Department of Education External Users Login.gov Guide

Self-Asserted Identity and Authentication Account

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Login.gov

What is Login.gov?

Login.gov securely verifies, stores, and manages user's digital identity using verified credentials and multi-factor authentication. This means multiple layers to your identity are verified when you log in to ensure the person logging into your account is indeed you! Several levels of security are needed to qualify as an official identity provider (IdP) for a government agency, and Login.gov meets these requirements.

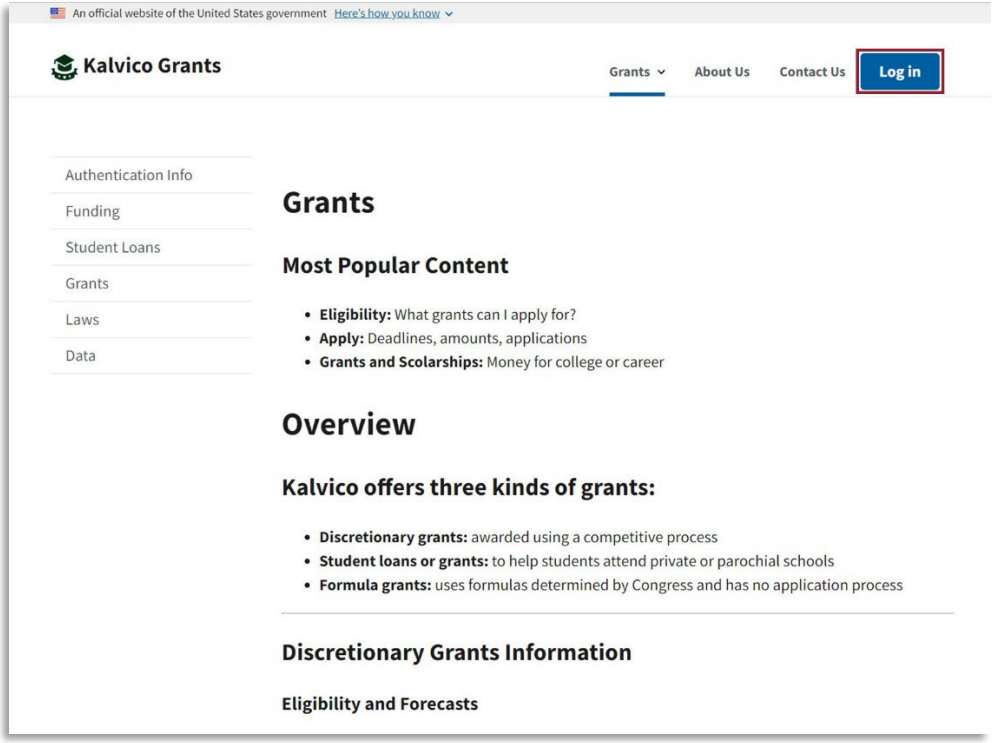
How Does This Work?

Think of Login.gov as a directory where external users' identities can all be housed and managed. The Department of Education allows transferring that identity (after being verified) from Login.gov to the Department's network. There are three steps to the transfer:

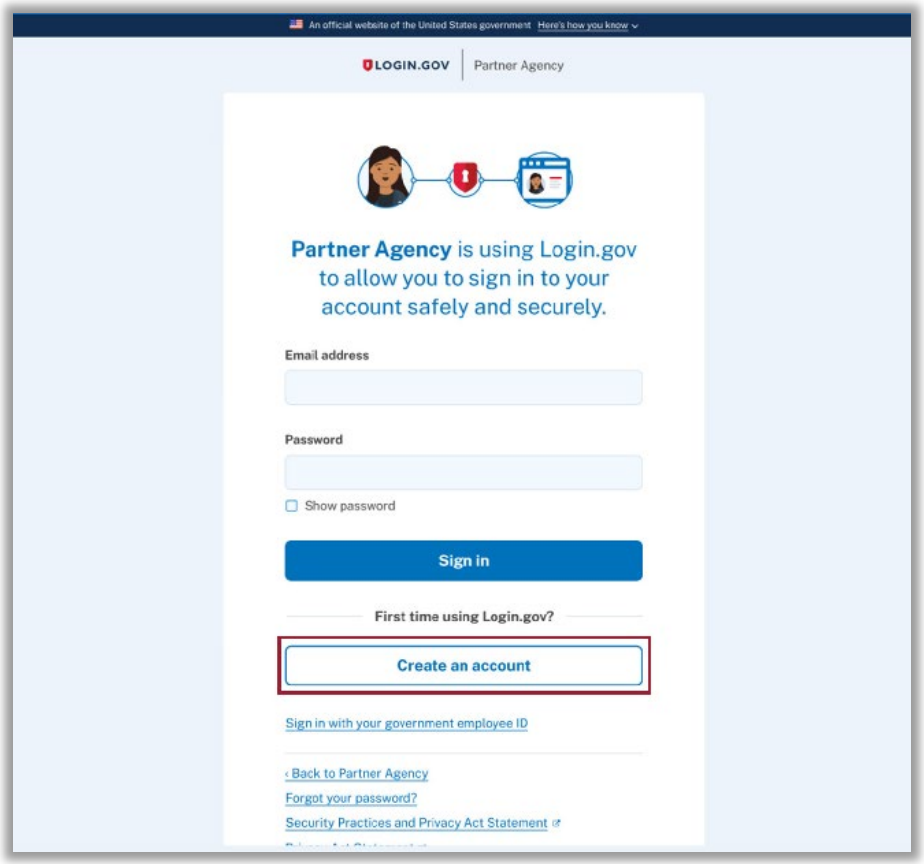
1. External users set up and use their Login.gov account
2. Login.gov verifies a user's identity through a vetted process
3. The Department of Education's Identity, Credential, and Access Management (ICAM) system allows users to access the Department of Education by using their Login.gov credentials

How to Create an Account

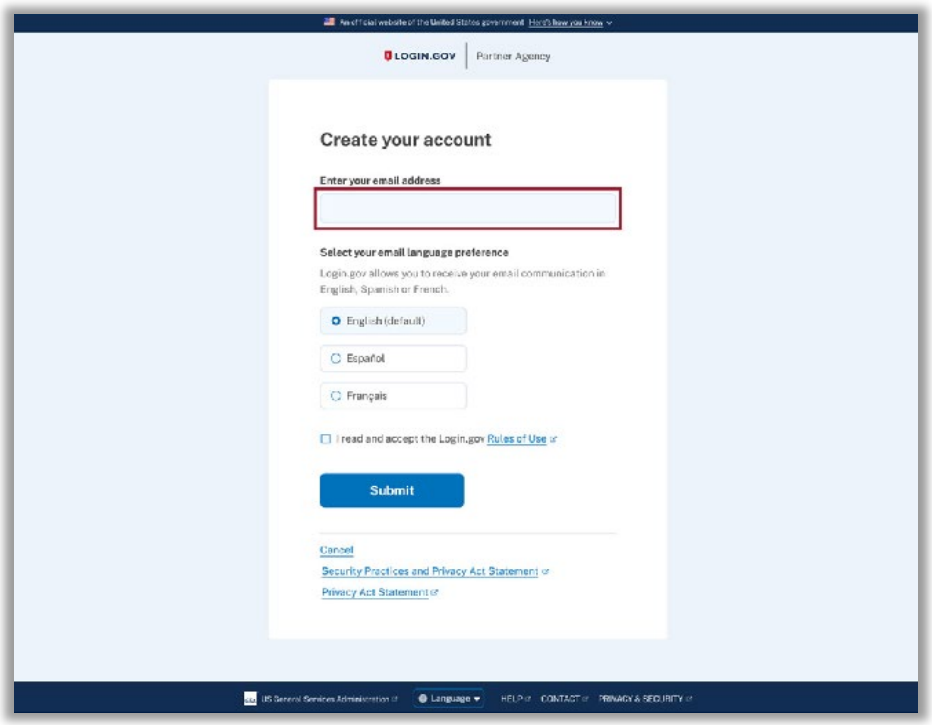
1. Go to your application's home page and select **Log In.**



2. On the Login.gov sign-up page, select **Create an account**.



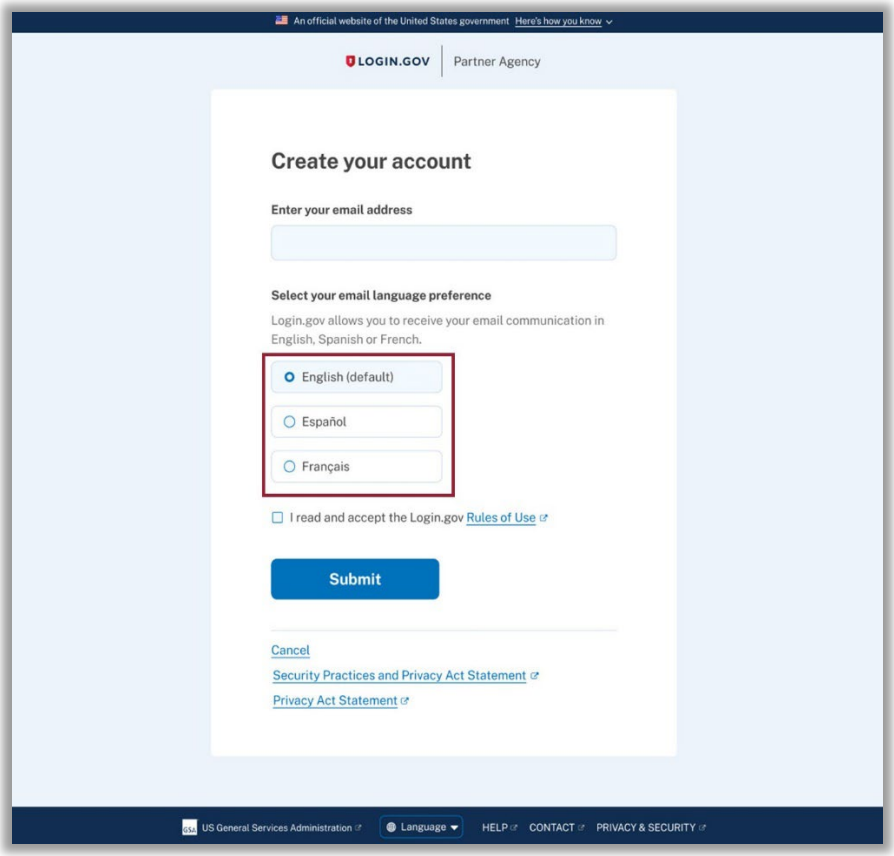
3. In the text box **Enter your email address,** enter the email address you would like connected to your Login.gov account.



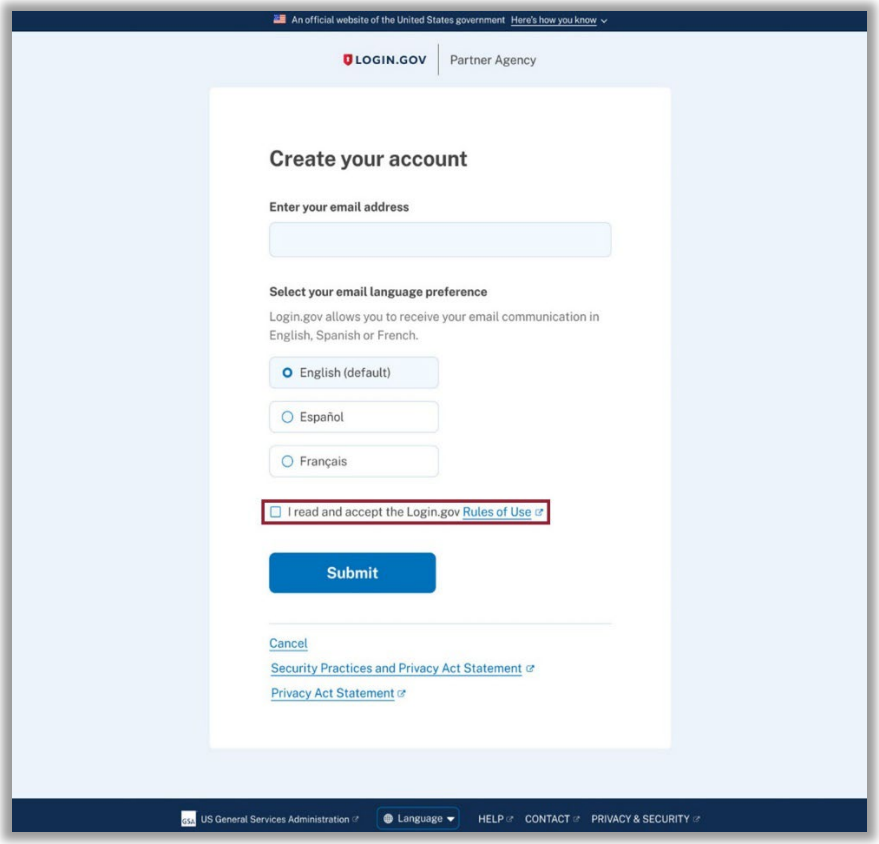
Note to Users:

It is best practice to use the same email address you presently use for your account with your application. If you already have a Login.gov account with a different email, check with your application to see if you need to create a new Login.gov account to match your email with that application.

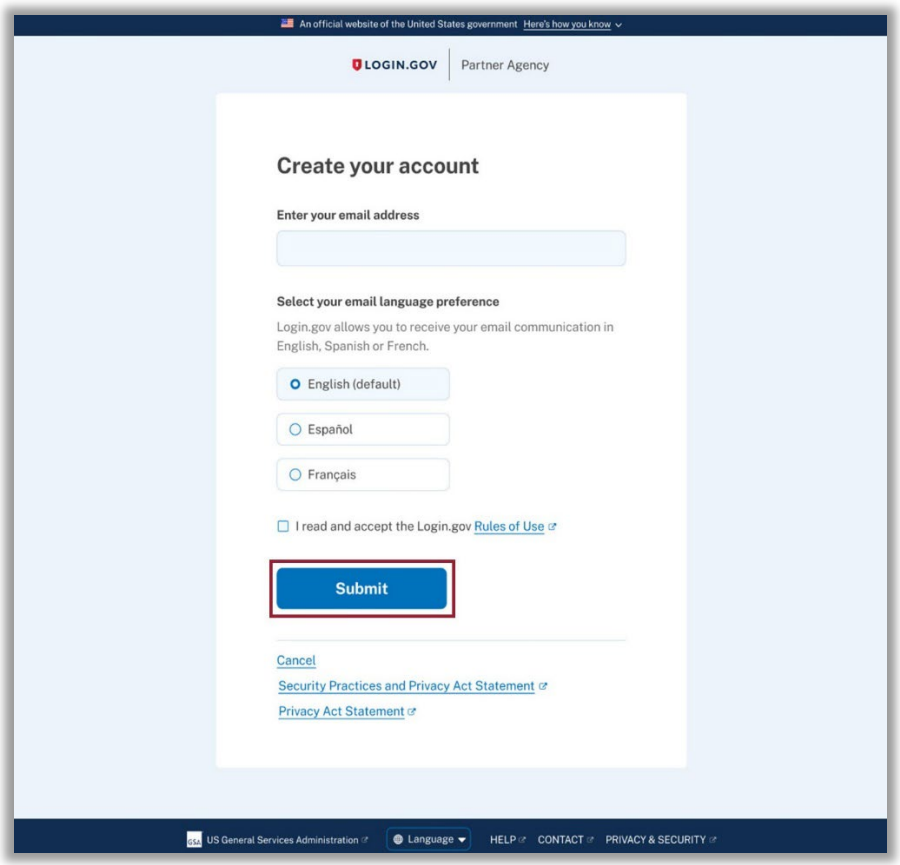
4. Then select your preferred language.



5. Select the checkbox next to the statement **I read and accept the Login.gov Rules of Use.**

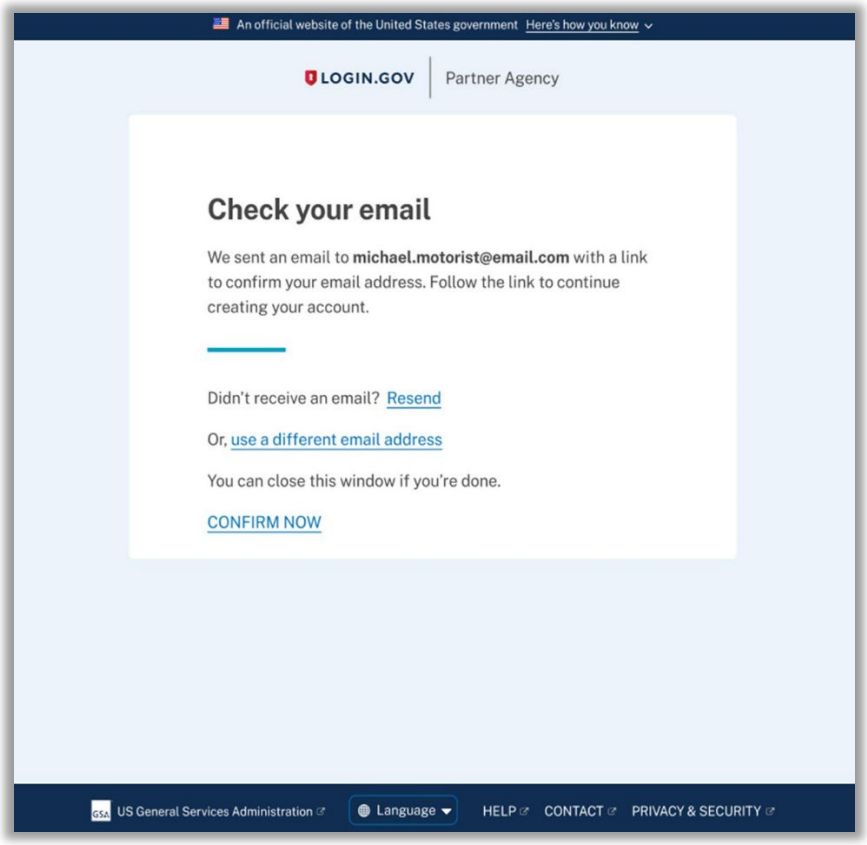


6. Select **Submit.**

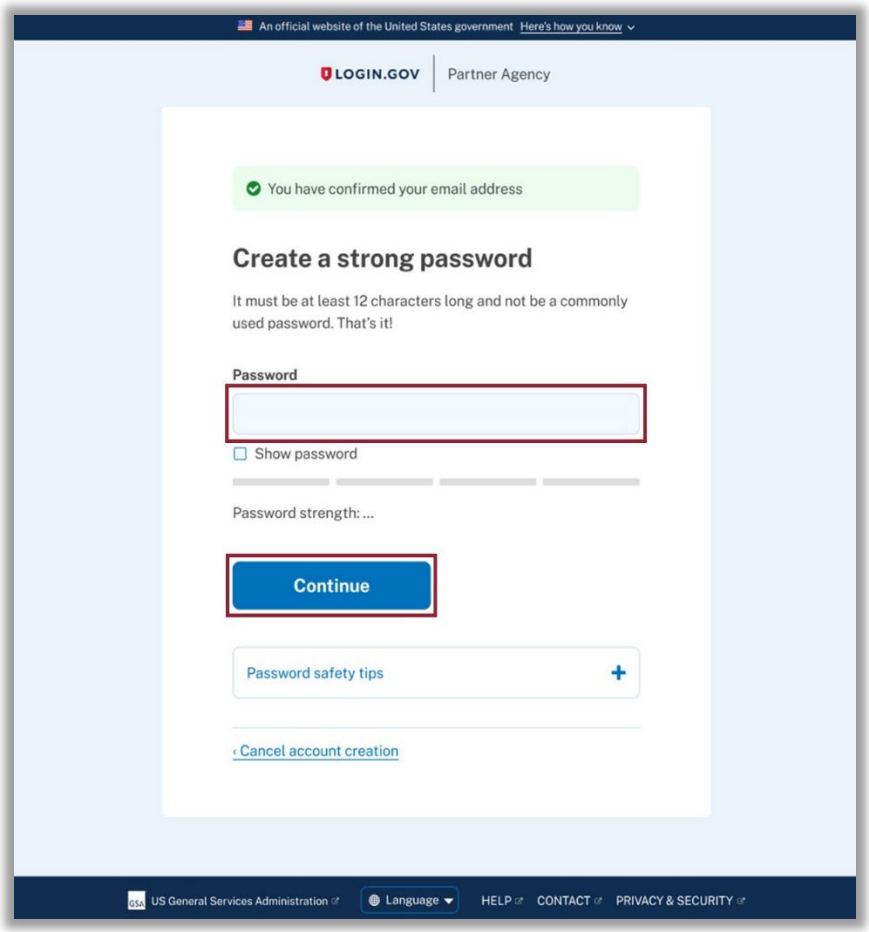


7. Check the inbox of the email account used in **Step 3** for a verification email. The verification email will have the subject: “Confirm your email” and be sent from no-reply@Login.gov. If you are not seeing an email come through, check your spam folder.

   Open the email and select the **Confirm your email address** button. This will bring you back to the login.gov Create an Account page where you can finish creating your account.



8. You will then be prompted to **create a strong password**.

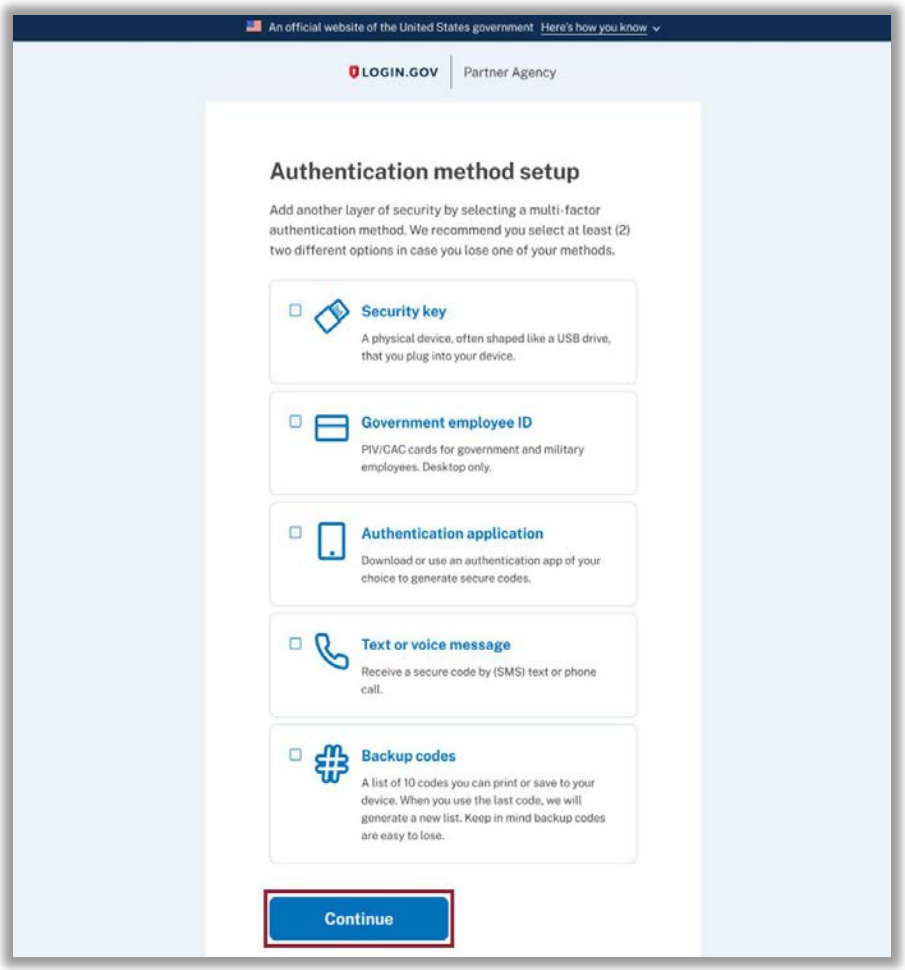


Note to Users:

Login.gov requires your password be at least 12 characters long. Alphabet characters, special characters, and even spaces are allowed. Make sure this password is unique and not used with any other applications or websites.

9. Next, you will need to set up your secondary authentication method. Choose one of the options listed below. Then select continue.

   - Authentication application
   - Security Key
   - PIV or CAC



Note to Users:

The government issues two types of smart cards to people with verified identities: Personal Identity Verification (PIV) cards and Common Access Cards (CAC). PIV cards are used throughout the government to control access to facilities and systems at different security levels. CACs are a subset of PIV cards The Department of Defense uses.

If your email address ends in .gov or .mil, using a PIV card or CAC as a second authentication method is appropriate.

Your account setup is complete.

What if I Already Have a Login.gov Account?

If you already have a Login.gov account created for a different organization or application, you can use the same account to access your application at the Department of Education

Adding Authentication Methods

Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Card / Common Access Card (CAC)

A PIV card or CAC is a smart card issued by different government agencies to verify individuals. The card contains a chip that allows the card to store encrypted information about a person (name, phone number, email, and address). The encrypted PIV card or CAC can authenticate its user with physical resources, such as offices and equipment, and virtual resources, such as Login.gov. To use a PIV card or CAC for authentication, your device must have a smart card reader and you must already have a PIV card or CAC issued.

How to Add a PIV / CAC Authentication Method

1. Open a new browser and **sign in** to your Login.gov account.
2. On the left side of your account page, find the menu of options below the heading **Your Authentication Methods**.
3. Select **Add Federal Employee ID**.
4. **Enter a nickname** in the text box. (e.g. Education PIV Card).
5. **Insert your PIV card/CAC** into your card reader
6. Select Add PIV/CAC card
7. On the certificate selection pop-up, select the certificate associated with your PIV card/CAC.
8. When prompted, **enter your PIN** associated with your PIV card/CAC, then **select Okay**.

You have successfully added your PIV card/CAC to your Login.gov account.

How to Remove PIV or CAC Authentication Method

1. Open a new browser and **sign in** to your Login.gov account.
2. On the right-hand side of your account page, scroll down to the section titled **Federal Employee ID**.
3. Find the PIV card/CAC you want to remove and **select Delete**.
4. If you're prompted to enter your password or authentication code, enter it and select **Continue**.
5. Select **Yes, remove card**.

You have successfully removed your PIV card/CAC from your Login.gov account.

Security Key

A security key is a phishing-resistant authentication method similar to a PIV card or CAC. It must be connected to your computer or mobile device to authenticate. A common type of the security key is a small USB device, like a YubiKey.

How to Add a Security Key Authentication Method

1. Open a new browser and **sign in** to your Login.gov account.
2. On the left-hand side of your account page, find the menu of options below the heading **Your Authentication Methods**.
3. Select **Add Security Key**.
4. **Enter a nickname** in the text box (e.g. Education Key).
5. **Insert your security key** into your computer.
6. Select Add Security Key.
7. **Activate** your security key (e.g. pressing the security key).

Note: *This may differ based on specific vendor instructions.*

You have successfully added your security key to your Login.gov account.

How to Remove a Security Key Authentication Method

1. Open a new browser and **sign in** to your Login.gov account.
2. On the right-hand side of your account page, scroll down to the section titled **Security Keys**.
3. **Select the security key** you want to remove and select **Delete**.
4. If you're prompted to enter your password or authentication code, enter it, and **select Continue**.
5. Select Yes, Remove Key.

You have successfully removed your security key from your Login.gov account.

Authentication App

An authentication app is another way to prove your identity when you log into an account. An authentication app generates a time-sensitive code to sign into your account. The code changes each time you sign in, so it cannot be memorized and used by someone other than the user with the authenticator app. Department of Education users must install the authentication app on a mobile device.

Although many different authentication apps are available, it is encouraged that Department of Education users begin only to use Microsoft Authenticator as their authenticator app. Microsoft has taken steps to ensure its authenticator app is secure and safe to use with government applications. This makes it a strong choice for internal and external Department of Education users.

How to Add an Authentication App

After you've installed Microsoft Authenticator on your mobile device, follow the steps below to configure the app for use with Login.gov.

1. Open a new browser and **sign in** to your Login.gov account.
2. On the left-hand side of your account page, find the menu of options below the heading "Your authentication methods." **Select Add Authentication Apps**.
3. **Enter a nickname** in the text box for the app you choose (e.g. Microsoft Authenticator).
4. Open the authentication app.
5. **Scan the barcode** on the screen *or* manually enter the code below the barcode into the app.
6. **Enter the temporary code** the app generates into the text box at the bottom of the authentication app setup page and **select Submit.**

You have successfully added your authentication app to your Login.gov account.

How to Remove an Authentication App

Follow the steps below to remove an authentication app from your Login.gov account.

1. Open a new browser and **sign in** to your Login.gov account.
2. On the right-hand side of your account page, scroll down until you see the **Authentication Apps** section.
3. **Select the app** you want to remove and **select Delete**.
4. Select Yes, Remove Authentication App.

You have successfully removed your authentication app from your Login.gov account.

Have Further Questions?

Go to Login.gov's Help Center for all Login.gov account related questions.

Login.gov Help Center

Email OCIOEnterpriseHelpDesk@ed.gov for any Department of Education network access questions.

Email The Help Desk

Contact your application at the Department of Education for any application account related questions.