

# Submitting ACA Test Files to the IRS

## Overview

**NOTE: PCGenesis REQUIRES electronic filing to the IRS!!**

The information published below is obtained from *IRS Publication 5164, Test Package for Electronic Filers of Affordable Care Act (ACA) Information Returns (AIR) (Processing Year 2019)*. This IRS publication can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p5164.pdf>.

**NOTE:** According to *IRS Publication 5164*, transmitters (Georgia school districts and RESAs) are required to complete communication testing to transmit information returns to the IRS only for the first year in which they will transmit returns. **This means that Georgia school districts who used PCGenesis to complete their ACA reporting in 2017 will NOT need to redo the ACA test file submissions in 2018 for 2018 ACA reporting.**

### **Required Step: Test Communication with AIR System**

***For first-time users of the PCGenesis ACA software, this step must be completed before production ACA files can be submitted to the IRS.***

Software developers, transmitters, and issuers must pass all applicable test scenarios. Georgia school districts and RESAs are considered issuers. This will help ensure your software can communicate with the IRS before you submit information returns through the AIR system.

- **Transmitters and Issuers** must use approved software to perform the communications test. PCGenesis is an approved software package for submission of 1095-C forms. Issuers are only required to successfully complete the communication test once.

### **Who Must Test?**

The IRS will receive and process information returns reporting on individual health insurance coverage from:

- Applicable Large Employers (ALE) (e.g. employers with 50 or more full-time equivalent employees) using Forms 1094/1095-C.
- Issuers (e.g. health insurance issuer, sponsor of a self-insured health plan, government agency that administers government-sponsored health insurance programs, or other entity) using Forms 1094/1095-B.

ACA Information Returns must be filed electronically if the Issuer or Applicable Large Employer is submitting 250 or more information returns of the same type. Transmitters, including Issuers, must use approved software to successfully execute a communication test. PCGenesis is an approved software package for submission of 1095-C forms.

## **Why Is Testing Required?**

The purpose of required testing prior to Production is to ensure that:

- IRS can receive and process the electronic information returns.
- Software Developers, Transmitters, and Issuers can send electronic information returns and retrieve Acknowledgments.
- Software Developers, Transmitters, and Issuers use the correct format and electronic filing specifications for AIR.

## **ACA Application for Transmitter Control Code (TCC)**

Prior to testing, all Software Developers, Transmitters, and Issuers must obtain an ACA TCC. To become eligible to electronically file ACA Information Returns, a firm or organization must submit the *ACA Application for TCC*. To file ACA Information Returns electronically, the *ACA Application for Transmitter Control Code (TCC)* must be completed online. **AIR only accepts ACA TCCs.** Software Developers, Transmitters and Issuers should not use an existing FIRE TCC or Electronic Filing Identification Number (EFIN) or Electronic Transmitter Identification Number (ETIN). The application process consists of two steps:

1. Responsible Officials and Contacts in the business or organization register for e-Services (for more information on e-Services Registration and Tutorials, see the Registration Services page on [irs.gov](http://irs.gov)). The registration process involves collecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and taxpayer data for the sole purpose of authenticating your identity. After completing the initial registration, a confirmation code will be sent by U.S. Postal Service (USPS). After receiving the confirmation code, log on to e-Services, using the Username and Password that was created when the account was set up and confirm the registration.
2. Responsible Officials initiate the ACA Application for TCC. The application must include a minimum of one Responsible Official and minimum of two Contacts (maximum of 10 Contacts).

## **Submitting the ACA Application for Transmitter Control Code**

Submitting the ACA Application for TCC begins with the Responsible Official and Contacts registering for e-Services. Once the registration is complete, including the confirmation process, the Responsible Official can begin the application for TCC process. For additional information on submitting the ACA Application for TCC, please refer to *Publication 5165, Guide for Electronically Filing Affordable Care Act (ACA) Information Returns (AIR) for Software Developers and Transmitters (Processing Year (PY) 2019)*.

The ACA Application for TCC contains three separate roles: Software Developer, Transmitter, and Issuer. Georgia school districts and RESAs are considered Issuers.

Complete the ACA Application for TCC if your firm or organization is performing one or more of the following roles:

- **Software Developer:** An organization writing either origination or transmission software according to IRS specifications.
- **Transmitter:** A third-party sending the electronic information returns data directly to the IRS on behalf of any business.
- **Issuer:** A business filing their own ACA Information Returns regardless of whether they are required to file (transmit 250 or more of the same type of information return) or volunteer to file electronically. The term issuer includes any person required to report coverage on Form 1095-B and any Applicable Large Employer required to report offers of coverage on Form 1095-C and file associated transmittals on Form 1094-B or 1094-C.

These roles are not mutually exclusive: for example, a firm or organization may be both Software Developer and a Transmitter. In addition to the roles the firm or organization will perform, the application requires the selection of the transmission method(s) for Transmitters and Issuers or the transmission method(s) the software packages will support.

### **ACA Information Returns Test Transmissions**

Using the information provided by the IRS, the Transmitter or the Issuer creates the applicable files in Extensible Markup Language (XML) format for the forms they will test. Using the transmission method identified on the *ACA Application for TCC*, the Transmitter or Issuer will send the files to AIR. The **Receipt ID** is used to retrieve the acknowledgement after the IRS processes the transmission.

PCGenesis supplies the two XML files which are required for testing. The two files have the following naming conventions and can be found in the **K:\SECOND\PERDATA** directory:

- 1 MANIFEST\_1094C\_Request\_XXXXX\_ccyymmddT010101003Z.xml
- 2 1094C\_Request\_XXXXX\_ccyymmddT010101003Z.xml

Where: **XXXXX** represents the school district's **TCC ID**.

The user must rename the two files replacing the **XXXXX** with the school district's **TCC ID**. Then, the user must follow the instructions in *Section A1. Editing the Test .xml Files Using Notepad* and edit the supplied **MANIFEST** xml file using the *Microsoft® Windows Notepad* utility.

The user must then follow the instructions in *Section A2. Uploading Test .xml Files to IRS Website* and submit the two xml files to the IRS. The transmission will either be accepted or rejected. All of the possible statuses are listed in *Table A-1* below.

**Important Note:** The term “accepted” does not imply the transmitter has successfully passed AATS testing. It only means the transmission was accepted into the AIR System for further validation.

**Table A-1 AATS Acknowledgement Status, Response and Action**

Status	Response	Action
Processing	IRS has not completed processing the transmission	Check back later - if this status persists for more than two days, contact the IRS help desk for further assistance:  Telephone number 1-866-937-4130
Accepted	IRS has completed processing the transmission and found no errors	Contact the IRS help desk for confirmation and update of the TCC and/or Form Status  Telephone number 1-866-937-4130
Accepted with Errors	IRS has completed processing the transmission and the errors are documented in the Error Data File attached to the Acknowledgement	Correct and resubmit  <u>Note:</u> The IRS help desk cannot provide any additional detail other than the information returned in your Acknowledgement
Partially Accepted	IRS has completed processing, one or more submissions within the transmission have been rejected and one or more submissions within the transmission have been accepted	Correct and resubmit
Rejected	IRS has rejected the transmission – depending on why the transmission was rejected, an Error Data File may or may not be attached to the Acknowledgement	Review, correct and resubmit the entire transmission
Not Found	IRS could not find a transmission corresponding to the Receipt ID provided	Verify Receipt ID and resubmit Acknowledgement request

If the transmission is rejected (contains manifest and/or header errors), the tester may receive the rejection notification immediately or when they retrieve their Acknowledgement. Once a **Receipt ID** is generated, providing no fatal errors were found in the manifest and/or headers, AIR validates the test scenarios included in the submission(s). If the test submission passes the IRS protocols, your test submission is *Accepted*.

Even though the test submission may be *Accepted*, the final step is to contact the IRS help desk for confirmation that the test phase of ACA processing has been completed successfully. The IRS help desk will ask for your **TCC ID** and the **Receipt ID** of the file that was *Accepted*, and will confirm that you may now process your “Production” transmission files. The IRS Help Desk Telephone number is **1-866-937-4130**.

Once your site has been confirmed for “Production” status, you may submit your regular ACA 1095-C transmission files to the IRS.



## A1. Editing the Test .xml Files Using Notepad

**\*\*\* Attention\*\*\***

To preserve the integrity of .xml files, PCGenesis users must edit the transmission files using Microsoft® Windows Notepad.

Step	Action
1	<p>PCGenesis supplies the two XML files which are required for testing. The two files have the following naming conventions and can be found in the <b>K:\SECOND\PERDATA</b> directory:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 MANIFEST_1094C_Request_XXXXX_ccyymmddT010101003Z.xml</li><li>2 1094C_Request_XXXXX_ccyymmddT010101003Z.xml</li></ol> <p>Where: <b>XXXXX</b> represents the school district's <b>TCC ID</b>.</p>
2	<p>The sample xml transmission files must be <u>renamed</u> to reflect the school district's TCC ID. Rename both these files, replacing 'BB1LX' with your TCC ID from the IRS Air system.</p>
3	<p>Rename the <b>1094C_Request_XXXXX_ccyymmddT010101003Z.xml</b> file where <b>XXXXX</b> represents the school district's TCC ID.</p> <p>In the example below, replace 'BB1LX' with the school district's TCC ID.</p>
4	<p>Rename the <b>MANIFEST_1094C_Request_XXXXX_ccyymmddT010101003Z.xml</b> file where <b>XXXXX</b> represents the school district's TCC ID.</p> <p>In the example below, replace 'BB1LX' with the school district's TCC ID.</p>

Example filenames:

Name	Date modified	Type
 1094C_Request_BB1LX_20161119T131057109Z.xml	11/21/2016 11:12 AM	XML Document
 MANIFEST_1094C_Request_BB1LX_20161119T131057109Z.xml	11/21/2016 12:12 PM	XML Document

Rename both these files, replacing 'BB1LX' with your TTC ID from the IRS AIR system.

Step	Action
5	Use <i>Microsoft® Windows Notepad</i> to update the <b>MANIFEST</b> file: MANIFEST_1094C_Request_XXXXX_ccyymmddT010101003Z.xml <u>Note:</u> Do not use any other utility except for <i>Microsoft® Windows Notepad</i> to update the <b>MANIFEST</b> file.

The following screen displays:



Step	Action
6	Using <i>Microsoft® Windows Notepad</i> , change the two occurrences of <b>BB1LX</b> to your school district <b>TCC ID</b> .
7	Save the changes.



## A2. Uploading Test .xml Files to IRS Website

Step	Action
1	<p><b>Logon to internet using GOOGLE CHROME</b></p> <p><u>Note:</u> Microsoft® Internet Explorer does <u>not</u> work for this process.</p>
2	<p>Enter the following URL:</p> <p><a href="https://www.irs.gov/e-file-providers/air/affordable-care-act-information-return-air-program">https://www.irs.gov/e-file-providers/air/affordable-care-act-information-return-air-program</a></p>

The following screen displays:

The screenshot shows the IRS website's "Affordable Care Act Information Returns (AIR) Program" page. The page layout includes a top navigation bar with the IRS logo, a search bar, and links for "Charities & Nonprofits" and "Tax Pros". Below this is a secondary navigation bar with categories like "File", "Pay", "Refunds", "Credits & Deductions", and "Forms & Instructions". The main content area features a breadcrumb trail: "Home > Tax Pros > Affordable Care Act Information Return AIR Program".

The central heading is "Affordable Care Act Information Returns (AIR) Program". To the right of the heading is a language selector set to "English". On the left side, there is a vertical menu with links for "Enrolled Agents", "Annual Filing Season Program Participants", "Enrolled Retirement Plan Agents", "Certified Professional Employer Organizations (CPEO)", "Enrolled Actuaries", "E-File Providers", and "Modernized e-File".

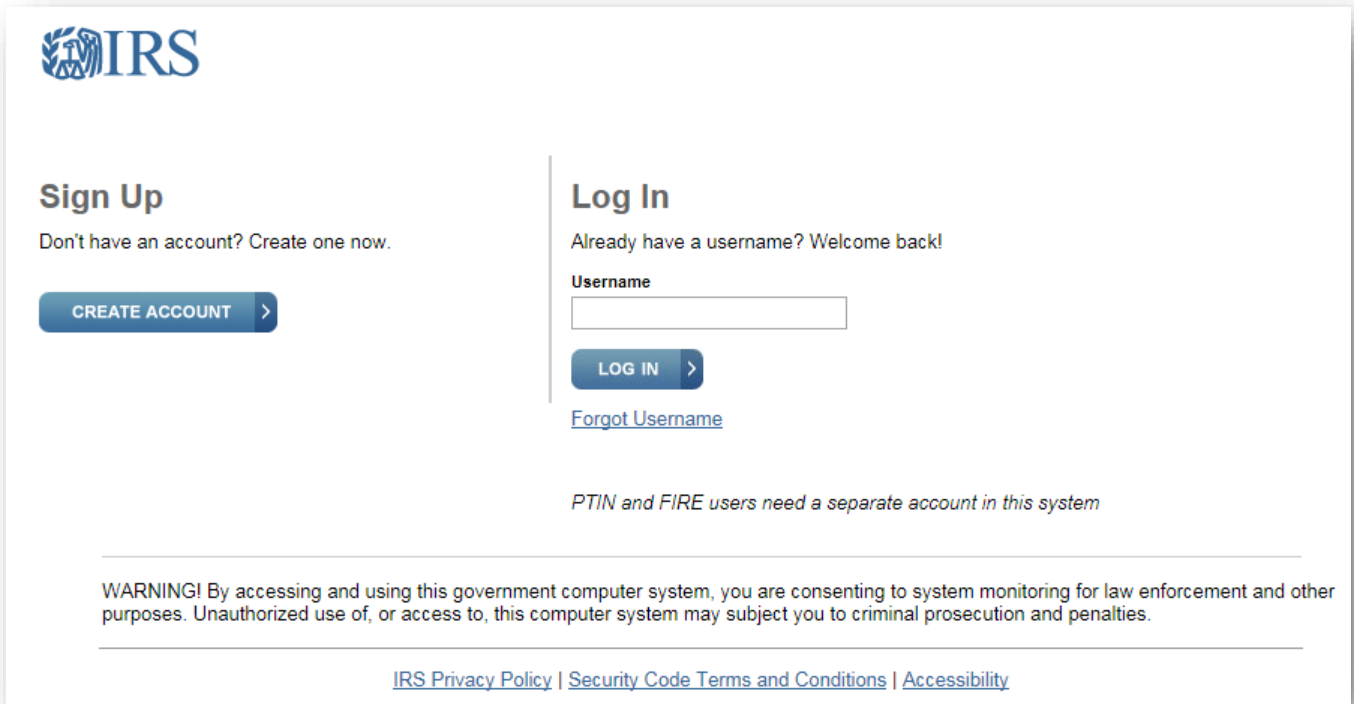
The main content area is divided into several sections:
 

- Program Overview:** Explains that ACA information returns are filed electronically through the AIR system. It notes that under the ACA, insurance companies and self-insured businesses must submit information returns to the IRS. It also mentions that other non-ACA returns (Forms 1099) can be filed through the Filing Information Returns Electronically system (FIRE).
- ACA information returns include:**
  - Form 1094-B, Transmittal of Health Coverage Information Returns
  - Form 1095-B, Health Coverage
  - Form 1094-C, Transmittal of Employer-Provided Health Insurance Offer and Coverage Information Returns
  - Form 1095-C, Employer-Provided Health Insurance Offer and Coverage
- UI Channel Link:** Contains two links: "AIR UI Channel Login - AATS (Testing)" and "AIR UI Channel Login - Production". The "Production" link is circled in red.
- A2A Certificates:** Contains a link for "AIR Automated Enrollment (AE)".
- Quick Links:** Contains links for "AIR Operational Status", "AIR Webinars", "AATS (Testing)", "AIR Schemas/Business Rules", and "Year 2015 and 2016 Information".

At the bottom of the page, there is a section titled "Here's what you need to know to get started with AIR:" followed by the text: "In general, if you are a software developer, transmitter, or issuer required to file".

Step	Action
3	At the top right corner under the orange heading <b>UI Channel Link</b> , select <i>AIR UI Channel Login – Production</i> .

The following screen displays:



Step	Action
4	Login using your E-Services Registration Id.

The following screen displays:

Step	Action
5	Select the radio button to the left of the organization you will represent in this session and select the <i>Submit Selected Organization</i> button.

The following screen displays:

Step	Action
6	Select the <i>AATS Version</i> . Select the radio button to the left of <b>AATS ccyy</b> and select the <i>Submit Selected Version</i> button.

The following screen displays:

**IRS**

[Change Version](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Logout](#)

### Affordable Care Act Information Returns

#### A Upload ACA Forms

Upload your completed ACA form and manifest file in XML.

Prior to transmission, please read the instructions to ensure that the form has been completed correctly and is organized in the correct structure. Please have the following XML forms ready for upload:

- ACA Manifest of basic submitter information
- ACA Form 1094B/1095B or 1094C/1095C

**UPLOAD ACA FORMS >**

#### B Check Transmission Status

Once you have completed your transmission in Step A, you may check the transmission status of your form.

Please have your Receipt ID ready.

**CHECK TRANSMISSION STATUS >**

Step	Action
7	Select the <i>Upload ACA Forms</i> button.

The following screen displays:

**IRS**

[Contact Us](#) | [Home](#) | [Logout](#)

## ACA Transmission File Upload

### Upload Manifest

Browse for your Manifest file in XML format.

**Note:** Only one Manifest file may be selected to coincide with this transmission.

Manifest File  **BROWSE**

### Upload Form

Browse for your Form file containing Form 1094B and all associated 1095Bs or Form 1094C and all associated 1095Cs in XML format. Once you have selected your files select "Transmit" to process the transmission.

**Note:** Only one Form file may be selected to coincide with this transmission. Your total transmission file size may not exceed 100MB and may only include XML file types.

Form File  **BROWSE**

### Transmission

Once you click "Transmit", you will NOT be able to cancel your transmission.

If your file is successfully received after clicking "Transmit", a confirmation page will appear that contains the Receipt ID for this transmission. It is recommended that you save your Receipt ID in a secure location. If there was a problem with your file, an error page will be shown. Please correct the problem and try your transmission again.

**Note:** Due to file size limitations, please allow sufficient time for larger Form files to be transmitted.

**CANCEL** **TRANSMIT >**

Step	Action
8	<p>Upload the Manifest and Form file.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Browse and select the <b>Manifest file</b> for first input box: MANIFEST_1094C_Request_XXXXX_ccyymmddT010101003Z.xml</li> <li>Then browse and select the <b>Form file</b> for second input box: 1094C_Request_XXXXX_ccyymmddT010101003Z.xml</li> <li>Select the <i>Transmit</i> button to upload the files.</li> </ul>

The following screen displays:

**Transmission Confirmation**

Your uploaded file has been transmitted. Please see details of this transmission below. It is **highly recommended** to print this page to keep for your records. Remember to check the status of this transmission by using the Receipt ID provided below to ensure your file is accepted.

**Receipt ID:** 1095C-16-00034716  
**Date and Time:** 04/18/2016 02:12:18 PM UTC

**Your Transmitted Form File**

File Name	File Size
1094C_Request_BB1LX_20160305T010101101Z.xml	10.06 KB

**PRINT**

Step	Action
9	The <i>Transmission Confirmation</i> page displays.
10	<p>Screen-print the <i>Transmission Confirmation</i> page and record the <b>Receipt ID</b>. The <b>Receipt ID</b> is required to view the <i>Transmission Status</i>.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Be sure to write down the <b>Receipt ID</b>. The <b>Receipt ID</b> is required to determine the status of the test transmission.</p>

## A3. Verifying the Status of the Test Transmission

Step	Action
1	<p><b>Logon to internet using GOOGLE CHROME</b></p> <p><u>Note:</u> Microsoft® Internet Explorer does <u>not</u> work for this process.</p>
2	<p>Enter the following URL:</p> <p><a href="https://www.irs.gov/e-file-providers/air/affordable-care-act-information-return-air-program">https://www.irs.gov/e-file-providers/air/affordable-care-act-information-return-air-program</a></p>

The following screen displays:

The screenshot shows the IRS website's "Affordable Care Act Information Returns (AIR) Program" page. The page layout includes a top navigation bar with the IRS logo, a search bar, and links for "Charities & Nonprofits" and "Tax Pros". Below this is a main navigation menu with categories like "File", "Pay", "Refunds", "Credits & Deductions", and "Forms & Instructions". The main content area features a breadcrumb trail: "Home > Tax Pros > Affordable Care Act Information Return AIR Program".

The central heading is "Affordable Care Act Information Returns (AIR) Program". To the right, there is a language selector set to "English". On the left side, there is a vertical menu with links for "Enrolled Agents", "Annual Filing Season Program Participants", "Enrolled Retirement Plan Agents", "Certified Professional Employer Organizations (CPEO)", "Enrolled Actuaries", "E-File Providers", and "Modernized e-File".

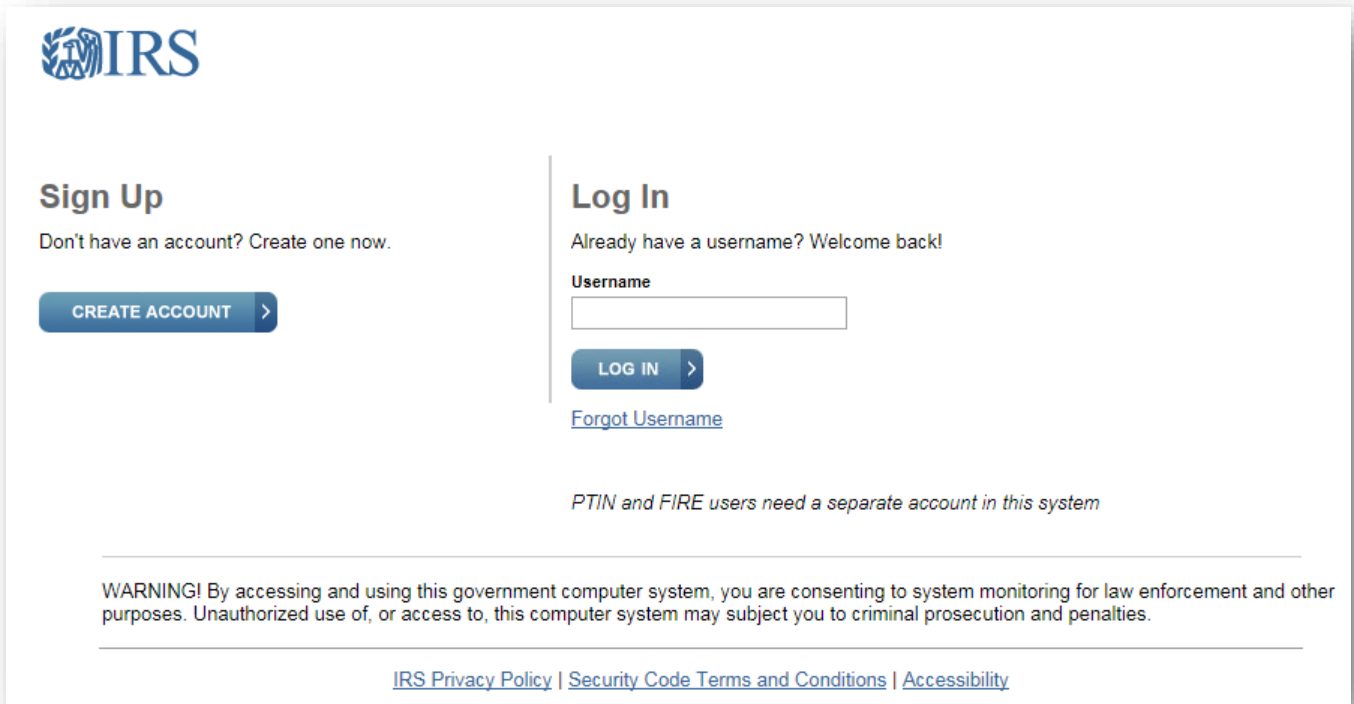
The main content area is divided into several sections:
 

- Enrolled Agents:** A list of links for various agent categories.
- Program Overview:** A section explaining that ACA information returns are electronically filed through the AIR system. It also mentions that other non-ACA returns can be filed through the FIRE system. A list of forms included in ACA returns is provided: Form 1094-B, Form 1095-B, Form 1094-C, and Form 1095-C.
- UI Channel Link:** A section with two links: "AIR UI Channel Login - AATS (Testing)" and "AIR UI Channel Login - Production". The "Production" link is circled in red.
- A2A Certificates:** A section with a link for "AIR Automated Enrollment (AE)".
- Quick Links:** A section with links for "AIR Operational Status", "AIR Webinars", "AATS (Testing)", "AIR Schemas/Business Rules", and "Year 2015 and 2016 Information".

At the bottom of the page, there is a section titled "Here's what you need to know to get started with AIR:" followed by a note: "In general, if you are a software developer, transmitter, or issuer required to file".

Step	Action
3	At the top right corner under the orange heading <b>UI Channel Link</b> , select <i>AIR UI Channel Login – Production</i> .

The following screen displays:



Step	Action
4	Login using your E-Services Registration Id.



The following screen displays:

Step	Action
5	Select the radio button to the left of the organization you will represent in this session and select the <i>Submit Selected Organization</i> button.

The following screen displays:

Step	Action
6	Select the <i>AATS Version</i> . Select the radio button to the left of <b>AATS ccyy</b> and select the <i>Submit Selected Version</i> button.

The following screen displays:

Step	Action
7	Select the <i>Check Transmission Status</i> button.

The following screen displays:

The screenshot shows the IRS logo in the top left corner. In the top right corner, there are links for [Contact Us](#), [Home](#), and [Logout](#). The main heading is "Transmission Status Record". Below this, a note states "All fields with \* are required." and another note says "You may enter a Receipt ID applicable for the current tax year in the search tool to find a specific transmission. You must enter the Receipt ID **exactly** how it is written in your transmission confirmation." There are two input fields: "TCC \*" and "Receipt ID \*". Below the input fields are two buttons: "FIND" and "CLEAR".

Step	Action
8	<p>The <i>Transmission Status Record</i> screen displays.</p> <p>Enter the <b>TCC ID</b> and the <b>Receipt ID</b> you obtained earlier in <i>Section A2. Uploading Test .xml Files to IRS Website</i>.</p> <p>Select the <i>FIND</i> button.</p>

If the transmission is still processing, the following *Transmission Status Details* screen displays:

The screenshot shows the IRS logo in the top left corner. In the top right corner, there are links for [Print](#), [Contact Us](#), [Home](#), and [Logout](#). The main heading is "Transmission Status Details". Below this, a note states "Please see details for this transmission below." The details listed are: "Receipt ID: 1095C-16-00034732", "Date and Time: 04/18/2016 02:22:49 PM UTC", and "Status: Processing". At the bottom, there are two buttons: "BACK" and "PRINT".

If the transmission is rejected, the following *Transmission Status Details* screen displays:

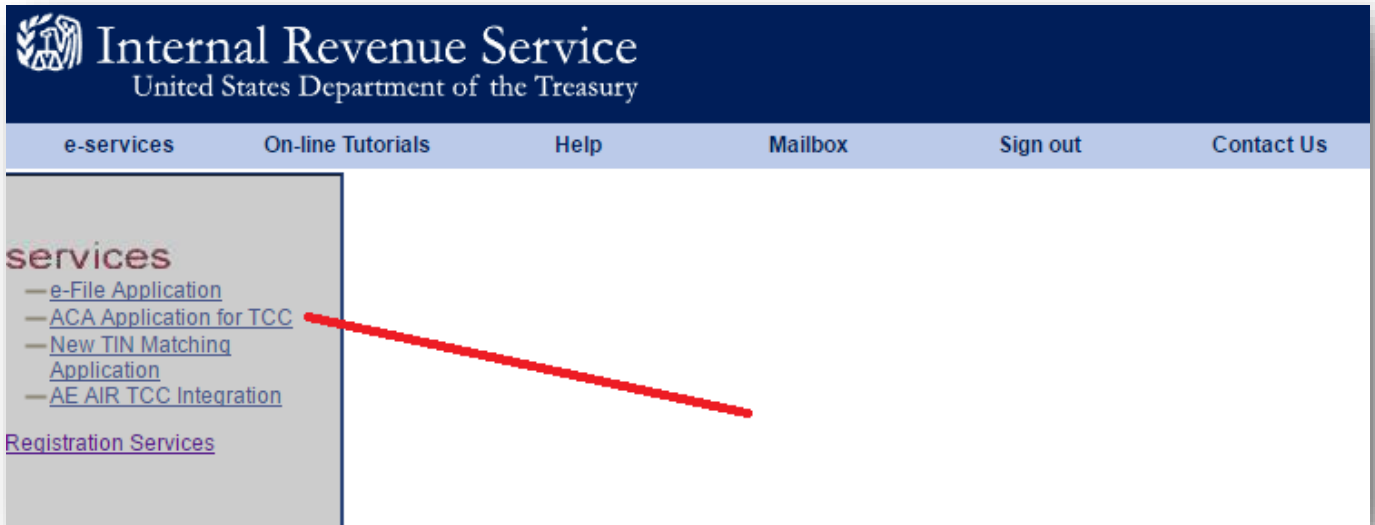
The screenshot shows the IRS logo in the top left corner. In the top right corner, there are links for [Print](#), [Contact Us](#), [Home](#), and [Logout](#). The main heading is "Transmission Status Details" in a blue-bordered box. Below this, a message reads: "Please see details for this transmission below. Click Download to be prompted to save an XML response message to your computer." The transmission details are: Receipt ID: 1095C-16-00034716, Date and Time: 04/18/2016 02:17:55 PM UTC, and Status: Rejected. A red "Errors" section follows, stating: "The following errors are issues reported by the system for your transmission. If your transmission is 'Accepted' no further action is needed. If your transmission is 'Rejected' please correct the errors and try your transmission again." Below this, it says: "For further assistance, please [contact us](#)." A table with two columns, "Error Code" and "Error Details", contains one entry: Error Code AIRMF3006 and Error Details Rejected transmission - Duplicate UUID. At the bottom, there are three buttons: a "BACK" button with a left arrow, a "PRINT" button, and a "DOWNLOAD" button.

If the transmission is accepted, the following *Transmission Status Details* screen displays:

The screenshot shows the IRS logo in the top left corner. In the top right corner, there are links for [Print](#), [Contact Us](#), [Home](#), and [Logout](#). The main heading is "Transmission Status Details" in a blue-bordered box. Below this, a message reads: "Please see details for this transmission below." The transmission details are: Receipt ID: 1095C-16-00034732, Date and Time: 04/18/2016 05:58:04 PM UTC, and Status: Accepted (highlighted in yellow). At the bottom, there are two buttons: a "BACK" button with a left arrow and a "PRINT" button.

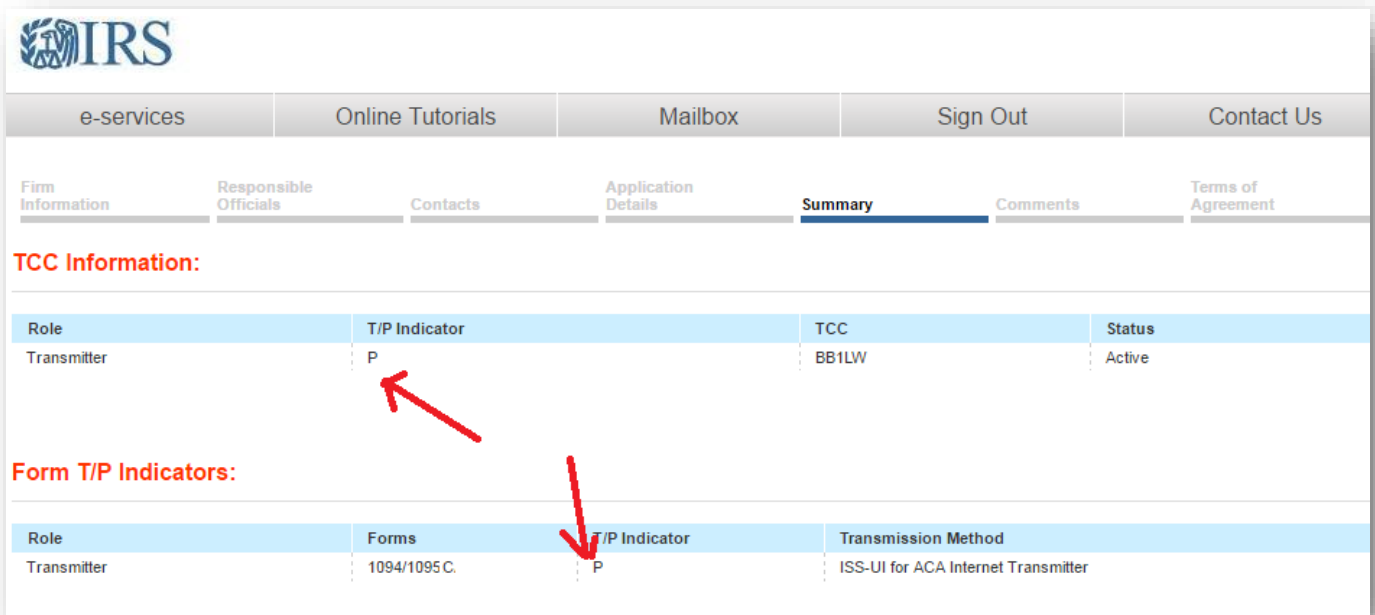
Step	Action
9	<p>The <i>Transmission Status Details</i> screen displays.</p> <p>The processing time varies before a status is returned.</p> <p>This status will display <i>Processing</i> if the transaction is still pending. Keep checking back with same <b>Receipt ID</b> until the test transmission is <i>Accepted</i>.</p>
10	<p>Once the status of your test submission is <i>Accepted</i> contact the IRS help desk for confirmation. Contacting the IRS help desk is a required step.</p> <p>IRS Help Desk Telephone number: <b>1-866-937-4130</b> then select option ‘3’ on the phone tree.</p>
11	<p>The IRS help desk will ask for your <b>TCC ID</b> and the <b>Receipt ID</b> of the file that was <i>Accepted</i>. Once updated the IRS will confirm that you may now process your “Production” transmission files.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Typically, it takes at least 48 hours for your TCC ID status to be updated to “Production” by the IRS. Please wait at least <u>48 hours</u> after receiving the confirmation from the IRS help desk before checking to see if your TCC ID application status has been changed to ‘P’. If your TCC ID application status is not ‘P’, your production file will be rejected by the IRS. Once your TCC ID application status is confirmed as ‘P’, you may submit your production ACA 1095-C transmission files to the IRS.</p>
12	<p><b><u>To confirm your TCC ID application status is ‘P’:</u></b></p> <p>Log into AIR e-services using your e-services logon ID and password:</p> <p><a href="https://www.irs.gov/Tax-Professionals/e-services---Online-Tools-for-Tax-Professionals">https://www.irs.gov/Tax-Professionals/e-services---Online-Tools-for-Tax-Professionals</a></p>

The following screen displays:



Step	Action
13	Select the option for <i>ACA Application for TCC</i> .

The following screen displays:



Step	Action
14	Confirm that the <b>T/P Indicator</b> is set to ' <b>P</b> ' (production status) for both the <b>TCC Information</b> and the <b>Form T/P Indicators</b> .

Step	Action
15	Once 'P' (production status) has been confirmed for the TCC ID, you may submit your production ACA 1095-C transmission files to the IRS.