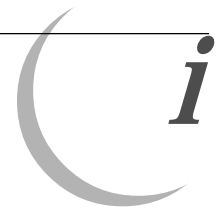


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# Introduction



*This volume of the Federal Student Aid Handbook discusses the eligibility requirements for students and parent borrowers and your responsibilities in checking to make sure that recipients qualify for their aid awards.*

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## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

There are many factors that you must consider when reviewing a student's application for aid from the FSA programs, such as whether the student is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, whether the student is making satisfactory academic progress, and whether the student has a defaulted FSA loan. To answer these questions you receive information about the student from several different sources, including the Department of Education's Central Processing System (CPS) for financial aid applications and the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).

Throughout the year the Department provides updates to schools in the form of Dear Partner/Colleague Letters. These letters and other information, such as Federal Register notices and announcements containing system updates and technical guidance, are available on the *Information for Financial Aid Professionals* (IFAP) website ([www.ifap.ed.gov](http://www.ifap.ed.gov)).

Schools using software from the Department also receive other materials that explain how the software operates, such as technical references, which are available on the SAIG website. The FSA Handbook doesn't cover the operation of specific pieces of software. Schools using third party software should consult the vendor's reference materials for technical guidance.

## RECENT CHANGES

The text in chapter 1 has been changed to note that students from a state that provides for a certification of a home-school secondary education can self-certify that they have received such a certification.

In chapter 1 the requirement that a student pass an ATB test within twelve months before the receipt of aid has been eliminated.

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## Program and systems information online

### Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG)

[www.fsadownload.ed.gov](http://www.fsadownload.ed.gov)

Technical References and Users

Guides for—

- CPS
- Electronic Data Exchange
- RFMS EDE Pell
- Direct Loans
- SSCR
- FISAP
- Packaging

### IFAP

[ifap.ed.gov](http://ifap.ed.gov)

- Federal Registers
- Action Letters
- Dear Partner/Colleague Letters

We have revised the guidance regarding parolees as eligible noncitizens in chapter 2. The new text now states that parolees are eligible noncitizens if paroled into the U.S. for at least a year and if they can provide evidence from the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS, formerly the Immigration and Naturalization Service or INS) that they are in the U.S. for other than a temporary purpose with the intent to become citizens or permanent residents. A valid application for lawful permanent resident status on file with the BCIS would meet this criterion.

Also in chapter 2 we have replaced INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) with BCIS (Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services), which is the new name for that part of the old INS that provided services to immigrants. Note that the INS abbreviation still appears in the charts showing ISIR results because the application processing system was not changed for 03-04 to show the new name for the INS.

The Department no longer plans to conduct a match to determine if students are incarcerated and in what kind of institution.

The Social Security match will now produce a reject when an applicant's name and SSN match but the date of birth does not. Also, students from the Pacific islands who do not have an SSN will now send their FAFSA to the same address as all other students. See chapter 4.

There are the usual updates to the allowances used in the EFC calculation.

The text regarding the treatment of overpayments in chapter 8 (pp. 127–130) has been updated to reflect the changes in the regulations.

If you have any comments regarding the FSA Handbook, please contact Research and Publications via e-mail at [fsaschoolspubs@ed.gov](mailto:fsaschoolspubs@ed.gov).