Clarity

Tax Verification Guide

This guide will walk you step-by-step through the tax verification process for the financial aid application.

Questions? You can view/download the Tax Verification FAQs PDF on the Tax Verification help page

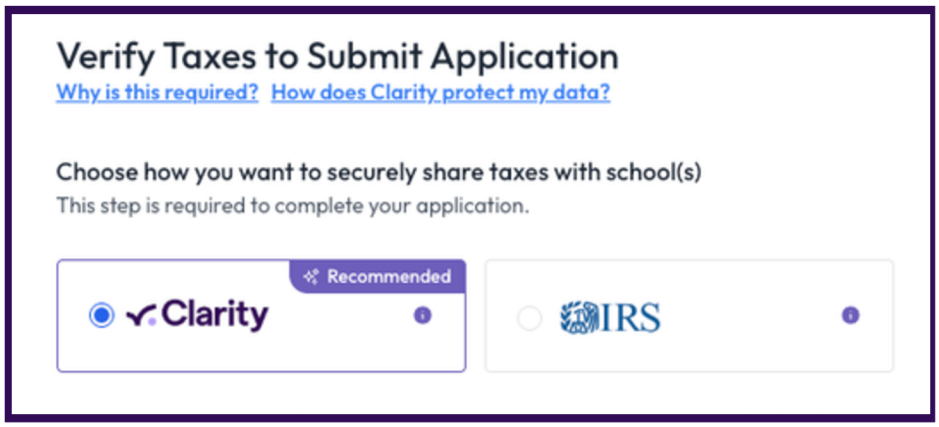
Need more help?

We encourage you to keep this guide open as you complete these steps to help answer questions and provide explanation when needed. But if you get stuck, you can contact us at: **support@clarityapp.com**

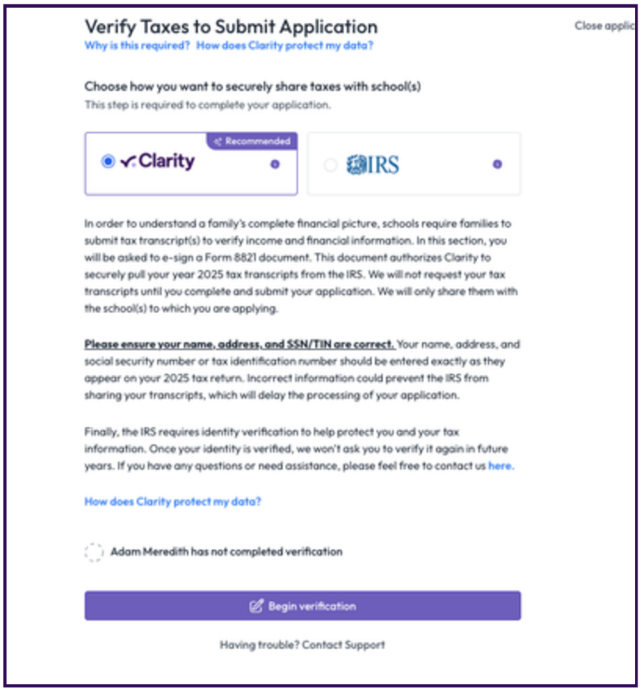
Tax Verification

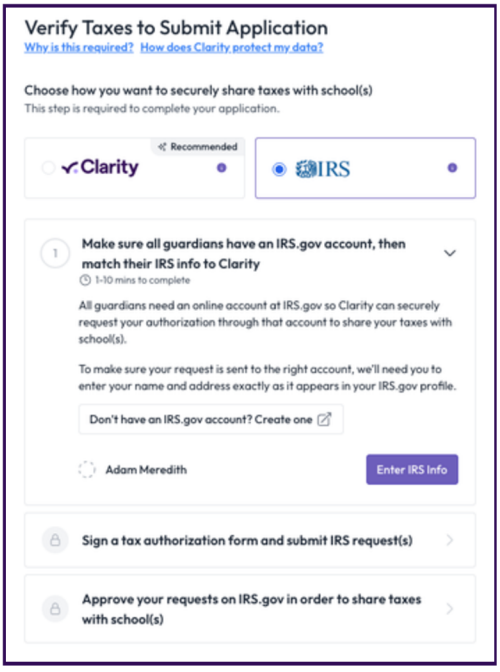
STEP 1 - SELECT YOUR VERIFICATION PROCESS

- You will have the option to verify through Clarity or through the IRS website.
- You can review the step-by-step directions for both processes in this guide.



Choose between verifying on Clarity or through the IRS.
Since it is a quicker and less involved process, we recommend going through the Clarity verification steps. However, both options are available





Continue to the next page (Page 03) for the step-by-step verification process through Clarity

Continue to Page 07 for the step-by-step verification process through the IRS

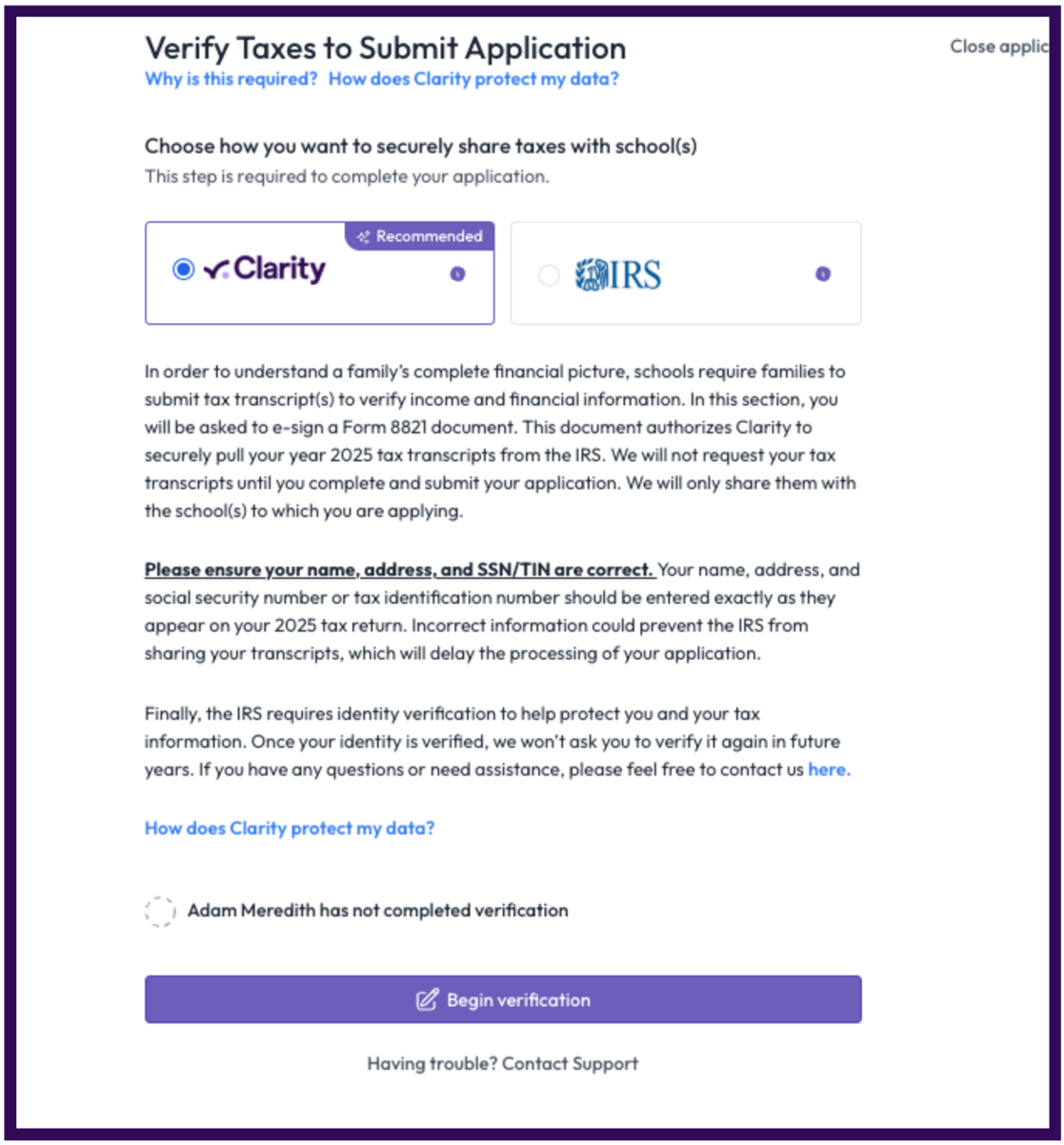
Tax Verification

Clarity Verification Process

STEP 1 - SIGN THE FORMS

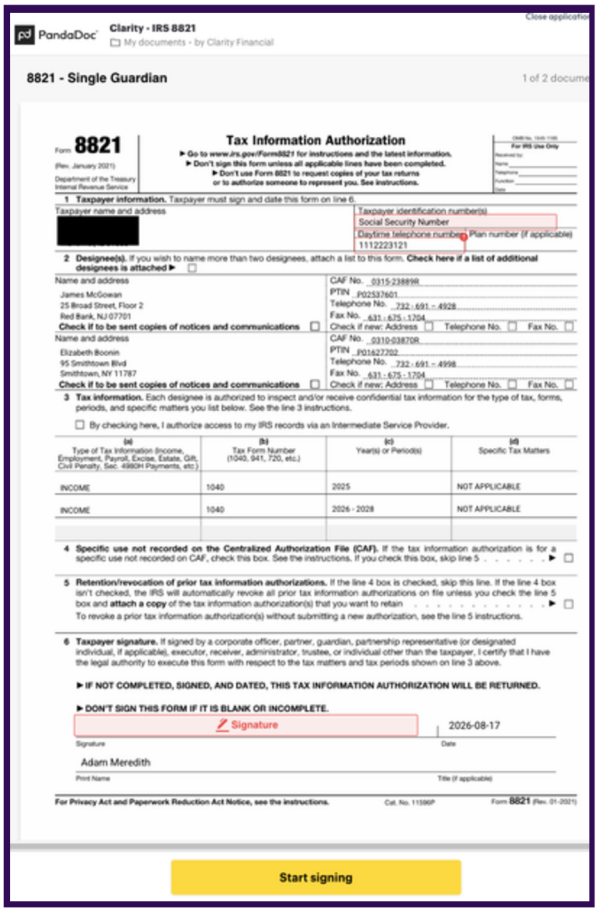
- During this process, you will sign both the 8821 and 4506c, which are tax authorization forms.

Start by clicking the “Sign and verify with Clarity button”. This will take you to the forms to e-sign both tax documents and tax authorization consent

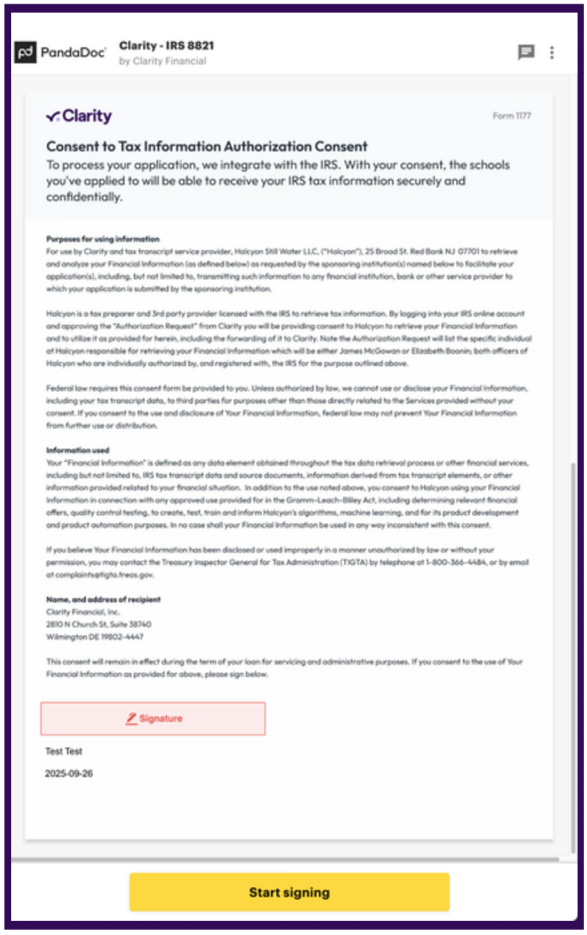


Tax Verification

STEP 1 - SIGN THE FORMS (CONT'D)



- Both the 8821 and 4506c forms will be signed in the same digital document. You will start with the 8821, and then continue down to the 4506c after the Tax Authorization consent form is signed.
- You will sign the forms and complete verification for each guardian separately. Once verification is completed for the first guardian listed, the process will start for the second guardian





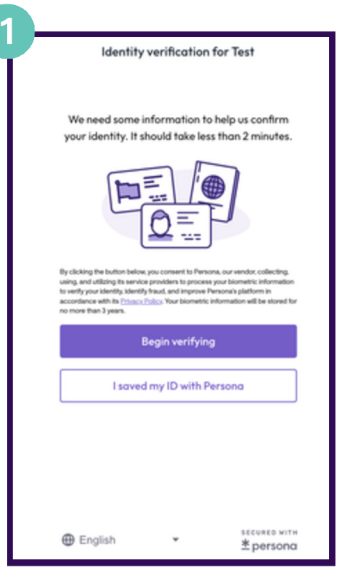
Tax Verification

Clarity

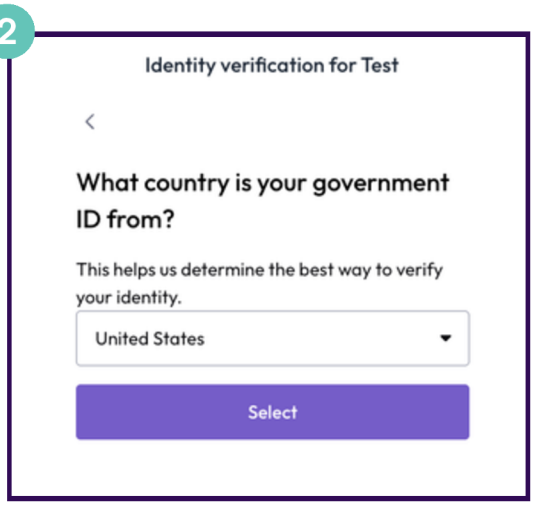
STEP 2 - VERIFY YOUR IDENTITY

- Each guardian will need to complete this verification step. If the other guardian is not available, you will have the option to send them an email with the steps.
- The verification can either be completed on the device you are using, or a different device if it's easier. (Computer with camera, mobile phone, tablet)

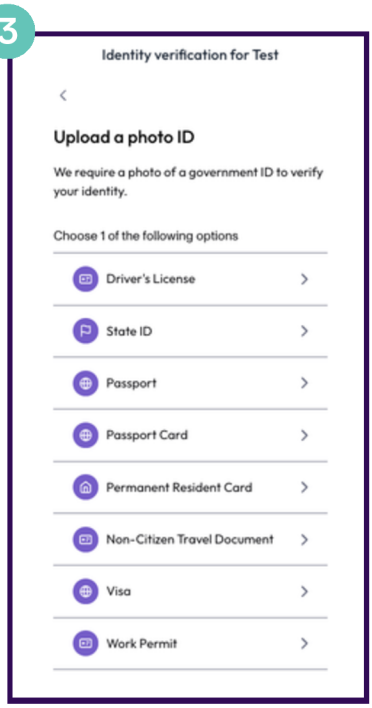
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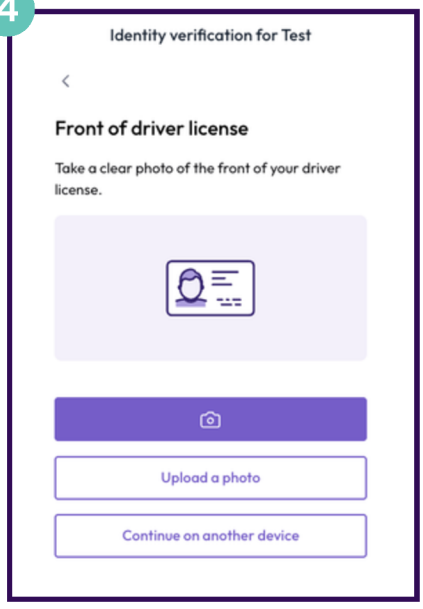
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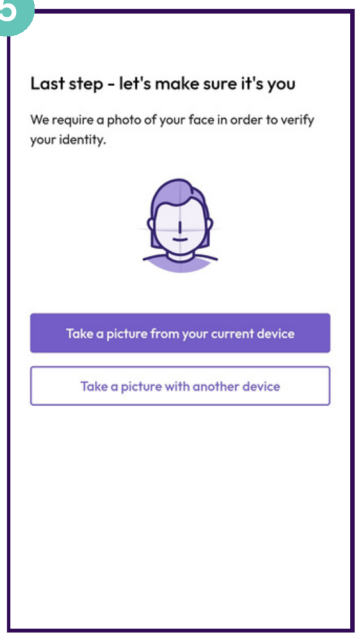
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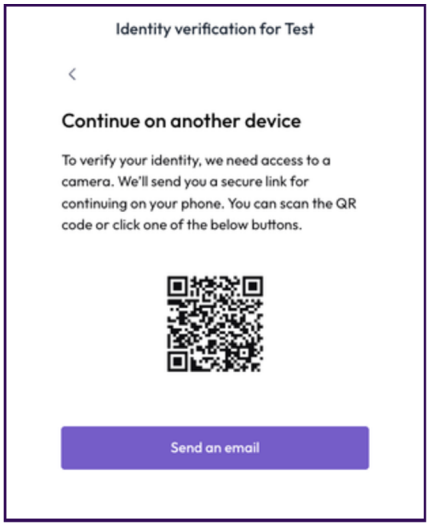


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5



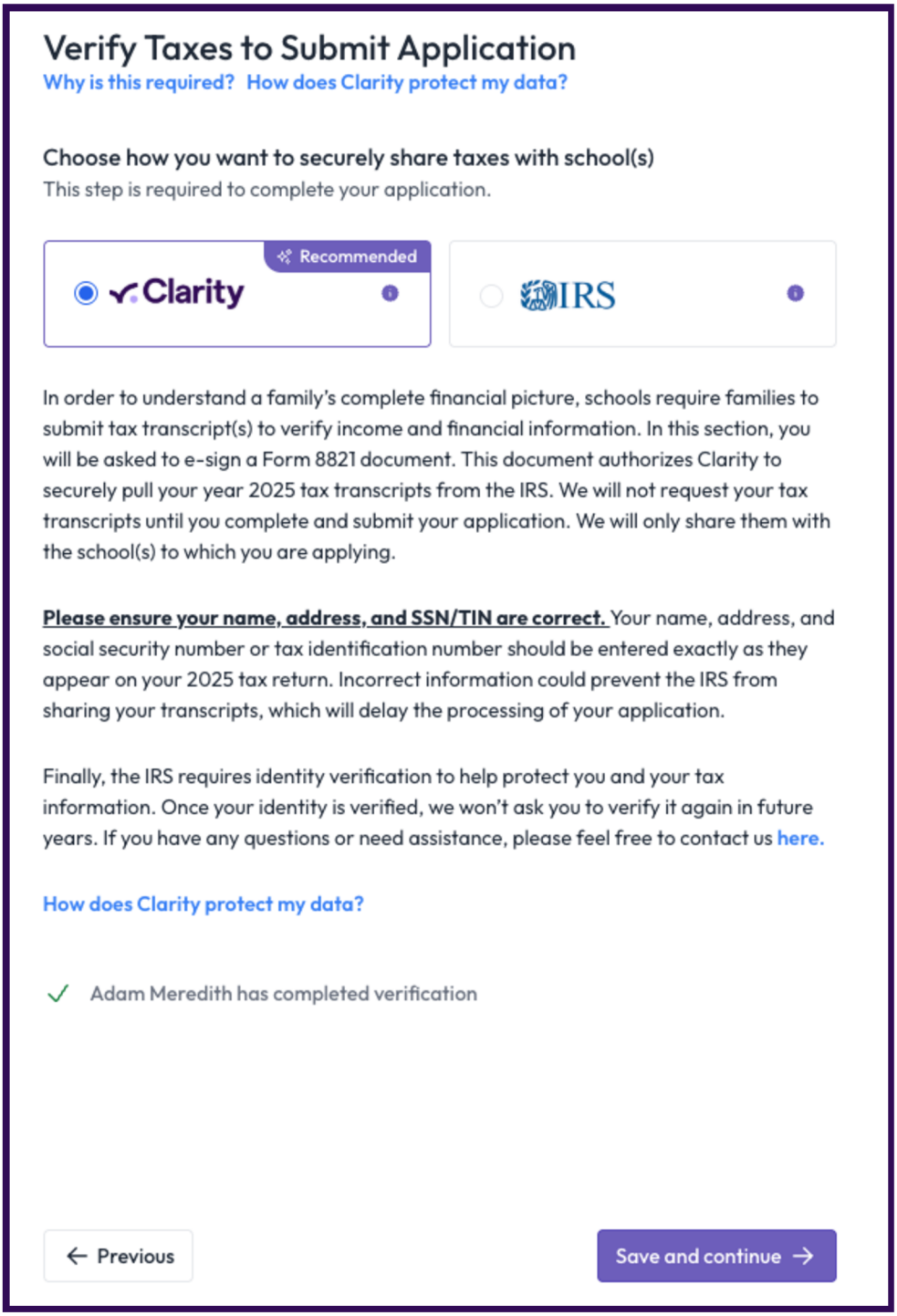


If you select "Continue on another device", you can either scan the QR code with your mobile device or send an email with an access link.

Tax Verification

STEP 3 - SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

- Once verification is completed for all guardians, you will be brought back to the page where you can submit your application.
- If verification failed through Persona, you can still submit the application. Our manual verification team will review it and reach out if any additional information is needed.

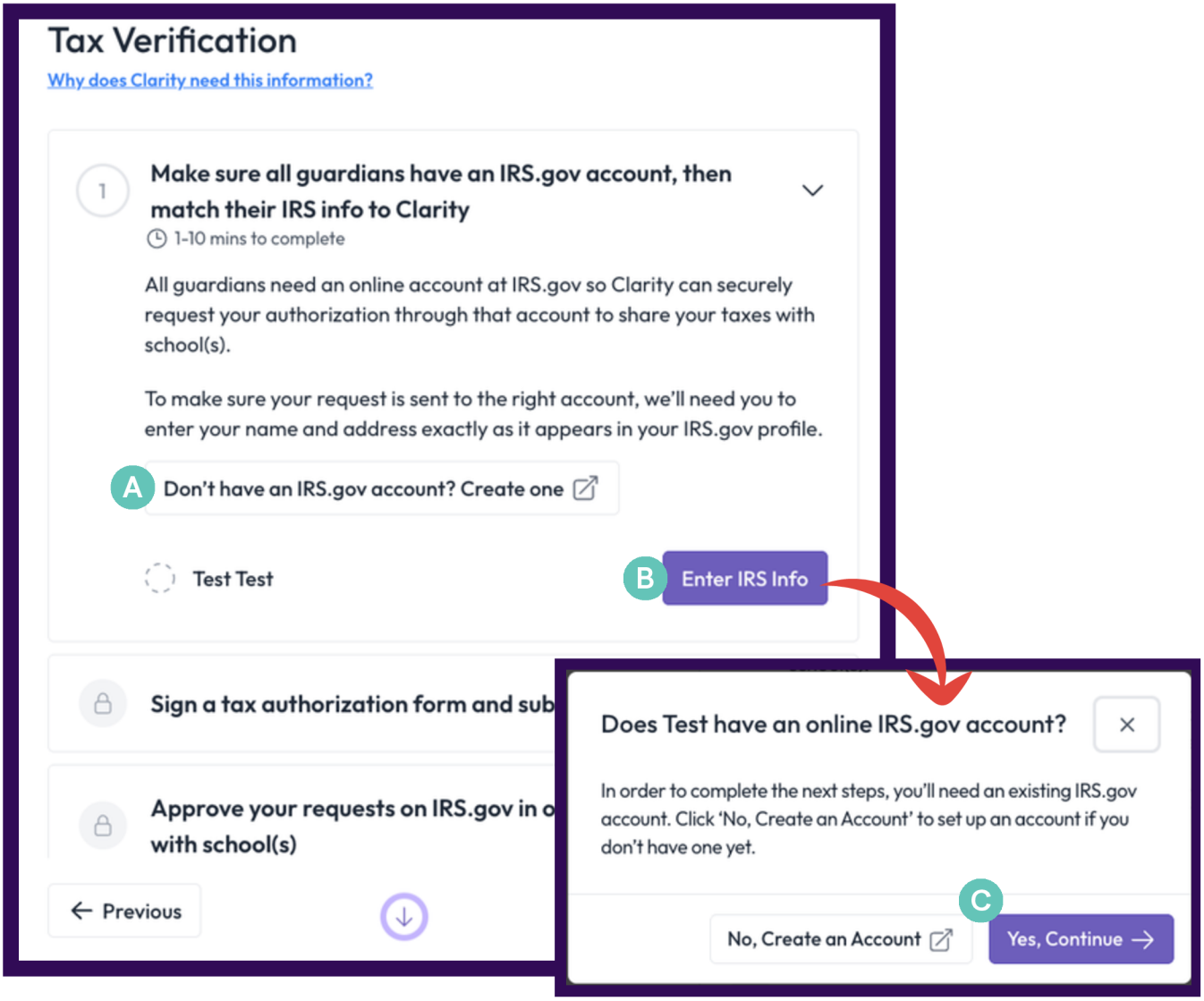


Tax Verification

IRS Verification Process

STEP 1 - CREATE/CONFIRM IRS ACCOUNT

- Each guardian will need to create their own individual IRS account.
- If you already have an account, simply click the button to enter your IRS info and skip to page 10 of this guide.

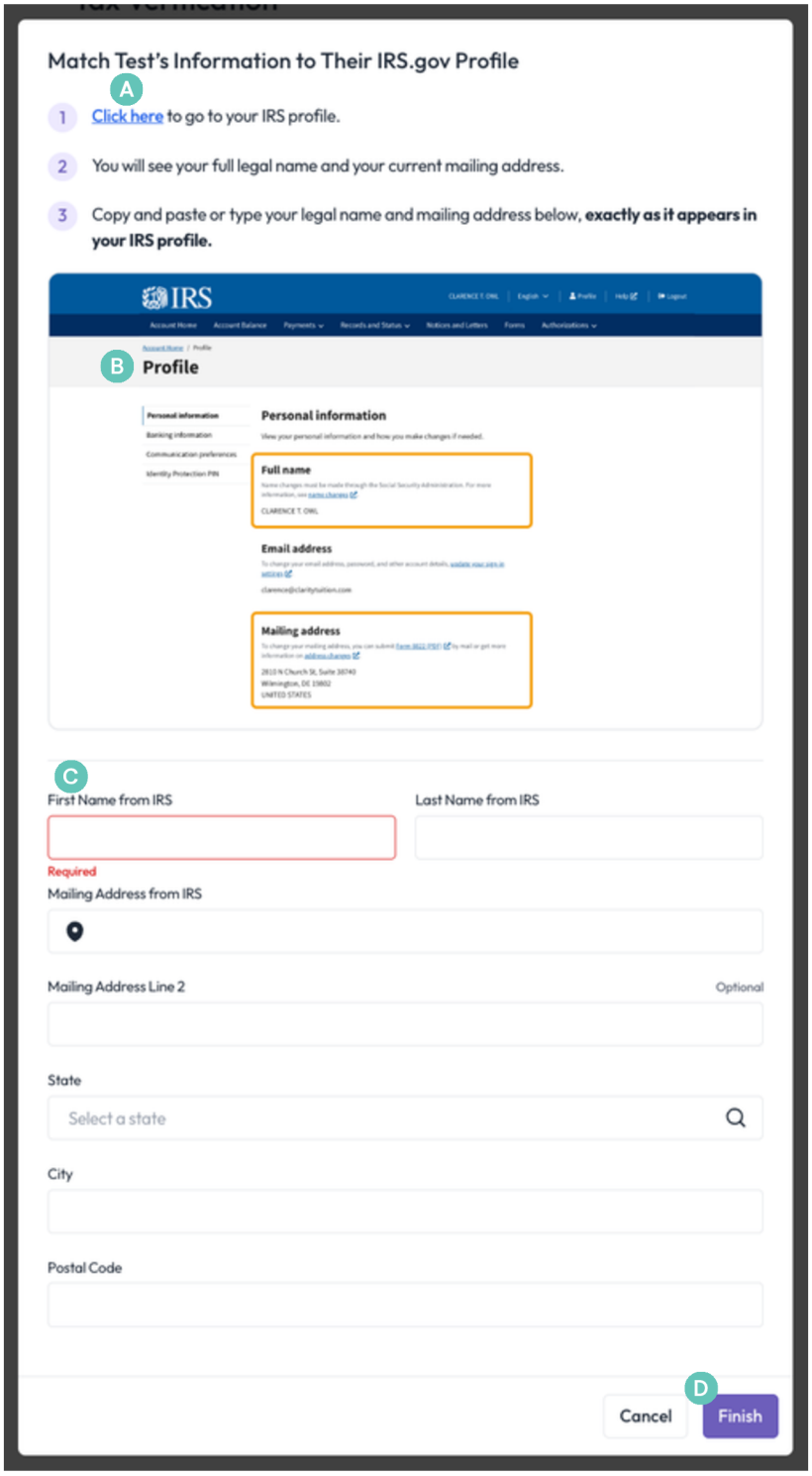


A If any guardians in the household do not have an IRS account, click this button to create one.
(See pages 4-9 for step-by-step instructions on the creation process)

B Once created, or if you already have an IRS account, click the "Enter IRS Info" button to add your name and address. (See next page for more details)

C A confirmation box will pop-up to confirm that the guardian has an IRS account. Once you have an account, click the "Yes, Continue" button to proceed.

STEP 1 - CREATE/CONFIRM IRS ACCOUNT (CONT'D)



A Click the link to go straight to your IRS profile page.

B Refer to the screenshot to find where to locate your IRS name and address.

C Enter your name and address EXACTLY as it appears on your IRS profile

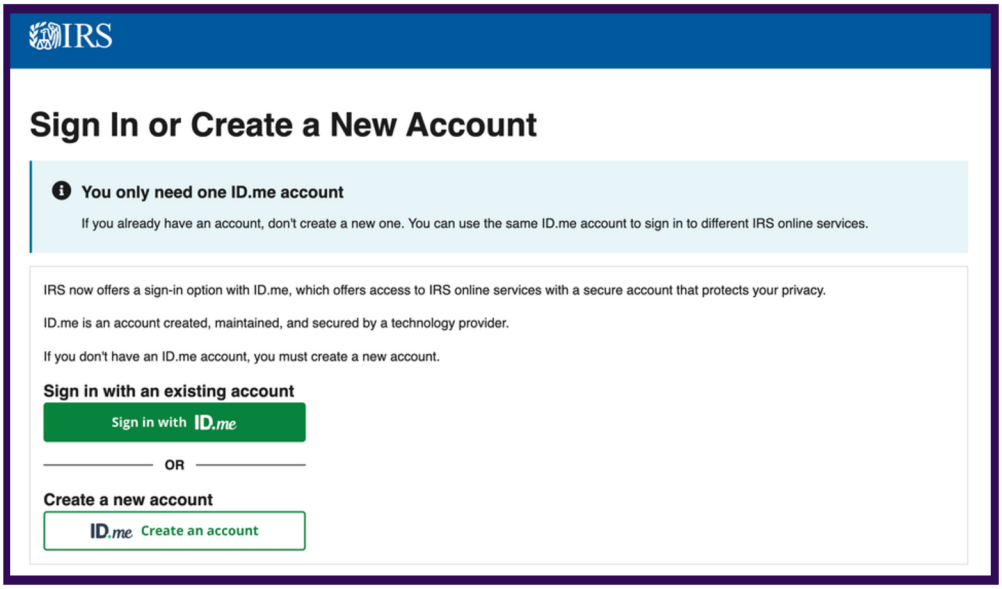
D Once everything is entered, click the Finish button to move to the next step

Tax Verification

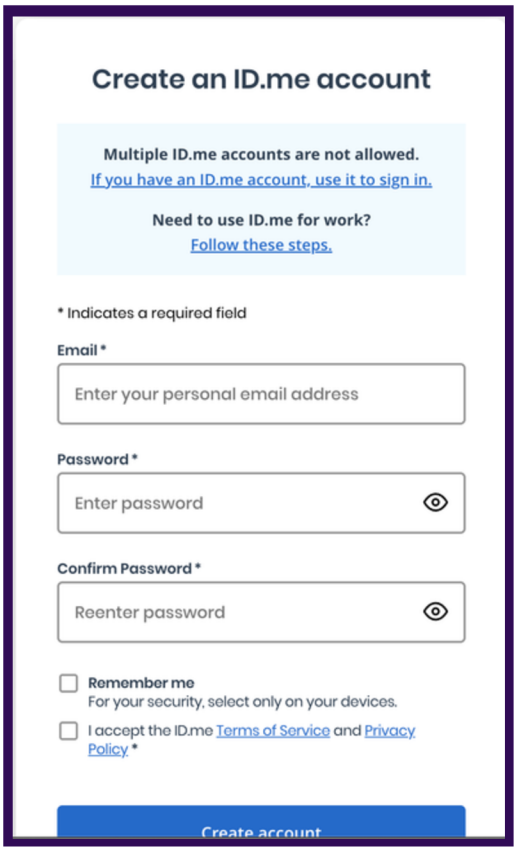
STEP 2 - IRS ACCOUNT CREATION

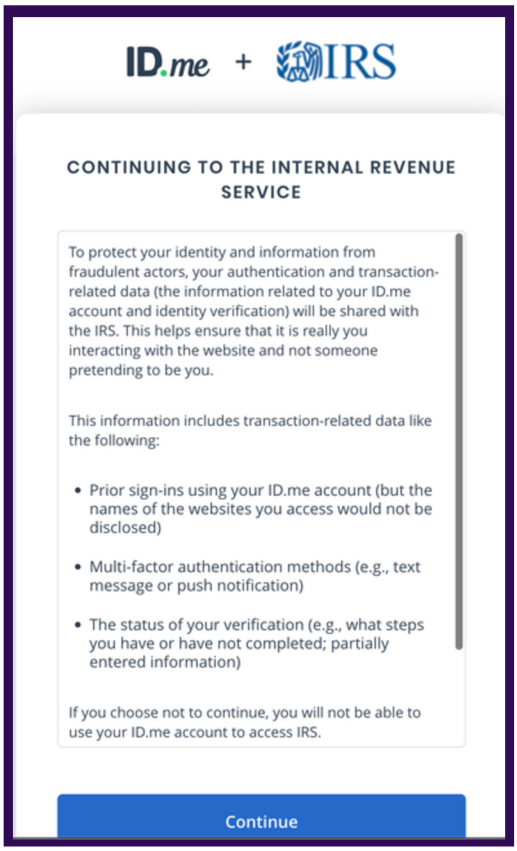
- If you already have an IRS account through ID.me, you do not need to complete these steps. Skip ahead to page 10 for the next steps in the Clarity process.
- These steps are completed outside of Clarity's scope. If you have any questions or encounter issues verifying your account, visit: ID.me Support

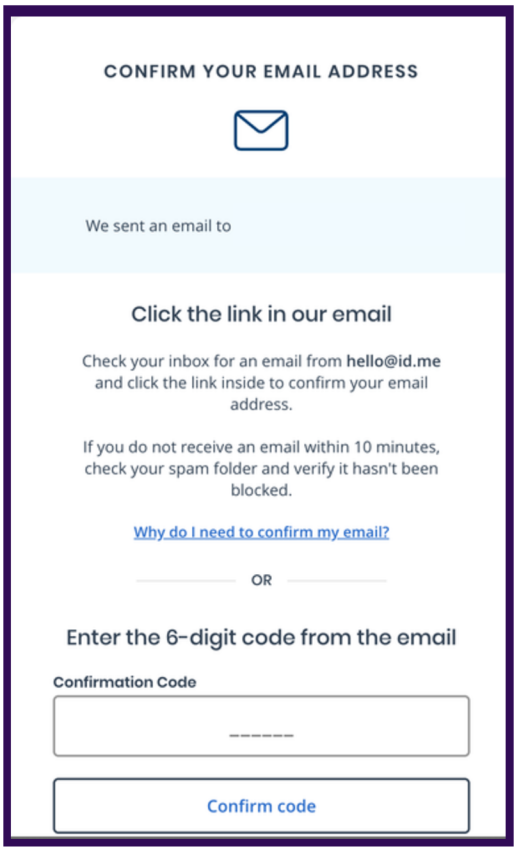
Click the Create an Account button to get started



Fill out your log-in information and follow the prompts to confirm your email.



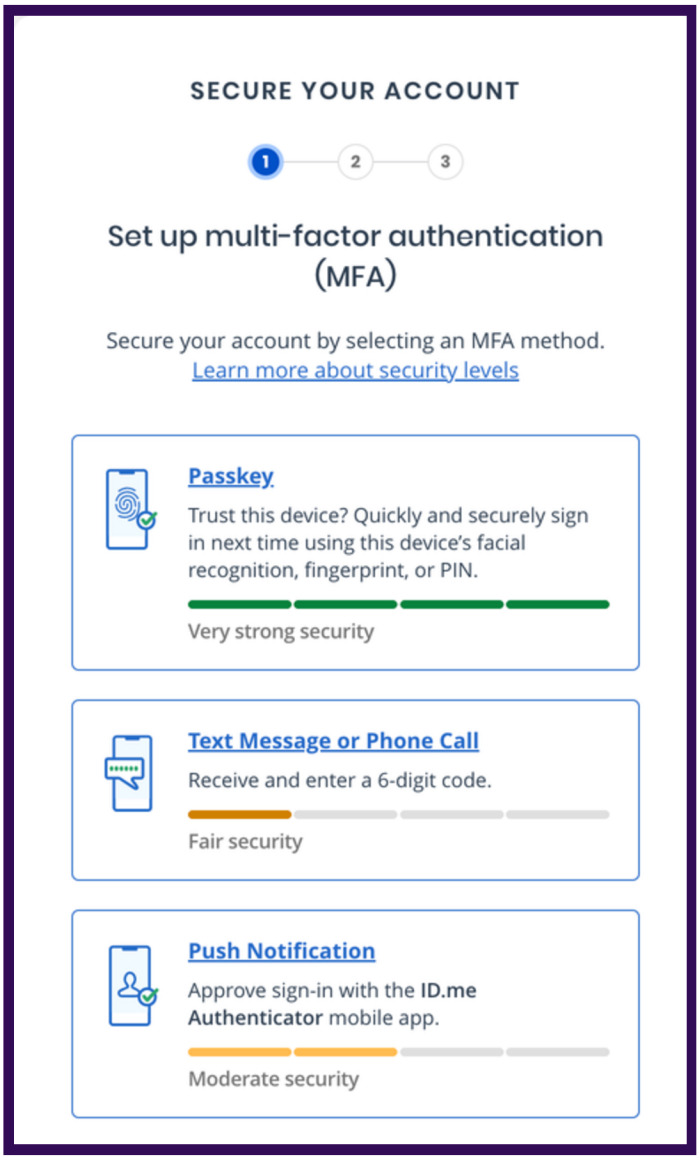


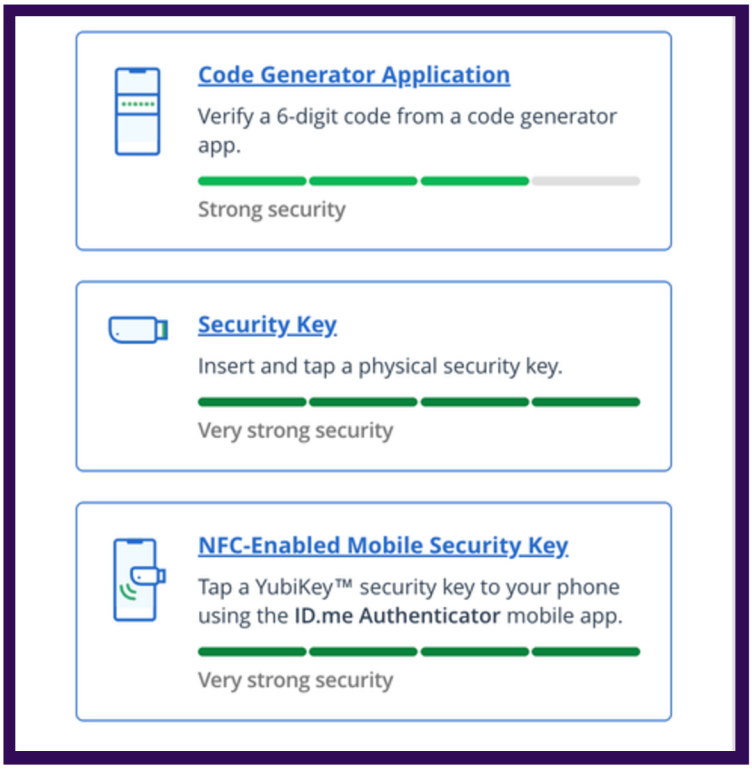


Tax Verification

STEP 2 - IRS ACCOUNT CREATION (CONT'D)

Once account has been created, you will need to set up multi-factor authentication. You can select whichever option works best for you.

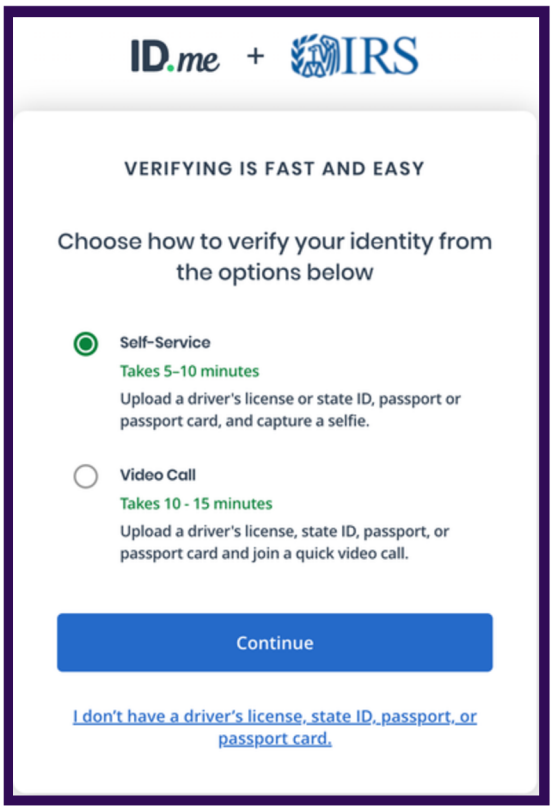


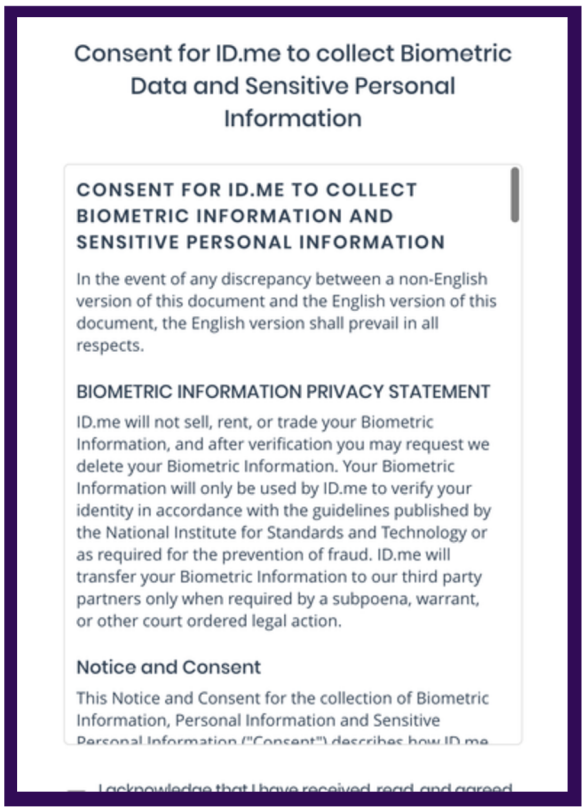


Tax Verification

STEP 3 - IRS ACCOUNT VERIFICATION

You will have the option to use Self-Service or a Video Call to verify your identity. If you select the Self-Service option, you will need to consent for ID.me to collect biometric data and sensitive personal information.





What information is being requested? Here is the explanation from the ID.me site:
note: for our purposes, it is very unlikely that fingerprint information will be requested

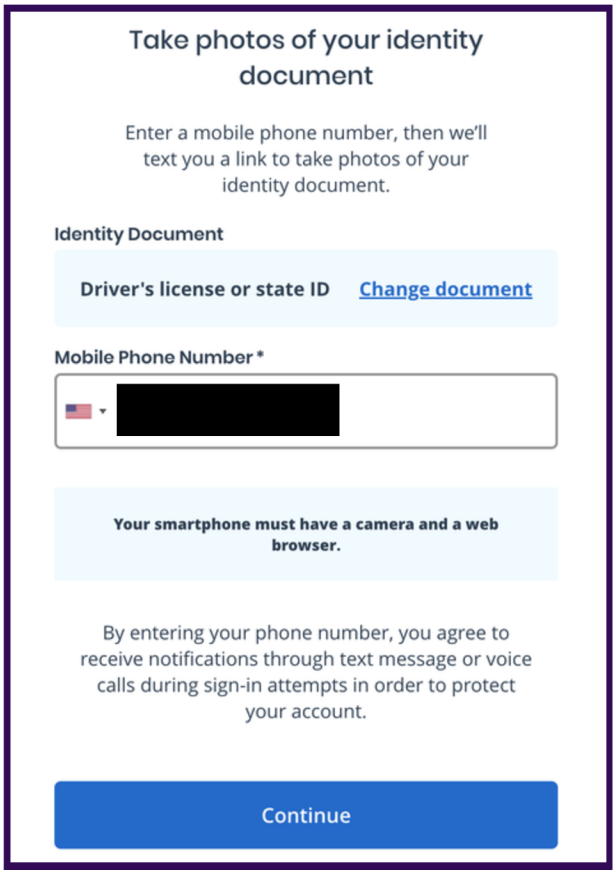
- Facial Biometrics: Our Service may require you to upload an image of your government issued or other identification document(s) as well as your photographic image or "selfie" photograph using your mobile or other device. We use these images to create or derive facial geometry or faceprint which we use for purposes of identity verification and to prevent the creation of multiple accounts in a fraudulent manner.
- Fingerprint Information: Our Service may require the submission of fingerprints, including fingerprint or hand scanning, which we use for purposes of identity verification and to prevent the creation of multiple accounts in a fraudulent manner.

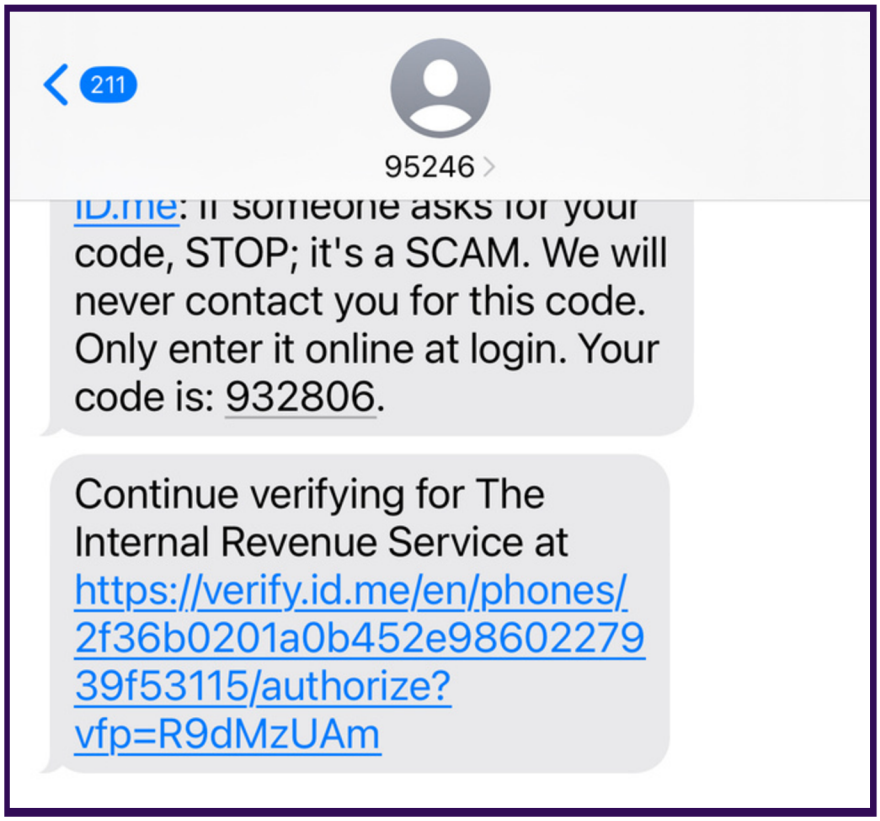
Tax Verification

STEP 3 - IRS ACCOUNT VERIFICATION (CONT'D)

Regardless of which verification method you choose, you will need to take photos of your identification document from your mobile device.

Enter your mobile phone number and then follow the link in the text message you receive.

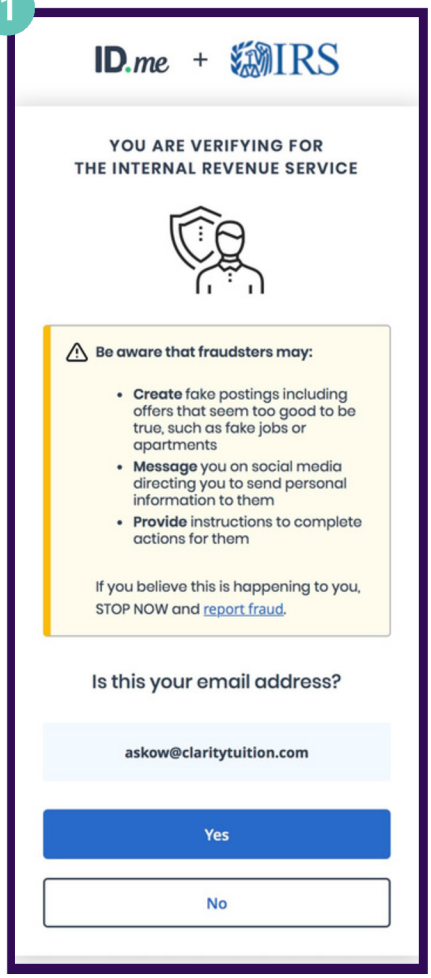




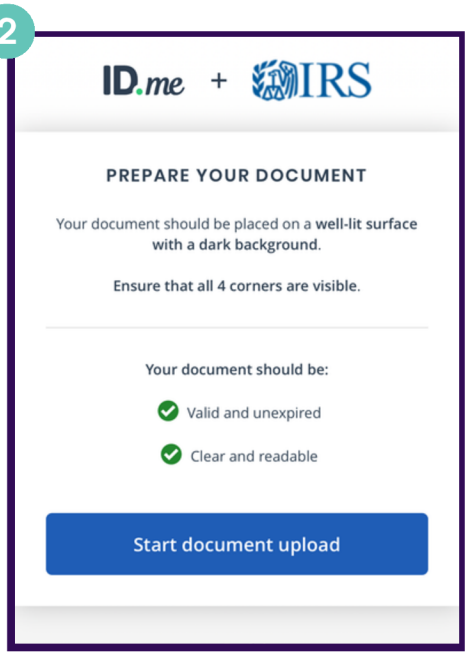
STEP 3 - IRS ACCOUNT VERIFICATION (CONT'D)

Follow the prompts to take photos of your identification.

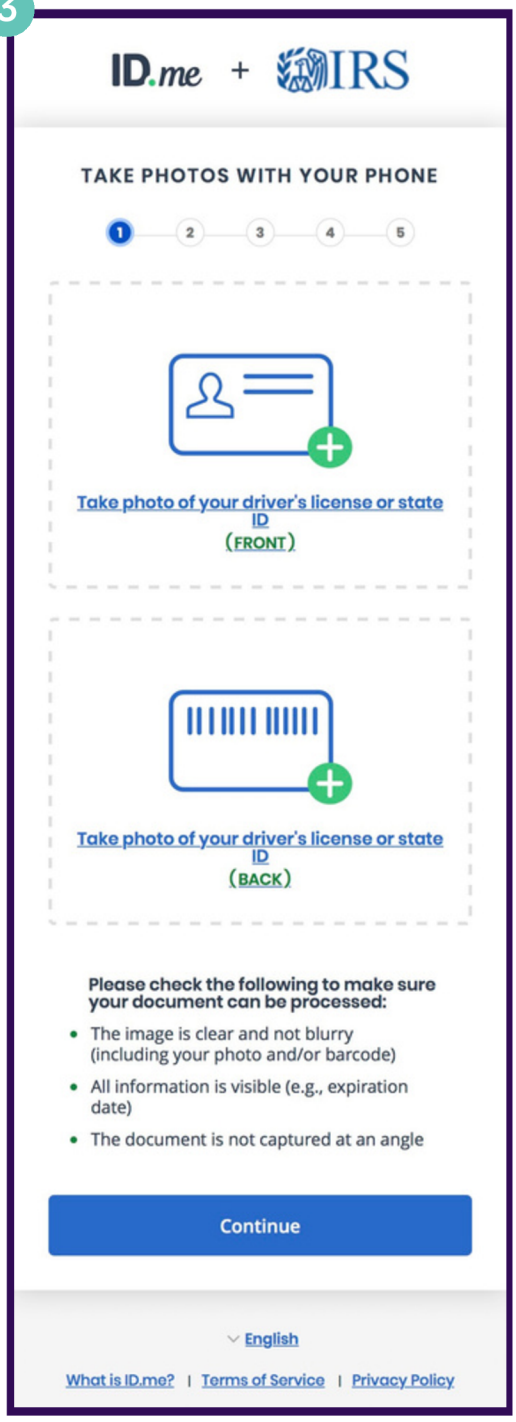
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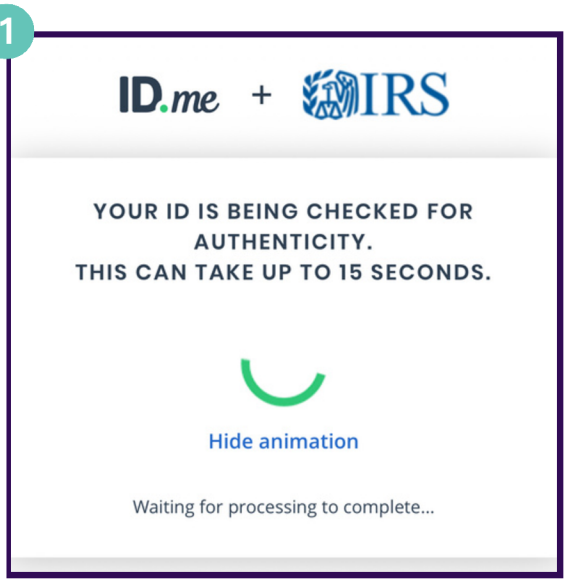


Tax Verification

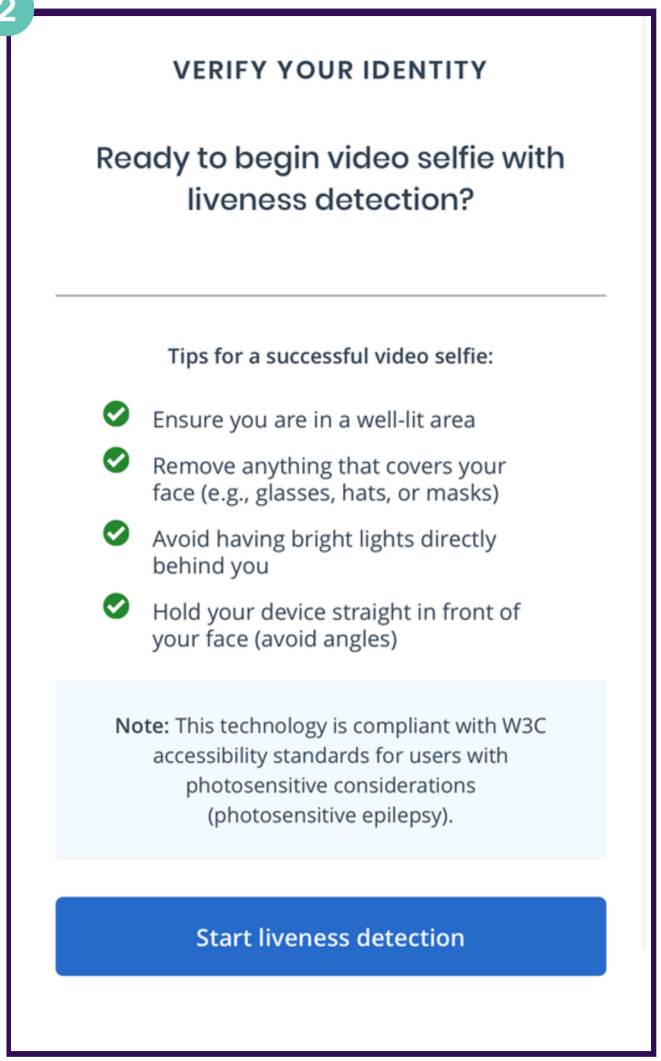
STEP 3 - IRS ACCOUNT VERIFICATION (CONT'D)

Follow the prompts to upload a selfie. Once completed, you can return to the Clarity application.

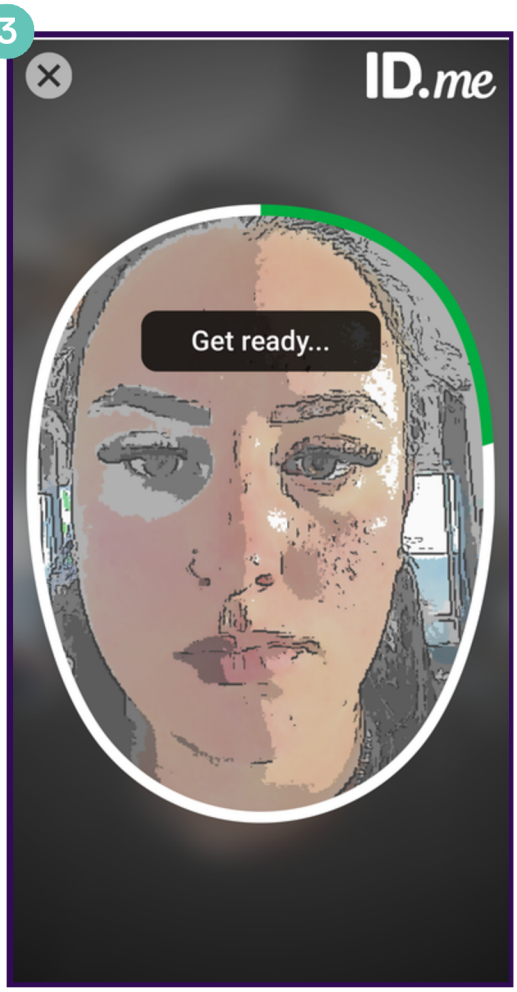
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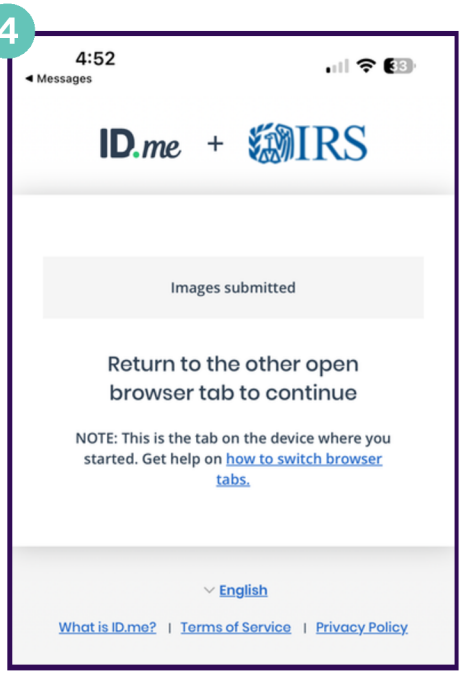
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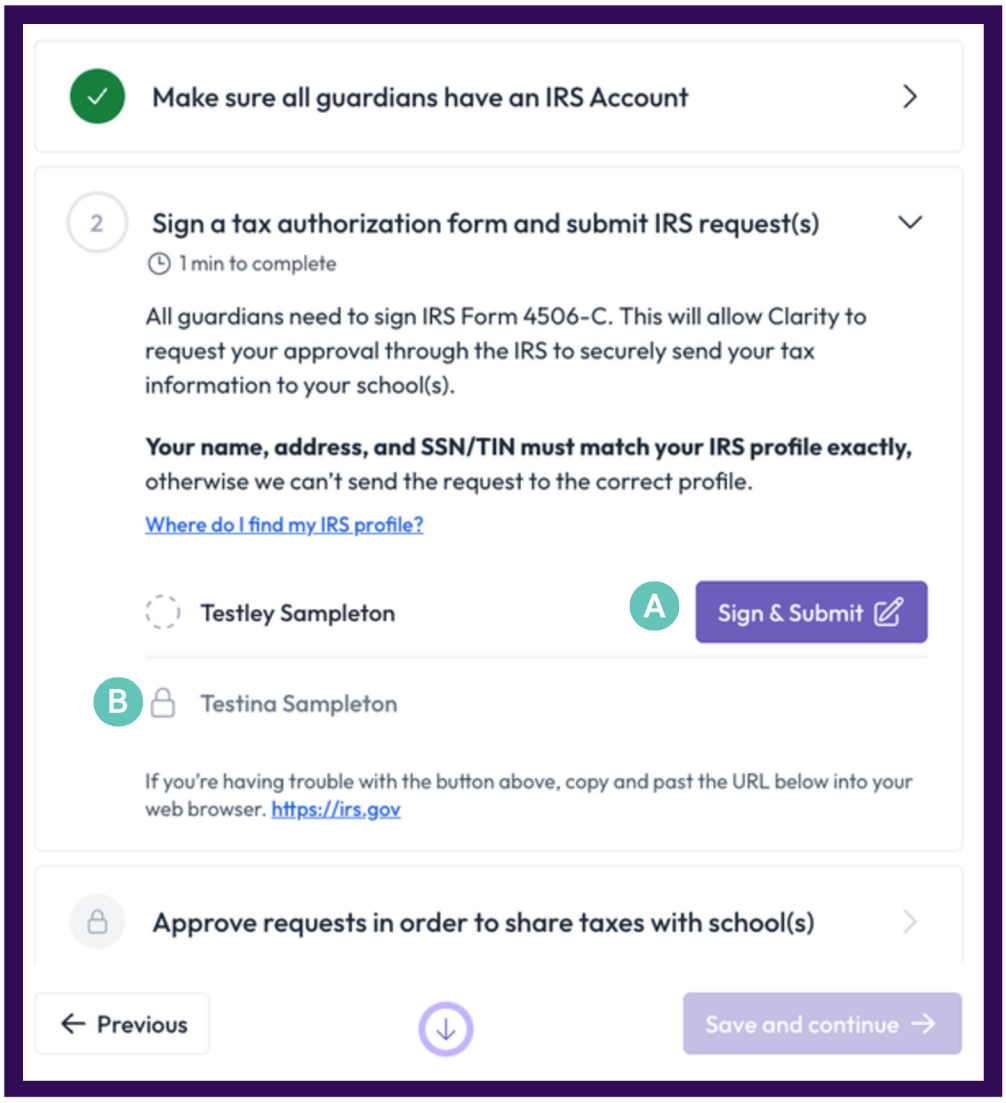


4



STEP 4 - TAX VERIFICATION FORM

- Once all guardians have checked the box confirming that the have an IRS account, Step 2 will automatically open up for you to begin signing the form.
- Each guardian will complete a separate copy of the tax verification form, with forms submitted one at a time.

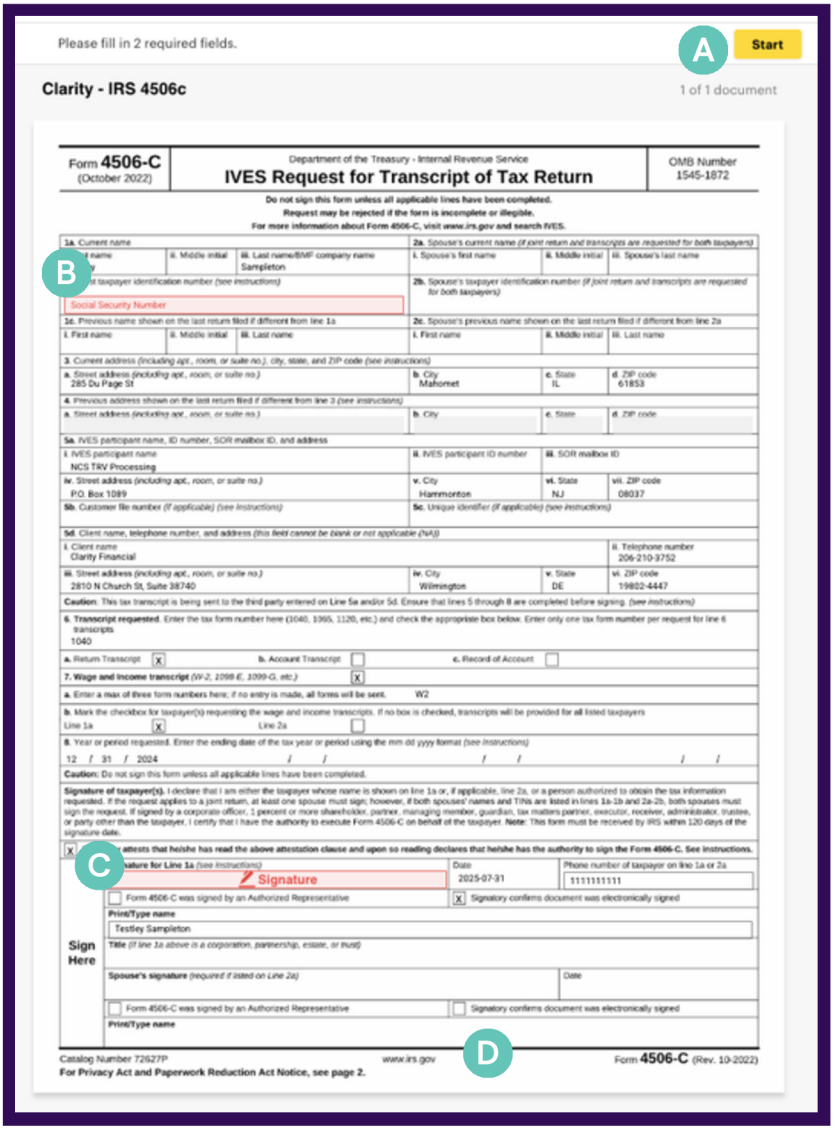


A The first, or only, guardian will click the Sign & Submit button to fill out the 4506-C tax verification form.

B If there is a second guardian, the Sign & Submit button will appear after the first guardian has signed the form. Repeat the same signing process for the second guardian

STEP 4 - TAX VERIFICATION FORM (CONT'D)

- Clarity will automatically fill in most of the information on the form using the details you provided in your application.
- Double-check that the pre-filled information is correct. If any details are incorrect, return to the application and update them.



A Depending on the size of your browser window, the yellow buttons saying "Start, fill, next, and finish" will either appear next to the box that needs to be filled out, or at the bottom of the page. You can either click the buttons or just navigate and click directly on the box that needs to be filled out.

B Enter the guardian's social security number.

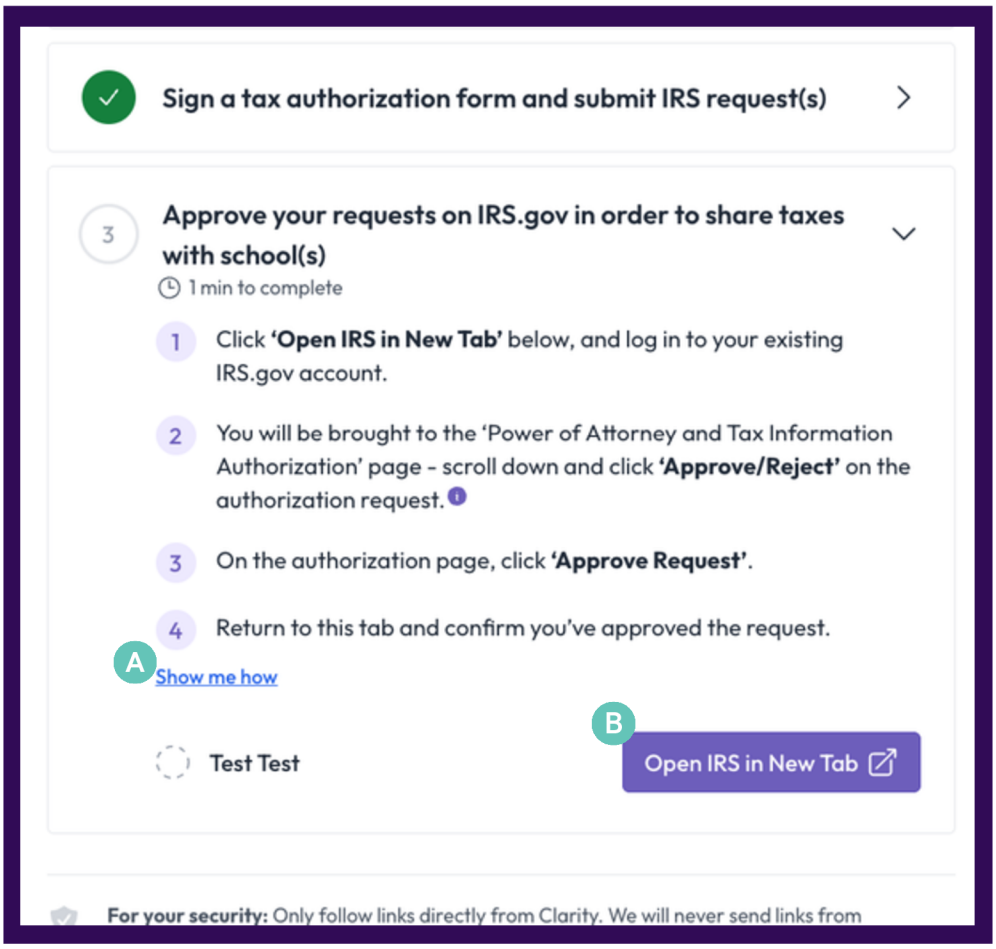
C Enter the guardian's signature. It will be a digital e-signature

D A prompt to Finish will appear at the bottom of the screen to finalize the signing.

Tax Verification

STEP 5 - APPROVE DOCUMENT REQUESTS

- As with the other pages, each guardian will complete the process separately, logging in to their personal IRS account.



A The 'Show me how' link brings up a window providing the steps to take on the IRS website.

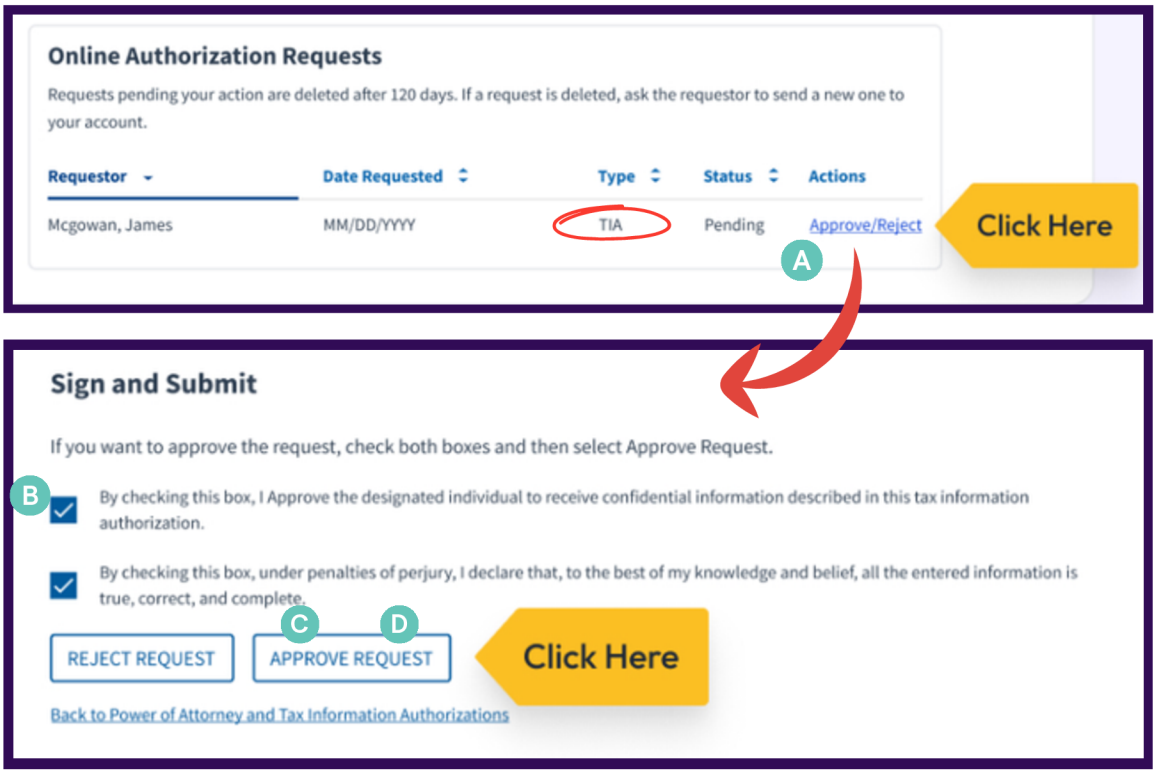
B Click "Open IRS in New Tab" to be taken to the IRS website. (See next page for the approval steps)

Tax Verification

STEP 5 - APPROVE DOCUMENT REQUESTS (CONT'D)

- Once you sign in to your account, you will automatically be taken to the authorization request page

*Note: the page on the IRS site is called "Power of Attorney and Tax Information Authorizations." You will be authorizing Clarity, through our IRS-designated representatives James McGowan or Curtis Knuth, to access your tax records. You are not being asked to authorize a power of attorney. You can verify this by looking for the "TIA" in the "Type" column of the Online Authorization Request box (see below)



A Click "Approve/Reject" to move to the approval step.

B Check both boxes to agree to the authorization.

C Click Approve Request.

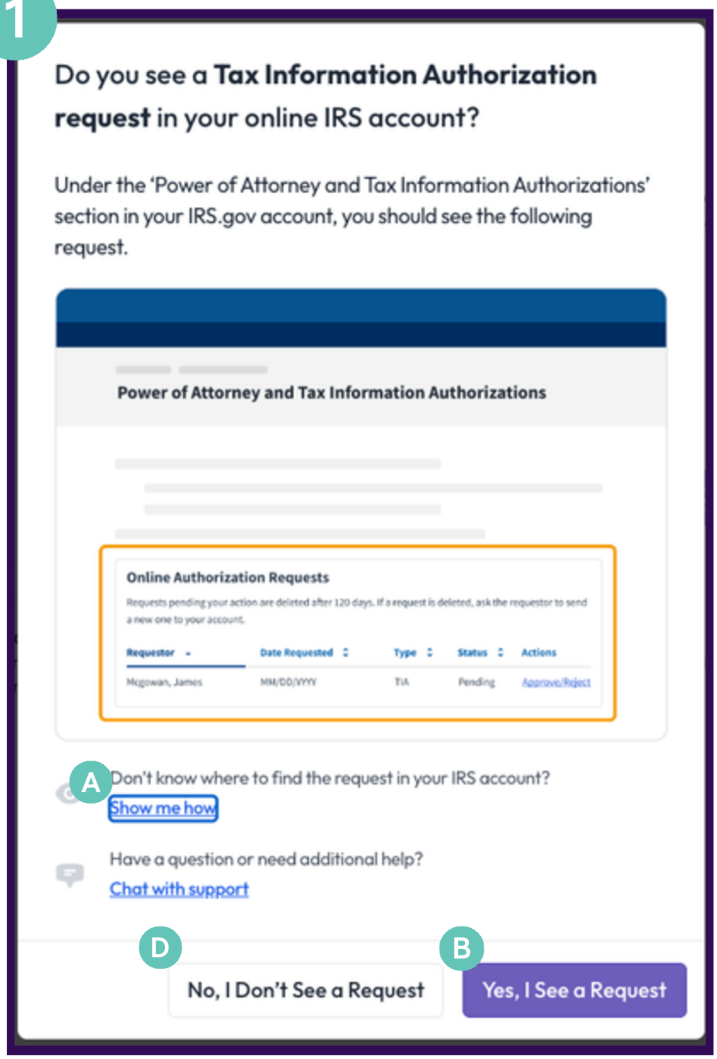
D Once request is approved, you can close the IRS page and continue your application (see next page)

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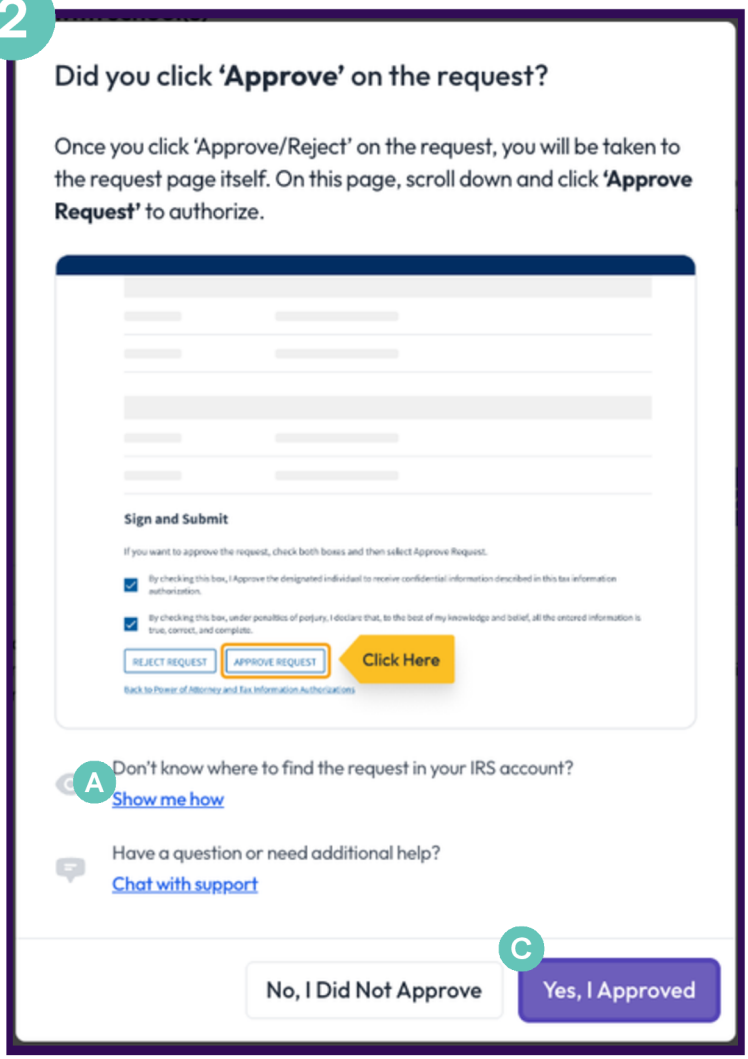
STEP 5 - APPROVE DOCUMENT REQUESTS (CONT'D)

- After coming back to your application, you will see these pop-ups to confirm the authorization process on the IRS website.

1



2



A The 'Show me how' link brings up a window providing the steps to take on the IRS website.

B If you saw the authorization request on your IRS account, click "Yes, I See a Request" to confirm

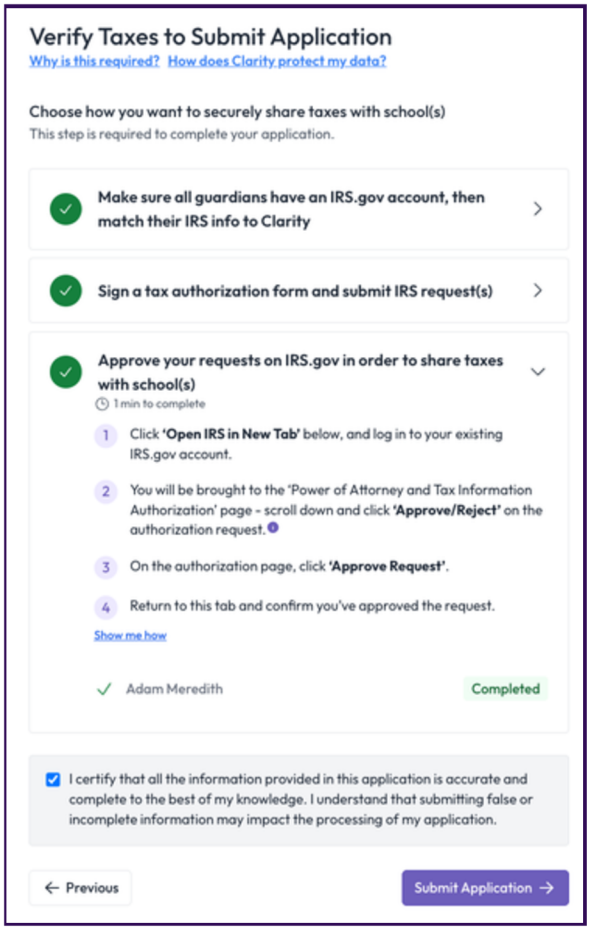
C On the next pop-up, if you approved the authorization, click the "Yes, I Approved" button to proceed.

D If you are not seeing an authorization request, click "No, I Don't See a Request" and follow the process on the next page

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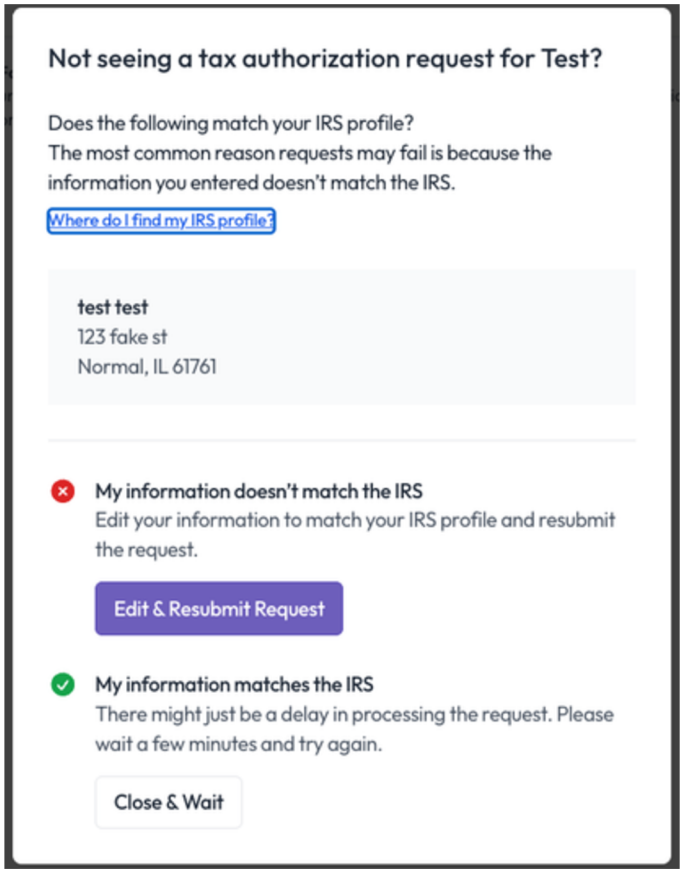
STEP 5 - APPROVE DOCUMENT REQUESTS (CONT'D)

If you saw and approved the request:



Once you have approved the authorization, you should see a green checkmark next to all names. At this time, you can check the "I certify..." box and submit your application.

If you did not see the request:



If you are not seeing an authorization request, follow the steps to confirm that your name and address match exactly what is on your IRS profile. Make any updates needed and then follow the steps on page 08 again to approve

Questions? You can view/download the Tax Verification FAQs PDF on the Tax Verification help page

Tax Verification - FAQ

Clarity

Why are we doing this process?

To get a full picture of your family's financial situation, schools need to review your tax transcripts as part of the application process. When you authorize Clarity to securely retrieve your tax transcripts directly from the IRS, you won't need to manually upload any documents.

As part of the Clarity application process, you'll be able to choose how you want to authorize the sharing of your taxes. You can:

1. Complete the tax authorization through Clarity (3-7 business days verification time, except during tax season in January/February, when verification time averages 7-10 business days); or
2. Complete the tax authorization through IRS.gov (about 24 hours verification time)

Both pathways require you to verify your identity, which means uploading some form of ID and taking a photo of yourself to prove you are who you say you are. This extra layer of security protects your personal data and helps prevent identity theft or fraud.

Completing the tax authorization within Clarity will return your tax information to the school(s) of your choice in 3-7 business days (5-7 business days in January/February). Completing through IRS.gov will return your tax information to the school(s) of your choice about 24 hours. Accessing your IRS account will require you to go through ID.me, a secure platform used by government agencies and organizations to verify your identity online.

I'm concerned about biometrics and data collection.

That's completely understandable!

"Biometrics" refers specifically to the photo of your government-issued ID and the selfie you take during the verification process. ID.me uses these images to create a facial profile, which helps confirm that you are the same person shown on your ID—even if the ID photo is a few years old. This is a secure, standard method designed to protect your identity and ensure that no one else can access your sensitive information. The Clarity identity verification process uses similar technology to ensure your personal data is protected.

What form(s) of ID are accepted for the identity verification?

Acceptable forms of ID are a valid driver's license, state ID, passport, or passport card.

Who are James McGowan, Elizabeth Boonin, and Curtis Knuth?

Tax Authorization Requests require an IRS credentialed designee on file as a liable party. James, Elizabeth, and Curtis are our designated IRS practitioners, so one of their names will be the one displayed. on the form.

Why does Clarity request multiple years of tax information?

Form 8821 allows Clarity to securely access your tax transcripts from the IRS, not just for this year, but for the next three years as well. This means:

- You only need to complete this form once
- Your school can verify your financial information for future applications
- You won't need to reauthorize each year, saving time in your future application

Tax Verification - FAQ

Clarity

Questions on Completing the Identity Verification through Clarity

What is Form 8821 and why do I need to sign it?

Form 8821 allows Clarity to securely access your tax transcripts from the IRS. It's a required part of the application and helps your school verify your financial information quickly and accurately.

Is Persona verification required?

Yes. All families must complete identity verification through Persona as part of the Form 8821 process. It's quick, secure and only needs to be done once.

What if I have trouble verifying my identity with Persona?

If your verification fails or times out, you'll be given a chance to retry. If issues persist, reach out to support and we'll help take a look.

How long does it take to process Form 8821?

Processing times vary, but most transcripts are returned within a few business days.

Do I need to create an IRS.gov account for this process?

No. The current process uses Form 8821 and Persona verification only. You do not need to log into IRS.gov or create an account.

What happens after I complete Form 8821 and Persona verification?

Once verified, your tax information is authorized for three years. That means you won't need to repeat this process when reapplying during that time.

Is Persona part of the government?

No. Persona is a private, secure identity verification platform that Clarity uses to confirm your identity. It is not affiliated with the IRS or any government agency, and it does not share your information with the government. Persona helps ensure that your tax transcripts are requested securely and only by authorized representatives. Your data is encrypted and used solely for your school's financial aid application.

Why do I need to take a live selfie for verification?

As part of the identity check, you'll be asked to take a live selfie using your device's camera. This helps confirm that you're the person completing the application.

- The selfie must be taken live, not a photo of a photo, screenshot or old image.
- Make sure your face is clearly visible, well-lit, and matches your ID.
- If prompted, follow the on-screen instructions to complete the selfie step in real time.

Is my information secure?

Absolutely! Persona verification is designed with data security in mind through multi-layered approaches including data encryption (AES-256), regular vulnerability scanning, third-party audits, and adherence to global privacy standards like GDPR and CCPA.

Persona will permanently destroy Scan Data upon completion of Verification or within three years of your last interaction with Persona - whichever comes first.

How can Parent 2 complete Persona verification if they're not with me?

If Parent 2 isn't physically present, you can send them a secure link to complete their identity verification later. Persona gives you the option to send instructions by email or text message.

Tax Verification - FAQ

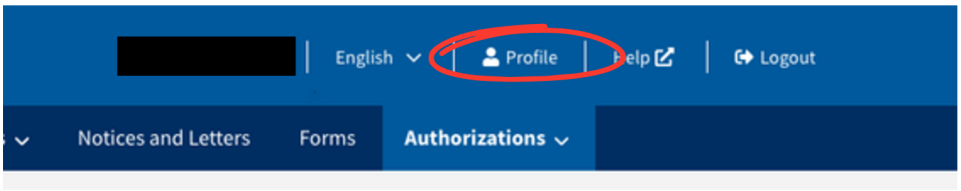
Questions on Sharing Taxes through IRS.gov

I am not seeing an authorization request when I log in to my IRS account

If no authorizations appear on your IRS account, there may be a mismatch in your profile information. Verify that your IRS profile name and address match exactly with what's entered in your Clarity application on Step 1 of the Tax Verification process. If there is a mismatch, update the information and try again. If everything matches, contact Clarity support for further assistance.

Checking your IRS profile:

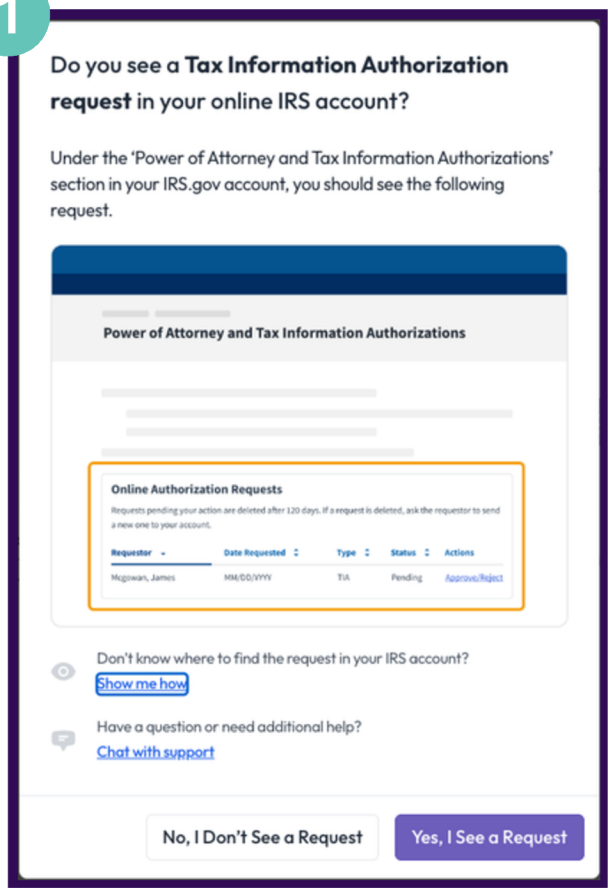
If currently logged in to your IRS account, you can access your account by clicking Profile at the top of the IRS page (see image). Otherwise, you can log in via this link to be taken there directly: https://sa.www4.irs.gov/ola/profile/personal



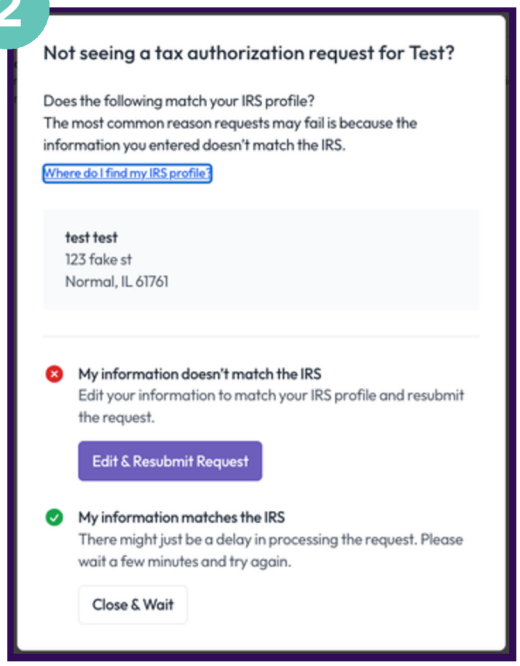
Updating your name/address:

After your initial visit to the IRS website to approve the authorization, on your Clarity application, you will see a pop up asking if you see the authorization. If no authorization was showing, click "No, I Don't See a Request" (shown in Step 1 below). Clicking that will bring up the box shown in Step 2.

1



2



This pop-up will show the name/address that was entered in the first step of the Tax Verification process. If that name/address does not match exactly what is showing on your IRS profile, click "Edit & Resubmit Request" to update the information and attempt to accept the authorization again.

Tax Verification - FAQ

Questions on sharing taxes through IRS.gov

I'm getting stuck in the IRS/ID.me verification process, who should I contact for help?

If you are having issues on the IRS website with the verification process, you can reach out to ID.me support here: https://help.id.me/hc/en-us/p/contact_support

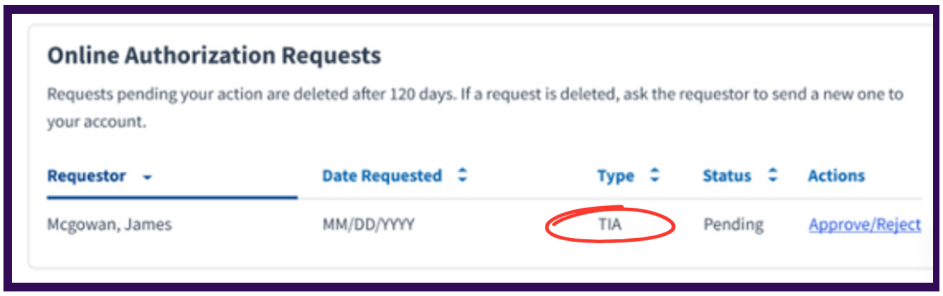
We have noticed that some families experience issues completing verification because they already have an ID.me account, and the IRS will not allow them to create a duplicate. It is worth double checking that you don't have an active account, as their system doesn't confirm that information while you are going through the process.

I updated the details on my Clarity account, but still not seeing the authorization on the IRS website.

While the process is usually instant, it can occasionally take up to 5 minutes for the authorization request to appear. If you don't see it right away, wait up to 30 minutes to be safe. If it's still not showing after that, please contact Clarity support for further assistance.

Are you asking for us to authorize a Power of Attorney?

No, the page on the IRS site is called "Power of Attorney and Tax Information Authorizations" You will be authorizing Clarity, through our IRS-designated representatives James McGowan or Curtis Knuth, to access your tax records. You will not be asked to authorize a power of attorney. You can verify this by looking for the "TIA" in the "Type" column of the Online Authorization Request box (see image)



I was able to authorize the request for the first guardian, but when I click on the IRS link for the second guardian, it still shows the authorization for the first guardian.

Chances are, the IRS website is still logged in to the first guardian's account. Sign out of the IRS account and then click the "Open IRS in New Tab" button again. Then, log in using the second guardian's account information.