

VERIFICATION UPDATE 2012-2013

The Federal Department of Education has instituted some changes to the verification process for the 2012-2013 Award Year. According to the Federal Department of Education Dear Colleague Letter GEN 11-03.

Since most applicants can quickly and easily access IRS data through the FAFSA-IRS Data Retrieval process, we no longer consider it reasonable for an institution to accept anything less reliable than IRS-supplied evidence for verification of income taxes. Therefore, if an applicant selected for verification has not successfully transferred information from the IRS, or one who did transfer the information, but then changed it, the Department expects the institution to require the applicant, and if necessary the applicant's parents, to provide an official IRS transcript of their Federal income tax information.

WHAT THIS MEANS –

Students and parents can no longer submit a signed copy of the IRS 1040 as a way to confirm the income reported on the FAFSA. When completing the income sections of the FAFSA, the applicant is given the option to have this data retrieved directly from the IRS.

If applicants decide not to use the IRS data retrieval process and the application is chosen for verification, the applicant and the parents will be required to submit an IRS tax transcript.

If the IRS tax retrieved information is changed on the FAFSA, the applicant will be required to submit an IRS tax transcript.

However, the IRS data can be retrieved by the applicant when a correction is made to the FAFSA. If the retrieved data is not changed, then an IRS tax transcript will not be required.

The IRS Tax Retrieval process will begin after February 5, 2012. The applicant must have a 2011 IRS tax return on file with the IRS in order to use the tax retrieval process.

TAX FILERS WITH SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The IRS Tax Retrieval may not be available for the applicant in the following circumstances:

- A joint tax return was filed for 2011 and the student or the student's parents have filed the FAFSA with a marital status of separated, divorced or widowed.
- If the tax filer is married to someone other than the individual included on the 2011 joint tax return.
- If the parent or student was not married in 2011 but is married at the time the FAFSA is filed. The current spouse's income must be reported on the FAFSA.
- If the parents or the student is married, but filed tax returns separately.
- If an amended tax return was filed.

REQUESTING AN IRS TAX TRANSCRIPT

There are three ways tax filers can request a tax transcript. Most of these methods do not require the payment of a fee.

ONLINE Go to www.irs.gov A paper transcript will be mailed to the requestor within 5-10 days. **THIS CANNOT BE SENT DIRECTLY TO SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY.** Please send this copy to our office.

TELEPHONE (800) 908-9946 A paper transcript will be mailed to the requestor within 5-10 days. **THIS CANNOT BE SENT DIRECTLY TO SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY.** Please send this copy to our office.

IRS FORM 4506T-EZ www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f4506tez.pdf A paper transcript will be mailed to the requestor within 5-10 days. **THIS CANNOT BE SENT DIRECTLY TO SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY.** Please send this copy to our office.

IRS DATA AVAILABILITY

In general, tax filers can anticipate that the IRS data will be available within:

- Two weeks if the tax return has been filed electronically.
- Eight weeks if the tax return has been mailed.

If the tax filer has changed or corrected the federal income return, the amended information may not be available through the IRS data retrieval process. You will be required to submit both the original IRS tax transcript as well as the amended IRS tax account transcript.

IF AN IRS 1040 WILL NOT AND IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE FILED

The filers must attest that an IRS 1040 has not and will not be filed and that the IRS 1040 is not required to be filed. Copies of all W-2 forms from all employers must be submitted to our office.

Applicants filing a Puerto Rico tax return or a foreign tax return may not use the IRS Data Retrieval process and must send a signed copy of their 2011 tax documents.

FOOD STAMP RECIPIENTS

Question 75 on the FAFSA confirms that the applicant received Food Stamp Benefits (also known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in either calendar year 2010 or 2011. Applicants who have been chosen for verification and who are recipients of Food Stamps must provide our office with documentation to support that they received Food Stamps. If documentation is not provided, additional income and asset information may be requested by our office.