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User Guide for the

# CPS Test System

2003-2004

U.S. Department of Education



F E D E R A L  
S T U D E N T A I D

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# Preface

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## About this Guide

This user guide describes the CPS Test System and the testing process. It also provides testing instructions.

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## Who uses this guide?

Readers of this guide are staff members at schools and software development companies that create systems to exchange application and correction data with the CPS. State agencies refer to this guide for using test data to verify that their systems can receive ISIRs.

Other readers are financial aid administrators or others in the financial aid community who want to complete and submit FAFSA on the Web in English or Spanish, Renewal FAFSA on the Web, and Corrections on the Web applications for demonstration or training purposes.

# CPS Test System

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## What is the CPS Test System?

The CPS Test System includes two testing environments: a mainframe test environment and a Web application demo site.

### Mainframe Test System

The mainframe portion of the CPS Test System is designed to test CPS processing of application and correction data from your system outside the production environment. The system is used primarily by schools with custom processing systems and by software development companies that create systems to exchange data with the CPS.

The CPS provides test files of application records and matching ISIRs, or you can submit application records you have created. To submit test correction records you have created, you must call CPS/WAN Technical Support for record IDs that will process successfully in the CPS Test System.

At the end of each processing day, the test database tables are cleared and the original data needed for correction processing is restored.



If you plan to test with the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System, you **must** test with the CPS *first*. CPS forwards your records to COD for their use in the COD test system, which means you can use the same student IDs throughout the testing process.

## **Web Demo Site**

This portion of the CPS Test System is a demo version of the FAFSA on the Web site. The demo site allows you to complete and submit sample FAFSA on the Web applications in English or Spanish, Renewal FAFSA on the Web applications, as well as make corrections using Corrections on the Web. You can also demonstrate all of the features of the production versions of the sites, including application status checking and electronic signatures.

You can use the Web site to demonstrate these electronic applications to parents and students or use it as an aid in training financial aid administrators, so they are better able to help students with completing electronic applications.

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## **When is the Test System available?**

The mainframe portion of the CPS Test System is available year-round.

A message will be posted on FSATECH, IFAP, and the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) when the Web demo site becomes available.

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## **Getting Help**

You can get help with the CPS Test System by contacting:

### **CPS/WAN Technical Support**

For questions regarding:

- Technical assistance
- System functionality
- ISIR/custom file layouts

and to obtain:

- Record IDs for testing corrections

contact CPS/WAN Technical Support at:

**800/330-5947**

**TDD/TTY: 800/511-5806**

Hours of operation are 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (CT), Monday through Friday.

You can also contact CPS/WAN Technical Support by e-mail at this address:

**[cpswan@ncs.com](mailto:cpswan@ncs.com)**

## **FSATECH**

This listserv provides a forum for users to ask questions and exchange ideas on the EDE process and financial aid processing with other users and customer service staff.

To subscribe to the listserv, along with information on how to post and receive messages, go to FSATECH on the Schools Portal Web site at:

**[www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html)**

# Before You Begin

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## Obtain a Destination Point Number

To use the CPS Test System, you must be able to transmit data over the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG). To do this, you can enroll online at the SAIG enrollment Web site:

**[www.FSAwebenroll.ed.gov](http://www.FSAwebenroll.ed.gov)**

CPS/WAN Technical Support mails you a destination point number, also referred to as a TG number (because it starts with the letters *TG*). It identifies your school as a destination point and allows you to exchange data with the CPS. Your TG number consists of seven characters, the letters *TG* followed by five numbers beginning with the number **5, 6, 7, or 8**.

For information on becoming a destination point, contact CPS/WAN Technical Support at:

**800/330-5947**

**TDD/TTY: 800/511-5806**

e-mail: **[cpswan@ncs.com](mailto:cpswan@ncs.com)**

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## Download the *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference*

To create data to use with the CPS Test System, you need a copy of the *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference*. It contains the electronic application and electronic correction record layouts you will need to develop your system as specified by the CPS. It also contains the ISIR record layout and other information you will need to format your data correctly.

The *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference* is available in Adobe Acrobat format (.pdf) at Federal Student Aid's (FSA) FSAdownload Web site, located at:

**[www.FSAdownload.ed.gov](http://www.FSAdownload.ed.gov)**

To download this document:

1. Go to **<http://fsadownload.ed.gov>**.
2. Click **References and Documentation**.
3. Click **2003-2004 Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference**.
4. Click **Save as**, designate a target directory for the document file, and click **OK** to save.
5. Open the saved file in the Adobe Acrobat Reader to view and print the draft document.

# CPS Test Process

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## **1 Create or Request Data**

To use the CPS Test System, you must create initial test application records or request IDs to create your correction records. All application data that you transmit to the CPS must be formatted according to the appropriate record layout in the *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference*.

The *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference* is available for downloading at the FSAdownload Web site. See “Before You Begin” in this user guide for instructions.

### **Initial Application Data for Testing**

You can create initial test application records in three ways:

#### ***Download and Use the CPS Test Application and ISIR Files***

You can download a file of test application data from the FSAdownload Web site, along with its corresponding test ISIR file. The test file contains approximately 3,000 records. The Web site is located at:

**[www.FSAdownload.ed.gov](http://www.FSAdownload.ed.gov)**

In the test application file, use the method described later in “SSNs for Initial Application Test Records” to change only the SSNs on the records. The processing results on the ISIRs you receive should match the test ISIR file you downloaded from the FSAdownload Web site.

## **Download and Use the CPS Test Application File as a Template**

You can also download the file of test application data from the FSAdownload Web site and use it as a template to create your own application data.

The Web site is located at:

**[www.FSAdownload.ed.gov](http://www.FSAdownload.ed.gov)**

Be sure to change the SSNs using the method described later in “SSNs for Initial Application Test Records.”

Remember, when you change any of the data in the test records other than the SSN, the resulting ISIRs will not match the CPS test ISIR file. You will need to check your results manually.

## **Create Your Own Application Data**

If you prefer, you can create your own application data from scratch according to the record layout specifications in the *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference*. If you choose this method, you must manually check the ISIRs you receive.

For information on downloading the *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference*, see “Before You Begin” in this user guide.

## **SSNs for Initial Application Test Records**

Whether you are using the test application file or creating your own data, each test record must contain a dummy Social Security Number (or “SSN”). The first five characters of this “SSN” must be your destination point, or TG, number. This ensures the test data you are submitting is unique to your destination point.

We recommend you use the remaining four characters to number the records in sequence. For example, if your TG number is 79999, the SSNs of your first five initial application records could be:

799990001  
799990002  
799990003  
799990004  
799990005

You can create and transmit as many initial application test records as you want.

If you plan to submit multiple batches of electronic applications on the same day, use unique dummy SSNs for the students in all batches you submit on that day to avoid receiving Transmission Reject 18, which indicates that a previous application is already in the CPS database. Test records are cleared from the database each evening, so you can use the unique dummy SSNs again the next day.

## **School Codes for Initial Application Test Records**

**You must include at least one (1) school code on each test record** in the first school code position of the record layout. You can include a school code in positions two (2) through six (6) if you choose.

For the first Federal School Code, for each record sent and processed, you will receive one ISIR back in the TAPS04OP message class.

If you include more than one Federal School Code on your input record, you will also receive a TSAR04OP (automatic ISIR) message class for schools listed in school code position numbers two through six.

For message class names, see “Import Data to Your System” within this user guide.

## **Correction Data for Testing**

For correction records, you must contact CPS/WAN Technical Support to obtain the SSNs for a series of test correction records that are already in the CPS test database. You can request up to 25 correction SSNs.

You can contact CPS/WAN Technical Support at:

**800/330-5947**

**TDD/TYY: 800/511-5806**

**e-mail: [cpswan@ncs.com](mailto:cpswan@ncs.com)**

If you are submitting multiple corrections for your assigned correction IDs in a single day (whether in different batches or in the same batch), you must use the same Federal School Code in the correction for that SSN. The Federal School Code is located in field 29 (positions 471 to 476) of the electronic correction record layout in the *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference*.

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## 2 Export Data from Your System

When your test data is formatted according to the specifications in the “Record Layouts” section of the *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference*, transmit the data through the SAIG using these message classes:

Initial applications	<b>TAPS04IN</b>
Corrections	<b>TCOR04IN</b>

The CPS processes the records it receives once a day. It forwards these records to the COD system, so you can use the same records when you perform testing with the COD system.



If you plan to test with the COD system, you **must** test with the CPS *first*.

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## 3 Import Data to Your System

After the CPS processes your test data and forwards it to the COD system, it places the data in your SAIG mailbox for you to retrieve. The data is identified with these message classes:

Initial application ISIRs	<b>TAPS04OP</b>
Correction ISIRs	<b>TCOR04OP</b>

If your input files contain data outside of the CPS processing specifications, the CPS does not process your files, but instead puts associated error files in your SAIG mailbox for you to retrieve. The data is identified with these message classes:

Initial application errors	<b>TAPE04OP</b>
Correction errors	<b>TCOE04OP</b>

The *Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference* can help you resolve the errors you receive in these files.

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## 4 Review Test Results

Each school uses different systems and has different reasons for testing. You can conduct testing at your convenience, and the results are for your use only. Testing is optional; ED does not require it. The test system is a tool for you to use to ensure that your processing system interfaces properly with the CPS.

If you used:

- **The CPS test input file and changed only the SSNs**, you can check your results with the CPS test ISIR file. Both the test input file and the test ISIR file are available at the FSAdownload Web site.
- **The CPS test input file and changed the SSNs and other data** in the file, you must check the resulting ISIRs manually.
- **Your own data** that you created from scratch, you must check the resulting ISIRs manually.

### Match Data

Note that the match agency data on the test ISIRs is simulated data. It does not compromise any student's privacy.

# State Agencies

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## Test Data for State Agencies

State agencies that want to test their systems can do so by downloading a file of test ISIRs from the FSAdownload Web site. The Web site is located at:

**[www.FSAdownload.ed.gov](http://www.FSAdownload.ed.gov)**



The file of 50 test ISIRs available in previous years is no longer available. It is replaced by the CPS Test System test data.

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## What is the next step?

Once you have either downloaded the test ISIR file (approximately 3,000 records), you can use the test data as you choose. Testing is not required, and you can conduct the testing at your convenience.

Import the data into your system and then review the data to ensure the data is displayed and used as appropriate for your system.

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## Match Data

Note that the match agency data on the test ISIRs is simulated data. It does not compromise any student's privacy.

See "Getting Help" at the beginning of this guide for technical support information.

# Web Demo Site

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## What is this site?

This Web site is a demonstration version of ED's FAFSA on the Web, Renewal FAFSA on the Web, and Corrections on the Web. It offers all the features of the production versions of the sites, except that no data is processed.

On the demo site, you can:

- Complete and “submit” a FAFSA or a Renewal FAFSA
- Make corrections
- Check application status
- Sign applications electronically
- Request duplicate SARs
- Search for Federal School Codes

The site provides a way for financial administrators to show students and parents, as well as financial aid office staff, how to use FAFSA on the Web.

Preloaded test data is available for demonstrating Renewal FAFSA on the Web and Corrections on the Web, and test student IDs and PINs are available for renewal applications and corrections.

The data you enter is saved for the day you enter it. All data is cleared from the database each evening.

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## Where is the site?

The Web application demo site is located at:

**fafsademo.test.ed.gov**

The site is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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## System Requirements

The system requirements for the Web demo site are the same as for the FAFSA on the Web production site. Select these tabs on the demo site for specific information:

- Browser Requirements
- Browser Setup
- Supported Browsers

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## Accessing the Web Demo Site

The Web demo site is password protected. When you go to the site, a login box displays first.

For the User Name (not case-sensitive), type: **eddemo**

For the Password (case-sensitive), type: **fafsatest**

Click **OK**. The Welcome page appears. You can find test IDs and PINs on this page.

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## Getting Help

You can get help with the Web demo site by contacting:

### **FAFSA on the Web Customer Service**

FAFSA on the Web telephone numbers are:

**800/801-0576**

**TDD/TTY: 800/511-5806**

Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. CT.

You can also contact Customer Service by e-mail at this address:

**[fafsaweb@ncs.com](mailto:fafsaweb@ncs.com)**

### **FSATECH**

This listserv provides a forum for users to ask questions and exchange ideas on the EDE process and financial aid processing with other users and Customer Service staff.

For information on how to subscribe for access to the listserv, along with information on how to post and receive messages, go to FSATECH on the Schools Portal Web site at:

**[www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html)**

# Glossary

## **Correction**

A correction refers to the record that contains the changes you have made to an ISIR.

## **COD**

The Common Origination and Disbursement Process, or COD, is a process ED developed to simplify the requesting, reporting, and reconciling of federal student aid funds. It enables origination and disbursement from a single record, as well as eliminates duplicate data reporting for Pell Grants and Direct Loans, streamlines edits, and offers expanded reporting capabilities.

## **CPS**

The Central Processing System, or CPS, is ED's application data processing facility. The CPS uses student information from the FAFSA processors to calculate the student's EFC and returns the student's eligibility information to schools and state agencies to which the student is releasing the data.

## **Destination Point**

Destination points are the receivers and transmitters of Title IV data across the SAIG. A destination point can be a postsecondary school, a servicer for a school, or a state agency. A destination point can represent multiple schools.

## **ED**

ED is the acronym for the U.S. Department of Education.

## **EDE**

ED supports the electronic transfer of Title IV financial aid data through a process called Electronic Data Exchange or EDE. As a user of EDE, you can send data to or retrieve data from ED and its systems electronically. Data is transmitted via the Student Aid Information Gateway (SAIG) using EDconnect, a telecommunications software product provided by ED.

## **EFC**

The Expected Family Contribution, or EFC, is the amount that the student's family is expected to contribute toward the cost of attendance (COA). This amount is usually based on the family's income. The EFC, together with the student's COA, helps determine the student's need for FSA funds.

## **Export**

In terms of CPS processing, to export data means to batch and transmit properly formatted data from your computer system to the CPS for processing.

## **FAFSA**

FAFSA is the acronym for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

## **Federal School Code**

The Federal School Code is the six-digit code used by the CPS to identify a school. It is the code for the schools entered by students on their FAFSAs. It was formerly called the Title IV Code.

## **Import**

In terms of CPS processing, to import data means to retrieve processed data from the CPS and add it to your computer system.

## **ISIR**

Institutional Student Information Record, or ISIR, is a federal output record that contains the student's EFC and all the information provided by the student on the FAFSA. The ISIR can be received electronically by schools that participate in the EDE system. For more information, see *A Guide to ISIRs* and the *Counselor's Handbook. A Guide to ISIRs* is available at the IFAP Web site, [www.ifap.ed.gov](http://www.ifap.ed.gov). Until the 2003-2004 version is available, refer to the 2002-2003 version under Current Publications by Title, Action Letters, No. 4 GEN-02-02(JAN).

## **ISIR, Automatic**

If you enrolled in this EDE service, you automatically receive an ISIR for each student who listed your Federal School Code on his or her FAFSA. These ISIRs are called automatic ISIRs.

## **Message Class**

This is the filename of a batch of records that identifies the type of records in the batch.

## **OPE ID**

The OPE ID is the eight-digit number assigned by the U.S. Department of Education to schools participating in Title IV programs.

## **SAIG**

The Student Aid Internet Gateway, or SAIG, links thousands of network nodes, or destination points, across the United States, its territories, and certain ED-designated foreign countries to the Higher Education Act's Title IV student financial aid programs and delivery systems. Destination points communicate with the SAIG using a PC or mainframe computer to transmit and receive data. Destination points are postsecondary schools, third-party servicers, guaranty agencies, lenders, software providers, and state scholarship agencies.

## **TG Number**

A TG number is the number that is assigned to you upon receipt of your SAIG Enrollment Form. It identifies you as a destination point and allows you to exchange data with the CPS. Your TG number consists of seven characters, the letters *TG* followed by five numbers beginning with the number **5, 6, 7, or 8**.