Live page: <https://www.va.gov/resources/verifying-your-identity-on-vagov/>

Meta description: Identity verification is a one-time process that helps us make sure that the person creating your account is really you—and not someone pretending to be you. During this process, the account provider (**Login.gov** or **ID.me**)will ask you to provide certain personal information and identification (ID). Learn about when and how to verify your identity.

**How do I verify my identity online?**

Here’s what you’ll need to verify your identity for your account online:

* Your **Login.gov** or **ID.me** username (your email address) and password, **and**
* Access to the method you set up for MFA, like your mobile or landline phone, authentication app, security key, or backup codes, **and**
* A smartphone with a camera or a computer with an internet connection where you’ve saved images of your ID, **and**
* Your Social Security number, **and**
* Your U.S. driver’s license or other state-issued ID (if you’re verifying for **Login.gov**) or your U.S. driver’s license, state ID, passport, passport card, or other identification documents (if you’re verifying for **ID.me**), **and**
* A U.S. phone number with a plan that’s in your name (if you have one)

When you’re ready, we'll guide you step by step through the identity verification process for your account. Get step-by-step instructions:

[Learn how to verify your identity for your Login.gov account](https://www.va.gov/resources/how-to-verify-your-identity-for-your-logingov-account) (in English)

[Learn how to verify your identity for your ID.me account](https://www.va.gov/resources/how-to-verify-your-identity-for-your-idme-account) (in English)

**Can I verify my identity in person for my Login.gov account?**

Yes. **Login.gov** offers in-person identity verification at a participating United States Postal Service (USPS) location near you.

You can choose this option from the start.

Or, you may also have the option to verify your identity in person if you tried to verify online but couldn’t upload a photo of your ID.

[Learn more about verifying your identity in person on the Login.gov website](https://www.login.gov/help/verify-your-identity/verify-your-identity-in-person/)

**How can I verify my identity on VA.gov if I live outside the U.S.?**

If your address is outside the U.S., you can use **ID.me** to verify your identity.

On the screen where you choose a verification option, select I don’t live in the US. You’ll need to show your identity documents on a video call with an **ID.me** representative.

[Learn more about verifying your identity if you live outside the U.S. on the ID.me website](https://help.id.me/hc/en-us/articles/4415907236375-What-if-I-don-t-live-in-the-United-States-)

Make sure to have your identity documents ready.

[Learn about primary and secondary identification documents on the ID.me website](https://help.id.me/hc/en-us/articles/360017833054-What-is-a-Primary-or-Secondary-Identification-Document-)

**Note:** If you don’t have a U.S. Social Security number, you’ll need to show a valid U.S. passport as one of your identity documents.

**Other common questions about verifying your identity**

What does it mean to verify my identity and why do I have to do it?

Identity verification is a one-time process that we ask you to complete for your **Login.gov** or **ID.me** account. The process often takes about 10 minutes.

During this process, the account provider (**Login.gov** or **ID.me**)will ask you to provide certain personal information and identification (ID). This process helps us make sure that the person creating your account is really you—and not someone pretending to be you. It’s a lot like the process for setting up a bank account.

Identity verification is not about whether we trust that you’re who you say you are. It’s about protecting you from scammers who may try to set up an account in your name to access your information and benefits.

After you verify your identity, you won’t have to do it again for that account unless you lose access to your account’s multifactor authentication method or need to recreate your account. In the future, we may ask you to help us reverify your identity once every several years for added protection.

What if I’m having trouble uploading my ID photo for verification?

We know that uploading a photo of your ID for verification can sometimes be difficult. These tips from **Login.gov** and **ID.me** may help.

* For **Login.gov**: [Get tips for how to add images of your ID on the Login.gov website](https://www.login.gov/help/verify-your-identity/how-to-add-images-of-your-state-issued-id/)
* For **ID.me**: [Get tips for taking photos of your documents on the ID.me website](https://help.id.me/hc/en-us/articles/360051696334-Taking-photos-of-your-documents)

For **Login.gov**, you may also have the option to verify your identity in person if you tried to verify online but couldn’t upload a photo of your ID.

[Learn more about verifying your identity in person on the Login.gov website](https://www.login.gov/help/verify-your-identity/verify-your-identity-in-person/)

Can I use Login.gov to verify my identity without a U.S. phone number?

Yes.

If you don’t have a U.S. phone number, select **Get a code via mail instead**on the screen that asks for your phone number.

You’ll have to wait to receive a letter in the mail with the code. Then you can follow the instructions to enter the code and complete the process.

I don’t have a smartphone. How do I verify my identity through ID.me?

You’ll need a computer or tablet with an internet connection to verify your identity.

[Learn more about verifying your identity on the ID.me website](https://help.id.me/hc/en-us/articles/4416188902039-Veterans-Affairs-and-ID-me)

How can I get more support from Login.gov or ID.me?

Go to the account provider’s website.

[Go to the Login.gov help center](https://login.gov/help/)

[Go to the ID.me support section](https://help.id.me/hc/en-us)

## Common questions about multifactor authentication

What’s multifactor authentication and why does VA use it?

Multifactor authentication is an extra layer of protection on your sign-in account. It helps us make sure that it’s you trying to use your account—and not someone pretending to be you. It’s also called 2-factor authentication or MFA.

Each time you sign in to a VA website or app, you’ll use multifactor authentication to confirm you’re you. You’ll do this using a device that only you should have, such as your mobile phone.

You’ll get a unique code through a method of your choice. Options may include an app like Google Authenticator, security key, text message, phone call, or backup codes. You’ll enter the code to use your account. **Login.gov** may offer other options like face or touch unlock for signing in securely and privately.

This way, even if someone were to guess or steal your username and password, they can’t access your account.

[Play our video on multifactor authentication (YouTube)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t85bt7Pmlvg)

[Learn about MFA methods on the Login.gov website](https://login.gov/help/get-started/authentication-options/)

[Learn about MFA methods on the ID.me website](https://help.id.me/hc/en-us/articles/360018113053-What-is-multi-factor-authentication-MFA-)

How does multifactor authentication differ from identity verification?

Identity verification and multifactor authentication work together to protect your identity and personal information:

* **Identity verification** is a one-time process. You complete this process when you first set up your sign-in account. To verify your identity, you provide certain personal information and identification (ID). Identity verification helps us make sure only you can create your sign-in account—and no scammer can create one in your name.
* **Multifactor authentication (MFA)** is an extra layer of protection that’s part of the process of signing in to use your account. When you first set up your account, you set up your choice of MFA method (like an authenticator app) on a device only you have access to. Then, you use that method to provide a specific code we send you each time you sign in. Multifactor authentication helps us make sure only you can use your sign-in account to access and manage your benefits and health care.