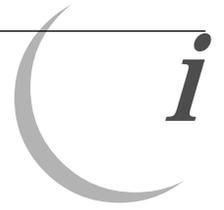

Introduction



This publication is intended for financial aid administrators and counselors who help students begin the student aid process—filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), verifying information, and making corrections and other changes to the information reported on the FAFSA.

Throughout the Handbook we use “college,” “school,” and “institution” interchangeably unless we mean something specific. “Parents” in this volume refers to the parents of dependent students, and “you” refers to the primary audience of the Handbook: financial aid administrators at colleges. “We” indicates the United States Department of Education.

We appreciate any comments that you have regarding the Application/Verification Guide as well as all the volumes of the Federal Student Aid Handbook. We make many minor revisions because of questions and feedback from the financial aid community, so please contact us at fsaschoolspubs@ed.gov to let us know how to improve the Handbook so that it is always clear and authoritative.

CHANGES FOR 2005-2006

Because most returning students will now receive a renewal reminder rather than a paper renewal FAFSA, the margin note on p. 5 was changed to discuss the limited circumstances for which one can receive a paper renewal FAFSA.

We’ve become aware that some schools have required students to fill out supplemental forms (in addition to the FAFSA) in order to apply for federal student aid. This is not permitted, and we have added text to that effect on p. 3.

On p. 4 we inserted the caution that students should not give their PIN to anyone nor should anyone ask for it, even if they plan to assist the student with receiving aid. A Dear Colleague Letter (GEN-04-10, September 2004) explains this further.

We often get questions about whether same-sex unions count as marriages on the FAFSA. They do not; see the pertinent margin note on p. 10.

We also added a margin note on p. 12 describing how to determine the income earned from work when values on lines 12 or 18 of the 1040 form are negative.

When a parent receives untaxed Social Security benefits on behalf of a student, the benefits would be reported on the parent's side of Worksheet A. We have noted this on p. 15.

Aid administrators have reported seeing an increase in combat pay on W-2 forms and have wondered how it should be treated on the FAFSA. See the margin note on p. 16 for the answer.

We added guidance on p. 23 under "Question 50" stating that a student who is independent due only to marriage becomes dependent for the next award year when divorced.

We clarified guidance regarding financial support for children of students. Such support from anyone other than the student's parents may be counted as support provided by the student for determining whether the child is a dependent of the student and whether the child should be counted in his household size. See the bottom of p. 26.

We removed the veteran match charts in Chapter 2 that reproduce information from the ISIR Guide because they were redundant with the text on p. 27. We added the pertinent page references for the ISIR Guide.

We clarified the instruction at the top of p. 34 to state explicitly that FAAs cannot accept a faxed or copied signature for the application. Verification signature requirements are more lenient.

Because schools can no longer pay on the secondary EFC under any circumstance, we emended the language on the top of p. 36 to show that rather than use the secondary EFC, schools must correct and re-submit an application for which the student wrongfully met the simplified needs test.

We added a margin note on p. 102 to allay worries about the size of IRS Publication 17. While it is a long document, we have specified the page numbers to which you might need to refer when resolving cases of conflicting information.