



## OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

### Verification Information and Documentation

Many students each year are selected for a process called Verification. In these instances, the Financial Aid Office will ask the student applicant to supply copies of documentation, such as income tax returns, W-2 statements, IRS Verification of Non Filing and verification forms etc., to verify the data that was submitted on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

The purpose of verification is to improve the accuracy of the information provided on the FAFSA. The Financial Aid Office is prohibited from disbursing federal financial aid or processing professional judgment requests until the verification process is completed. The Financial Aid Office has the authority to request any documentation it feels is necessary to complete the verification process. If a family refuses to supply the required documentation, the school may not disburse any federal financial aid to the student.

The Financial Aid Office should receive any verification documentation within 2 weeks of requesting the necessary items. Documentation normally consists of:

- Dependent or Independent Verification Worksheet(s)
- Signed copies of Parent and Student Filed IRS Tax Returns, Parent and Student Tax Transcripts or Use of the IRS Data Retrieval Tool
- Copies of W2's or 1099's
- IRS Verification of Non Filing Letter (VONF)

However, the Financial Aid Office may request other documentation as it deems necessary.

The easiest way to verify tax information for students and parents is to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool.

- Remember that not everyone will be eligible to use this tool. See below for those categories of taxpayers who are ineligible to use the Data Retrieval Tool. Students and parents who cannot use the Data Retrieval Tool will need to enter their tax information manually.
  - Students or parents who are married and filed as Married Filing Separately
  - Students or parents who are married and filed as Head of Household
  - Students or parents who filed a Form 1040X amended tax return,
  - Students or Parents who filed a Puerto Rican or foreign tax return
  - Students or Parents who have filed their tax returns electronically within the past 3 weeks or through the mail within the past 11 weeks. Students and parents may return later to try to use the Data Retrieval Tool again after returns are processed by the IRS.

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool transfers your IRS tax information directly into your FAFSA. To use the Data Retrieval Tool, complete the following steps:

- Go to [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov) and select the "Start Here" button
- Log in using your Student FSA ID
- Select the "Continue" or "Make a Correction" button
- Select the "Financial Information" tab from the top of the page.

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT) Electronically Transfers Your Federal Tax Return Information into your FAFSA Form.

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1. Log in to your current *FAFSA form* or start a new application at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov).
2. In the finances (Parent Financial Information and Student Financial Information) section of the online form, you will see a “Link to IRS” button if you are eligible to use the IRS DRT.
3. Click the “Link to IRS” button and log in with your *FSA ID* to be transferred to the IRS to retrieve your info.
4. Once at the IRS site, enter your information exactly as it appears on your federal income tax return and click the “Submit” button.
5. Check the “Transfer My Tax Information into the FAFSA form” box, and click the “Transfer Now” button.
6. You will know that your federal tax return information has been successfully transferred because the words “Transferred from the IRS” will display in place of the IRS information in your FAFSA form.

For your protection, your tax information will not be displayed on either the IRS site or [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov).

The IRS DRT can be used by both students and parents. To learn more about the IRS DRT, visit [StudentAid.gov/irsdrt](https://StudentAid.gov/irsdrt).

**Remember after all corrections are made to proceed to the SIGNATURE Page to sign and then SUBMIT the application.**

Families are encouraged to submit documentation as soon as possible so that they know their final aid award for the academic year. Any questions should be directed to the Financial Aid Office at [finaid@ferrum.edu](mailto:finaid@ferrum.edu) or call us at (540) 365-4282.