

According to the [Federal Register](#) announcing the verification requirements for the applicable award year, to be acceptable for verifying identity and Statement of Educational Purpose, the identification (ID) must be "An unexpired valid government-issued photo identification such as, but not limited to, a driver's license, non-driver's identification card, other state-issued identification, or U.S. passport."

If the front side of the ID contains the information needed to meet that requirement, then you only need a copy of the front side of the ID. In other words, you only need a copy of the side containing the name, photo, and expiration date, as well as indicating that it is a government-issued ID. That's most often the front side only.

**Note:** An unexpired valid government-issued photo identification is one issued by the U.S. government, any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, a federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native Tribe, American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau. Note that IDs from foreign countries are not acceptable.

**Acceptable Documents:** A valid unexpired government-issued photo identification (photo ID) can include, **but is not limited to**, the following:

- U.S. Passport;
- Driver's license;
- Non-driver's identification card;
- Other state-issued ID;
- Permanent Resident Card or Resident Alien Card (I-551, can be photocopied for Title IV purposes);
- Certificate of Naturalization if it contains a recognizable photo, even though it does not have an expiration date;
- Inmate ID from a government facility, even if it does not have an expiration date; or
- State-issued voter ID, even if it does not have an expiration date.

For this purpose, a valid unexpired government-issued photo ID is one that is issued by the U.S. government, any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, a federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native Tribe, American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau.

For a Certificate of Naturalization, if the institution cannot determine that it is the same student in the photo (such as one issued when the student was a baby) the student must provide the institution with either a Certificate of Naturalization with a current photo (which may be impossible per DHS-USCIS issuing guidelines), or the student must provide the institution with an alternate form of government-issued photo identification that does contain a current recognizable photo. Such individuals could have gotten married or changed their name. If the institution has any suspicions about the Certificate of Naturalization, it should request additional documentation including but not limited to a government-issued name change documentation or a marriage certificate.

**Unacceptable Documents:** The following documents are **not acceptable** for completing verification:

- A government-issued photo ID from a foreign country not previously listed;
- Military IDs, because there is a general prohibition on photocopying military IDs;
- Student IDs, not even those issued by state schools; or

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program IDs (SNAP IDs) with or without a picture because they should not be photocopied.

**Questionable Documents:** The following documents require further investigation with the agency that issued them:

- State-issued Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) cards, which require the school to find out from the issuing agency whether the card can be photocopied for Title IV purposes; if in doubt, do not accept them.

**Photos:** If the photo still is recognizable as the student, it is acceptable for verification of identity/Statement of Educational Purpose. This is a determination made by the financial aid administrator or notary public who reviews and accepts the document when it is presented in-person for verification purposes.

**Expiration Dates:** ED does not require that an ID have a date. However, if there is a date, it must not be expired.

NASFAA has confirmed the above guidance with the ED.

**Signatures on Documents:** If the document requires a signature in order to be considered a valid document, then it is NASFAA's understanding that a signature is required on that document for Title IV verification (and citizenship) purposes. For example, a U.S. passport and a Certificate of Naturalization require a signature, so they must be signed. In general, if there is space for a signature, then it must be signed. If you question whether a document requires a signature, consider searching the Internet.