. Students may be required to verify these types of income. If so, they will complete the Untaxed Income and Exclusions Form. This form requires the student and parent to provide any income received from the categories listed on the FAFSA. It must be signed by the student and parent (if applicable).

If questionable or conflicting data is present, Ohio University may choose to require additional documentation of a certain type of untaxed income or exclusion. This would be done on a case by case basis.

### **W-2 Forms**

Students/parents who have indicated on their FAFSA that they will not file taxes will be requested to submit W-2 form(s) to verify income. Some exceptions to this policy will exist but are not limited to student/parent(s) who have changed their marital status, students who have a comment code by the U.S.

Department of Education which identifies discrepancies with either theirs or their parents' information, and students who have requested to be selected for manual verification.

### **Household Size and Number in College**

To verify the household size of a student and the number of people in the household that are in college, a Verification Worksheet is used. Students who are not selected for verification, but who may need to document a change in or correction to household/number in college a Family/College Verification Form may be requested.

Ohio University does require that, for an unborn child to be included in a student or parent household, the mother must be in her second trimester of the pregnancy and that the child is expected to be born within the award year. Medical documentation is required.

### **Verification Processing**

Freshmen students may be awarded financial aid prior to completing verification, but must have a valid, non-rejected ISIR on file. Continuing students are not awarded financial aid until verification is completed. All students are required to complete the verification process prior to disbursement of any financial aid funds. Students not awarded before the end of the award year will not be eligible for student loans. Students may still receive the Federal Pell grant if awarded after the end of the award year as long as a valid ISIR was received prior to the end of the award year and the Pell is awarded by September 1 following the award year.

Generally, if a student has been selected for verification, they are not awarded any financial aid. If they were selected for verification after the fact, no further disbursements can be made until verification is completed. An exception is made for the initial awarding of freshman students. Freshman students who have not completed verification prior to packaging will receive a tentative award letter. A message is printed on the award letter indicating the awards are tentative until verification has been completed. Once verification has been completed, changes in the Expected Family Contribution will result in changes in the financial aid. After the first priority awards have been made, freshmen who have not completed verification will not be awarded until verification is complete. Upperclass and graduate students are not packaged and aid is not disbursed if the verification process is not complete.

Students receiving Federal Pell Grant funds must complete verification no later than 120 days after the last day of enrollment or August 30. Students receiving Campus-based aid must complete verification within two weeks of the last day of enrollment. Students with Direct Loan eligibility must complete verification within two weeks of the last day of enrollment. If an applicant does not complete verification by the established deadline, they forfeit their financial aid. Students are notified in writing that their application has been selected for verification and of the information required to complete verification monthly. If a student is selected for verification after the one of the above deadlines has passed, in general, verification is canceled. For 399 verification, which is required after enrollment periods have ceased, students must return documents within 30 days.

Ohio University does not make interim disbursements on a regular basis. Interim disbursements may be made on a case-by-case basis.