

Identity Verification Overview For SAMS 2.0

Document Version 1.0

Introduction

If you are reading this guide, it probably means that you have been (or will be) asked to provide proof of your identity for access to some type of public health data or computer application operated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This guide will talk about the process (called **Identity Verification**), the way it works within the SAMS Partner Portal, and why it is needed.

Your SAMS Partner Portal Account

These days, almost everyone conducts some form of business online – tasks like banking and shopping come easily to mind. In most cases, however, before you can buy a book or pay a bill for the first time, you will be asked to register and create a user account. The account you create can then be used to customize your experience and to help keep your information safe so that someone else can't conduct business in your name. Many of the partner-facing computer applications at CDC work in a similar way. Before you can use certain applications or access certain types of data, you will be required to establish an account with the SAMS Partner Portal. In addition, if the specific information or application that you will be using is considered sensitive or 'non-public' you may also be asked to prove that you are who you say you are as part of the account registration process.

OK. **So what is meant by sensitive or non-public information?** A computer application is typically considered sensitive or non-public if the work that it does or the information it contains could cause some kind of loss, embarrassment, or harm if it was misused or widely known. Examples include:

- An application used to place orders for medical supplies
- Details about a person's health or medical condition
- Details about a company's trade secret

If you are to be given access to this type of application or information, U.S. law requires that you first prove that you are who you claim to be and, by extension, that you are the person that should be working with this information. This is where Identity Verification comes in.

What is Identity Verification?

Simply put, Identity Verification is a formal process for establishing that you are who you claim to be and then *linking* that proof to your SAMS Partner Portal account.

The law requires that you provide proof of your identity each time you access non-public information. By signing-in to an application with your SAMS Partner Portal account, you are taking a shortcut while still meeting this requirement. These same types of shortcuts happen all the time – For example, before you could check out a book at your local library, you probably had to show proof of residence for your area. By signing up for a library card and providing this proof once, you have met the requirement. Now, by simply showing your library card, you can get the books you want without having to re-prove your residency each time. Your SAMS Partner Portal account works the same way.

If it is expected that you will be working with non-public information, CDC will send you a form to complete that meets the requirement for proving your identity. This may happen when you first register for your SAMS Partner Portal account or it may happen later if your access changes. Either way, the process and the requirements are the same.

What's the Process for Identity Verification?

Once you have successfully registered with the SAMS Partner Portal, the Identity Verification process consists of 3 basic steps (see Diagram 1 below):

1. CDC will email you a form to be completed and returned.
2. You must print the form and take it, along with your Photo ID, to a Proofing Agent.
3. Return the completed form and legible photocopies of your ID to CDC.

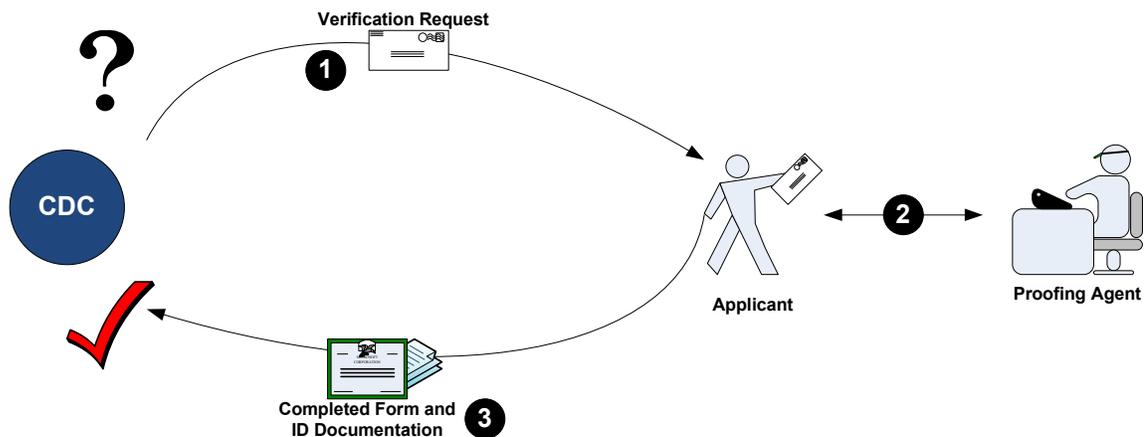


Diagram 1: Basic User Identity Verification Process

Some Common Questions

What information will I need?

The Identity Verification Request form is divided into 2 parts – one for you and one for the Proofing Agent. Your job is to provide your name, date of birth, signature, and the current date. Then, take the form, along with one of the following forms of Photo ID, to a Proofing Agent:

- State Issued Driver's License or ID Card
- U.S. Passport or Passport Card
- U.S. Military ID Card

What is a 'Proofing Agent' and where can I find one?

A *Proofing Agent* is someone authorized to endorse your Identity Verification request form. This person could be:

- A CDC Employee
- A Notary Public
- A person specifically designated for this role

Notaries Public are typically available throughout the United States and are a good choice. However, CDC employees working directly with you or attending conferences and onsite visits may make the process even easier.

Alternatively, you may receive information from a CDC Program representative directing you to a specific individual handling verification for your group, locality, or project.

What does the Proofing Agent do?

The second part of the Identity Verification Request form is for your Proofing Agent. Their job is to compare you to your ID. They will record the number from your ID onto the request form and add their signature and the date – Notaries will also stamp or seal the form and add their commission date.

Once your form is complete, make a photocopy of your ID and send it, along with the completed form back to CDC.

Helpful Tips for Successful and Painless Identity Verification

Consistency Counts

The purpose of Identity Verification is to establish that you are who you claim to be. In order to complete this process, the information you provide must be accurate and consistent. Here are some ways to make the process run smoothly:

- Register in SAMS Partner Portal with your *FULL LEGAL NAME*.
- If the name on your ID does not match the name you used during registration (you got married; you had a legal name change; etc.), you'll need to provide some supporting documentation with your request form – for example: a copy of your marriage license or order of legal name change.
- If the address on your ID does not match the address you used during registration (you moved), you'll need to provide supporting documentation with your request form – for example: a copy of your voter registration card or a utility bill in your name that shows the new address.

If you have any questions about what is required, please contact the CDC Proofing Authority at the SAMS Help Desk using the information provided below.

Make Legible Photocopies

In order to speed you through the Identity Verification process, please ensure that your documents copy and fax cleanly. Specific things you can do include:

- Select the 'Enlarge' option when photocopying your ID – 50 or 100 percent enlargements help make your documents more legible.
- Ensure good contrast and clarity on your original photocopy before you fax.
- Set your fax to a high dpi or 'fineness' setting – the bigger the better.

How Do I Get help?

Help is available from your CDC program or directly from the SAMS Partner Portal Help Desk. You can reach the SAMS Help Desk between the hours of 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM EST Monday through Friday (excepting U.S. Federal holidays) at the following:

Toll Free: 877-681-2901

Email: samshelp@cdc.gov

You can also find additional information in the SAMS User FAQs.