



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Docket ID ED-2026-FSA-1618]

Privacy Act of 1974; Matching Program

AGENCY: Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of a New Matching Program.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended by the Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act of 1988 and the Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Amendments of 1990 (Privacy Act), and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance on the conduct of matching programs, notice is hereby given of the re-establishment of the matching program between the U.S. Department of Education (Department or ED) (recipient agency) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (source agency). The current 18-month Computer Matching Agreement (CMA) between ED and VA was recertified for an additional 12 months on June 27, 2025, and will automatically expire on June 26, 2026. The matching program allows ED to receive information from VA to assist the Secretary of Education (Secretary) in the Secretary's obligation to verify the status of applicants for financial assistance under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, who claim to be veterans.

DATES: Submit your comments on the proposed re-establishment of the matching program on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

The matching program will become effective on the later of the following two dates: (1) June 27, 2026, or (2) 30 days after the publication of this notice, on [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER], unless comments have been received from interested members of the public requiring modification and republication of the notice. The matching program will continue for 18 months after the effective date and may be renewed for up to an additional 12 months if, within 3 months prior to the expiration of the 18 months, the respective Data Integrity Boards of the Department and the VA determine that the conditions specified in 5 U.S.C. 552a(o)(2)(D) have been met.

ADDRESSES: Comments must be submitted via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). However, if you require an accommodation or cannot otherwise submit your comments via [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov), please contact the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT. The Department will not accept comments submitted by fax or by email, or comments submitted after the comment

period. To ensure that the Department does not receive duplicate copies, please submit your comments only once. In addition, please include the Docket ID at the top of your comments.

Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to www.regulations.gov to submit your comments electronically. Information on using Regulations.gov, including instructions for accessing agency documents, submitting comments, and viewing the docket, is available on the site under the "FAQ" tab.

Privacy Note: The Department's policy is to make all comments received from members of the public available for public viewing in their entirety on the Federal eRulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov. Therefore, commenters should be careful to include in their comments only information that they wish to make publicly available.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Corinne Sauri, Management and Program Analyst, Office of Operations and Governance, Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 245-5612.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and wish to access telecommunications relay services, please dial 7-1-1.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (Privacy Act) (5 U.S.C. 552a); Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Final Guidance Interpreting the Provisions of Public Law 100-503, the Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act of 1988, published in the *Federal Register* on June 19, 1989 (54 FR 25818); and OMB Circular No. A-108, notice is hereby provided of the re-establishment of the matching program between the Department and VA.

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES:

The U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

AUTHORITY FOR CONDUCTING THE MATCHING PROGRAM:

The Department's legal authority to enter into the matching program and to disclose information thereunder is sections 480(c)(1) and 480(d)(4) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) (20 U.S.C. 1087vv(c)(1) and (d)(4)). VA's legal authority to enter into this matching program is 38 U.S.C. § 523.

PURPOSE(S) :

The purpose of this matching program is to assist the Secretary of Education (the Secretary) with verification of a veteran's status during the processing and review of applications for financial assistance under title IV of the HEA.

The Secretary is authorized by the HEA to administer programs under title IV of the HEA and to enforce the terms and conditions of the HEA.

Section 480(c)(1) of the HEA defines the term "veteran" to mean "any individual who-(A) has engaged in the active duty in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard; and (B) was released under a condition other than dishonorable." 20 U.S.C. 1087vv(c)(1). Under section 480(d)(1)(D) of the HEA, an applicant who is a veteran (as defined in section 480(c)(1) of the HEA) is considered an independent student for purposes of title IV, HEA program assistance eligibility, and, therefore, does not have to provide parental income and asset information to apply for title IV, HEA program assistance. 20 U.S.C. 1087vv(d)(1)(D).

CATEGORIES OF INDIVIDUALS:

This matching program covers Individuals who have completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) and have indicated that they are veterans.

CATEGORIES OF RECORDS:

ED will disclose to the VA the Social Security number (SSN), first and last name, and date of birth (DOB) of each applicant for financial assistance under

title IV of the HEA who indicates veteran status in their application.

VA will compare these data elements against the first and last name, SSN, and DOB of veterans. As a result of the match, VA will assign one of four values to the applicant records: (1) veteran status confirmed; (2) record found on database, but not a qualifying veteran; (3) record not found on database; or (4) record found on database, but applicant on active duty. VA then will transmit applicant records back to ED.

SYSTEM(S) OF RECORDS:

VA will use the VA system of records entitled "Compensation, Pension, Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Records - VA" (58VA21/22/28), last published in full in the *Federal Register* on September 15, 2025 (90 FR 44464). VA has determined that routine use 34 in the foregoing system of records is compatible with the purpose for which the information is collected and contains appropriate Privacy Act disclosure authority.

ED will disclose data from records in the FPS, which are covered by the system of records notice (SORN) entitled "Aid Awareness and Application Processing" (18-11-21), which was most recently published in the *Federal Register* on April 22, 2026 (91 FR 91245). ED has

determined that Routine Use 1(a) in the cited SORN permits the disclosure of information for the purpose of verifying the accuracy of veteran status information maintained in ED records.

Accessible Format: On request to the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, compact disc, or other accessible format.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the *Federal Register* by using the article

search feature at www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Richard Lucas,

Acting Chief Operating Officer,

Federal Student Aid.

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