

## **Fraud and Identity Theft Information**

Protecting students' personal information and ensuring compliant use of financial aid is a top priority at Barton. Unfortunately, fraudulent actions – such as providing false information to gain federal aid – negatively impacts innocent victims and jeopardizes federal programs. Combatting the abuse of federal funding, the U.S. Department of Education requires financial aid offices to carefully review, identify and resolve discrepancies, inaccuracies, and conflicting eligibility information.

### **Definitions**

**Fraud:** The willful misrepresentation or falsification of information for the purpose of securing financial aid that the individual may not be eligible for or not eligible to receive. Financial aid fraud can take many forms, including, but not limited to the following:

- The intent to deceive to receive Title IV aid.
- Falsified information or forged signatures on an application, verification documents, or loan promissory notes.
- False statement of income.
- False statements of citizenship.
- Use of false or fictitious names or aliases, addresses, or Social Security Numbers (SSN), including the deliberate use of multiple SSNs.
- False claims of independent status.
- Receiving financial aid without the intent of use for educational purposes
- Receiving financial aid for transfer or preparatory coursework by falsely claiming degree or certificate at the aid-granting institution.
- Patterns of misreported information.
- Unresolved conflicting information.

**Identity Theft:** The deliberate use of another individual's identity for financial gain or other benefits.

**Abuse of Federal Funds:** Applying for and receiving federal financial aid funds for other than allowable educational expenses. [List of Allowable and Non-Allowable Costs](#)

## **School Reporting Responsibilities**

Federal regulations require schools to report credible information to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Inspector General regarding individuals who may be engaging in fraud or identity theft in connection with application and eligibility for receiving federal aid.

## **Penalties for Providing False or Misleading Information**

When completing the Federal Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), applicants agree to the following:

- “You also certify that you understand that the secretary of education has the authority to verify information reported on your application.”
- “If you purposefully give false or misleading information, including applying as an independent student without meeting the unusual circumstances required to qualify for such a status, you may be subject to criminal penalties under 20 U.S.C. 1097, which may include a fine up to \$20,000, imprisonment, or both.”

## **Reporting Financial Aid Fraud**

Suspected fraud should be reported immediately to the Federal Student Aid.

### **How to Report:**

- Hotline: 1.800.MIS-USED (1.800.647-8733)
- Website: [OIG Hotline](#)
- Mail: Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-1510
- Fax: (202)245-7047

## **Victim of Identity Theft Should Act Quickly**

It's crucial that victims of identity theft act quickly to minimize damage. Below are steps to take:

1. **Visit** [IdentityTheft.gov](#) to report the theft and receive a personalized recovery plan.

2. **Update Security Settings:** Change all login credentials, PINs and passwords.
3. **Notify your Bank:** Request a fraud alert and monitor your financial accounts.
4. **Contact Credit Bureaus to Place a Free Fraud Alert:**
  - Visit the [Experian](#) website or call (888)397-3742
  - Visit the [Transunion](#) website or call (888)909-8872
  - Visit the [Equifax](#) website or call (888)685-1111
5. **Report to Authorities:**
  - File a police report with local law enforcement.
  - Contact Barton Community College Police at
  - Report to the **Social Security Administration** if your SSN is compromised.
  - Notify the **Federal Trade Commission**.
6. **Report to Federal Student Aid (FSA):**
  - Visit the [Federal Student Aid Help Center](#) website.
  - Call: 1(800)433-3243
  - Log in with your FSA ID to review loans and notify your loan servicer.
7. **Contact the IRS if tax records are affected:**
  - Follow the guide for [Victims of IRS Identity Theft](#).

## Reporting Fraud to Barton

Steps to take:

1. **File a Police Report** with local authorities.
2. **Reset College Accounts:** Contact the IT Help Desk to reset login credential and enable Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA):
  - Complete a [Tech Support Form](#) to contact the IT Help Desk.
  - Email IT at [webinquiry@bartonccc.edu](mailto:webinquiry@bartonccc.edu).
3. **Notify the College:**
  - Contact the Financial Aid Office at:
    - (866)257-2574 or email [financialaid@bartonccc.edu](mailto:financialaid@bartonccc.edu).