



Montgomery College
endless possibilities

Student Financial Aid Verification and File Review Policies 2013-14

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) at Montgomery College verifies all files selected by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) processor. OSFA selects other students for verification who fall below our minimum income standard (see below) and or on a case-by-case basis to correct discrepant information.

Initial File Review

OSFA imports Institutional Student Information Records (ISIRs) from the federal processor. The College's student information system, Banner, uses the flags and comment codes imbedded in the ISIR to review each record and determine which documents students must submit to complete their files. These documents may include:

- MC Financial Aid Application
- Dependent Verification Worksheet
- Independent Verification Worksheet
- Student's Federal Income Tax Transcript and W2s
- Parent(s') Federal Income Tax Transcript and W2s
- Asset Form
- Copy of high school transcript
- High School Diploma/GED
- Ability to Benefit Documentation

Other documents requested, based on ED-generated comment codes, may include copies of social security cards, copies of alien registration cards, citizenship documentation, copies of DD-214s, copies of social security benefits forms, default/overpayment clearance letters, and selective service documentation.

Personal copies of federal income tax returns can no longer be accepted. Students who did not complete the IRS data retrieval process must submit to the school a **2012 IRS tax return transcript**—not a photocopy of the income tax return. Dependent students must also submit a 2012 IRS tax return transcript for the parents listed on the FAFSA. Families may obtain IRS tax return transcripts at www.irs.gov, "Order a Return or Account Transcript" link, or call 1-800-908-9946. The **"IRS tax return transcript"** must be requested and submitted, **not** the "IRS tax account transcript." It takes up to two

weeks for IRS income information to be available for electronic IRS tax return filers, and up to eight weeks for paper IRS tax return filers.

Tracking Letters

OSFA sends each student a letter requesting additional documents after the initial review of the ISIR. The letter tells the student how to obtain the required documents and to return them to OSFA within two weeks of the date of the letter. Subsequent notifications are done through MC official college email addresses. OSFA does not award financial aid to the student until the requested documents are received and reviewed, and the verification process is complete. OSFA makes all corrections to student ISIR data electronically.

Documents required to complete student's financial aid files can be viewed on MyMC, the college's secure internal portal. Forms that must be submitted are downloaded and printed from the secure portal which links the student to Banner's self service web site. Changes to the student's expected family contribution due to verification corrections may be viewed by the student via the secure web site.

Verification Items

Verification items may include the following:

- ◆ Household size
- ◆ Number in college
- ◆ Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)
- ◆ U.S. taxes paid
- ◆ Income earned from work
- ◆ Untaxed income such as child support, military benefits, and other financial support paid on behalf of students and their families
- ◆ Child support paid
- ◆ Receive of SNAP benefits (food stamps)

Minimal Income

In some cases, the student's family income appears to be insufficient to support the family. OSFA picks these students for verification. The standards for selecting students for this review are as follows:

1 family member	=	Less than \$ 4000 income
2 family members	=	Less than \$ 6000 income
3 family members	=	Less than \$ 8000 income

Continue adding \$2000 per family member.

Families that meet any of the Federal needs test criteria on the FAFSA are excluded from minimal income verification review.

File Review/Verification Checklist

When a file is reviewed OSFA staff complete a Banner Verification Form for those students selected for verification. We record corrections to data and actions taken on the file. A copy of this electronic form is then placed in the student's permanent financial aid record in our imaging system. Additional file comments may be found on the comments screen in Banner, as well as noted on the documents or in the comment sections of the imaging system.

Ability to Benefit Review

In order to receive federal financial aid, students must be high school graduates or GED recipients. Students who do not have a high school diploma or GED will not be eligible for federal financial aid. The "Ability to Benefit" rule for new students is suspended as of July 1, 2012. Students who received aid as "ability to benefit" prior to July 1, 2012 will keep their aid eligible status.