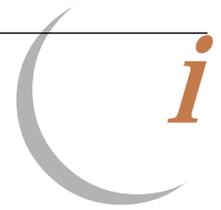

Introduction



This publication is intended for financial aid administrators and counseling staff who are helping students in the initial phases of the student aid process—filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, verifying information, and making corrections and other changes to the information reported on the FAFSA.

RECENT CHANGES

Only minor changes have been made in the areas of application and verification over the last year. Most of the statutory changes made by the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 [Public Law (P. L.) 105-244] were incorporated into the FAFSA processing system during the 2000-2001 school year.

The most notable changes on the FAFSA itself have been the addition of a new worksheet A and revisions to the drug conviction question, which is now number 35. The addition of Worksheet A does not add any items to be reported on the FAFSA, but separates some existing items for ease of identification. See Chapter Two of this *Guide* for information on the new worksheets and how the drug question has been reworded.

A major operational change worthy of note is the merger of the TIVWAN/SAIG and CPS help lines into the CPS/WAN Technical Support center (1-800-330-5947) and the elimination of charges for help calls to this number.

Scope of the Application and Verification Guide

The main change for this subject area in the SFA Handbook is the way that we've reorganized the content. For two years, application and verification material has been a part of the Student Eligibility volume of the SFA Handbook. In the past year, we've heard from a number of financial aid administrators that they preferred having the Verification Guide as a separate publication.

To see if that was a widespread opinion, we polled members of a major listserv (2,000+ members) and conducted focus groups. By a large majority these groups expressed a preference for a separate publication devoted to verification issues.

At the same time, we asked for opinions as to whether the application material that formerly was issued in the *Counselor's Handbook* should be made a part of this new publication, since the application and verification processes are so closely related. Again the responses to this proposal were strongly in favor.

The result of this feedback is the new *Application and Verification Guide*. You'll find that we've added a considerable amount of information, but we've also edited and streamlined the presentation.

We continue to seek feedback about your information needs and how you and your staff use this publication. In particular, we'd like to know if we've included in this *Guide* the basic elements that a counselor needs to work with a student who's beginning the financial aid process. If there are other topics that you'd like to see included in this publication or topics that you'd like to see removed, please let us know. Send your comments and suggestions to:
sfaschoolspubs@ed.gov

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