

# IAR CE Course Provider Onboarding to FINRA

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Need assistance as a course provider? Contact us at:

[IARCESupport@FINRA.org](mailto:IARCESupport@FINRA.org)

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# Introduction

This document is for NASAA-approved course providers participating in the Investment Adviser Representative Continuing Education (IAR CE) program. Course providers must upload course completions to FINRA and pay the reporting fee for credits to be counted toward an IAR's annual continuing education requirement. Course providers will need to complete entitlement forms for accessing FINRA's systems. Once processed, course providers may create multiple accounts for authorized individuals to upload courses and pay the reporting fee. Per NASAA's policy, courses should be uploaded within 30 days of course completion. This document also details the information that must be provided for a course completion to be processed by FINRA along with guidance on uploading course completions via machine to machine and a user interface (UI). Only courses that are approved by NASAA will be accepted by the system. It also includes instructions for viewing and processing invoice payments. Invoices must be paid by credit card or ACH.

## FINRA Entitlement Program Paperwork

FINRA Entitlement is the process by which a user is granted secure access to a participating FINRA web application by an account administrator who maintains that account. As such, a new course provider must have a FINRA Entitlement Program account in order to upload course information.

To create an account, the course provider must complete the following three forms:

1. FINRA Entitlement Agreement (FEA) Form
2. FINRA Entitlement Program Certification Representative (CRep) Designation Form
3. FINRA Course Provider Organization Entitlement Form

Once complete, email the above forms to [entsupport@finra.org](mailto:entsupport@finra.org).

## FINRA Entitlements

The account administrator may create and delete accounts and grant specific privileges within an application that allow a user to perform their job responsibilities by using specific functionality within a FINRA application.

Access to DUO Mobile is needed for multi-factor authentication to log in to FINRA applications. End-users do not have access to a cell phone to utilize the DUO Mobile app can use a landline for multi-factor authentication. Each end-user will need to access their own landline.

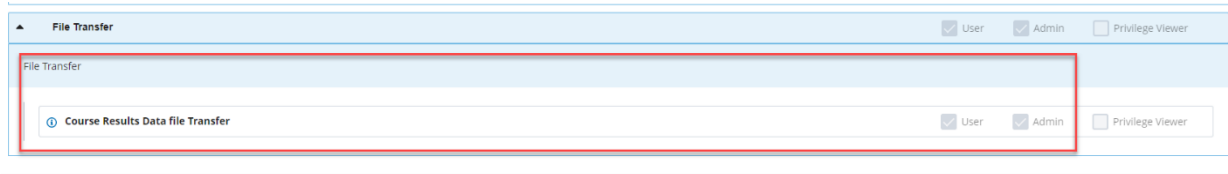
### File Upload

Entitlement: "Course Results Data File Transfer"

Description: This entitlement will allow approved course providers to upload the IAR course completion data through FileX or via the UI in FINRA Gateway.

### File Upload via the UI

Select User to allow account to upload completions and/or Administrator to assign account access:



### File Upload via FileX (Machine to Machine)

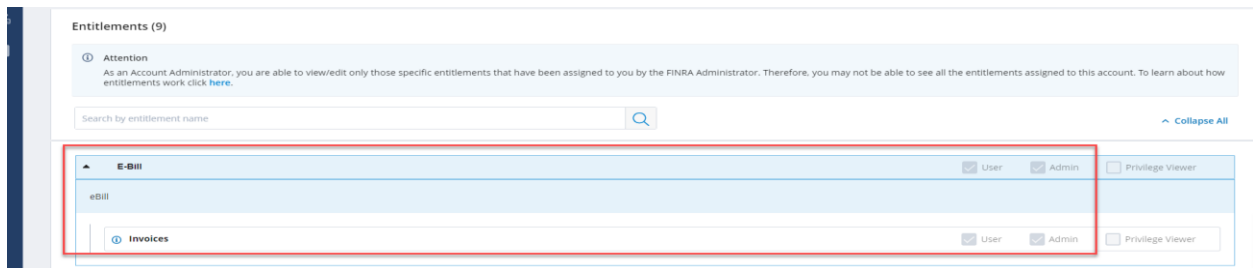
FTP – Please send an email to [IARCESupport@FINRA.org](mailto:IARCESupport@FINRA.org) to indicate you need FTP entitlements.

## Invoice Payments

Entitlement: E-Bill

Description: This entitlement will allow approved course providers to view and pay their invoices through E-Bill in FINRA Gateway.

Select User to enable account to view and pay invoices:



# File Upload Field Specifications

Each course completion record must be uploaded in a CSV format in the specified order, with five required fields and three additional optional fields if there is an in-person instructor. NASAA will give each provider the Course ID and Instructor ID, if applicable.

Specifications for each field:

Table Order	Field label	Field	Data Type	Example	Required?	Validation
1	FIRSTNAME	Student First Name	Alphanumeric(50)		Y	Y (character count/alphanumeric; first initial with last name)
2	LASTNAME	Student Last Name	Alphanumeric(50)		Y	Y (character count/alphanumeric; last name with first name initial)
3	CRDNUMBER	Student CRD ID Number	Numeric		Y	Y (validate the CRD ID exists; first initial and last name)
4	COURSEID	Course ID Code	Alphanumeric(50)		Y	Y (approved list)
5	COMPLETIONDATE	Course Completion Date	Alphanumeric(10)	Course completion dates must be submitted in the YYYY-MM-DD format (e.g., 2023-12-31).	Y	Y (date validation, rules not older than Jan 1, 2022, also validate not in the future)
6	INSTRUCTORFIRSTNAME	Instructor First Name	Alphanumeric(50)		N	N
7	INSTRUCTORLASTNAME	Instructor Last Name	Alphanumeric(50)		N	N
8	INSTRUCTORID	Instructor ID	Alphanumeric(50)		N	N

**Note:** The course provider does not need to include the following information on the upload file because NASAA will provide this information to FINRA for each approved course.

- Course name
- Number of credits
- Type of credits (Products and Practice or Ethics and Professional Responsibility)
- Whether the course is in-person or web-based

Sample file:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	FIRSTNAME	LASTNAME	CRDNUMBER	COURSEID	COMPLETIONDATE	INSTRUCTORFIRSTNAME	INSTRUCTORLASTNAME	INSTRUCTORID
2	John	Pala	1234	C12345	2022/02/01	Kier	Memphis	1234xx
3								

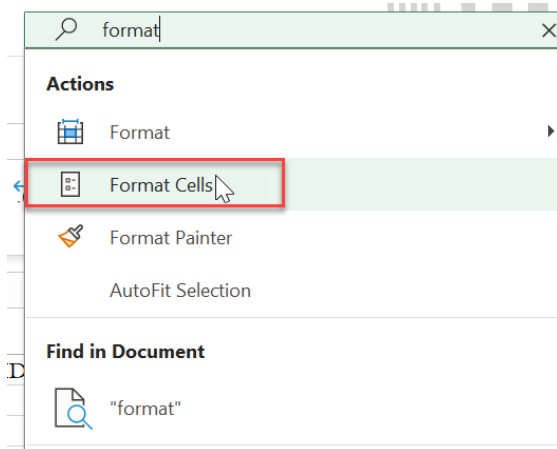
**Note:** The following special characters are allowed. Any other special characters will be rejected.

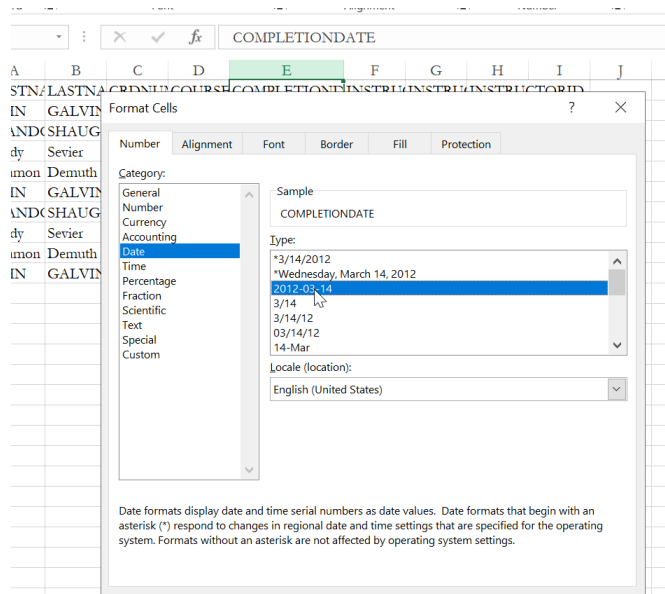
Special Character Name	Special Character
Hyphen	-
Underscore	_
Comma	,
Apostrophe	'
Accent	`

## Remedy Submission Errors

If you receive submission errors related to the date format, please consider taking one of the following actions to maintain date format integrity within the Excel/csv files.

### A. Format Cells in Excel/csv





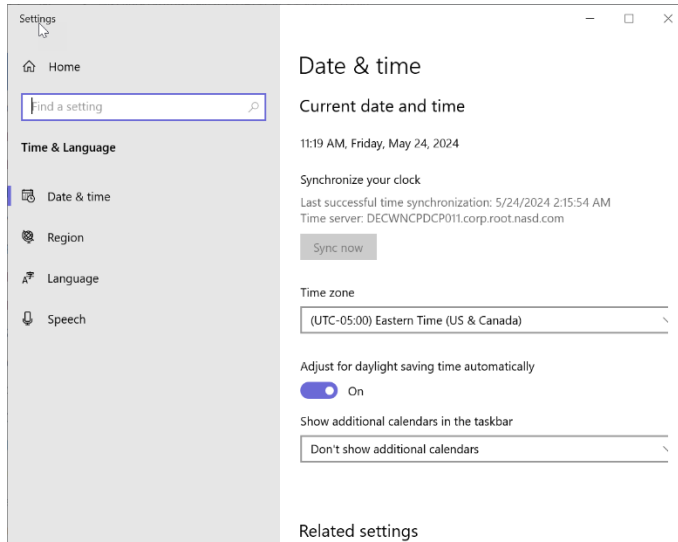
1. Highlight the date field column
2. Use the excel search bar to search on Format Cells
3. Select Format Cells
4. Click on the Number tab
5. Select Date
6. Scroll down and choose the yyyy-mm-dd date format
7. Select OK

*These steps must be completed every time the file is opened.*

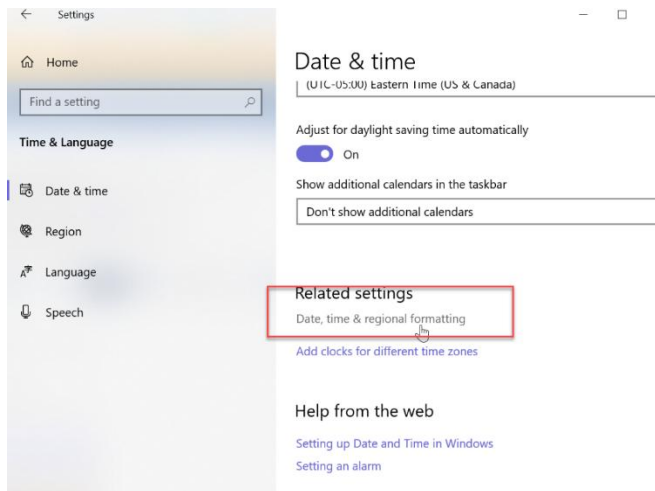
## B. Update System Date Settings

Changing the short date settings on your computer will change how the dates are automatically displayed in Excel/csv files.

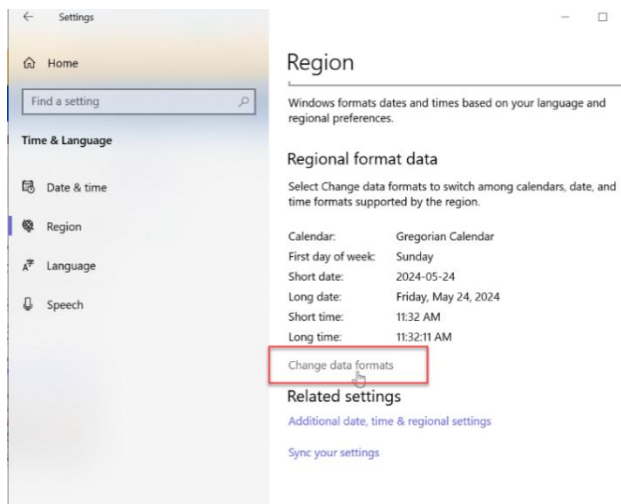
To change the date settings, navigate to the Date and Time Settings section. Please note that your system Settings section may have a slightly different look than the one in the screenshot although navigation should be similar.



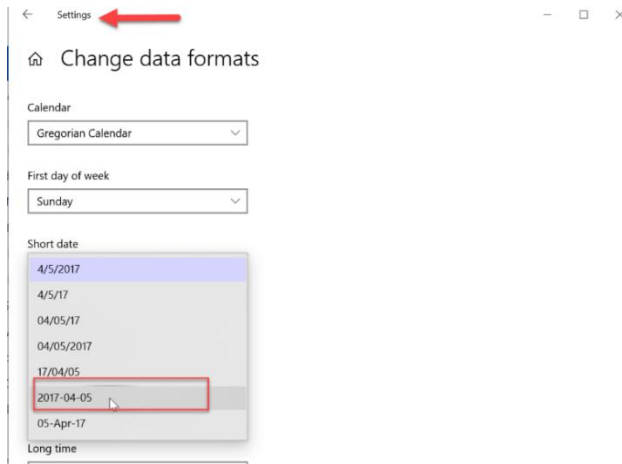
In Related Settings, select Date and Time then Related Settings.



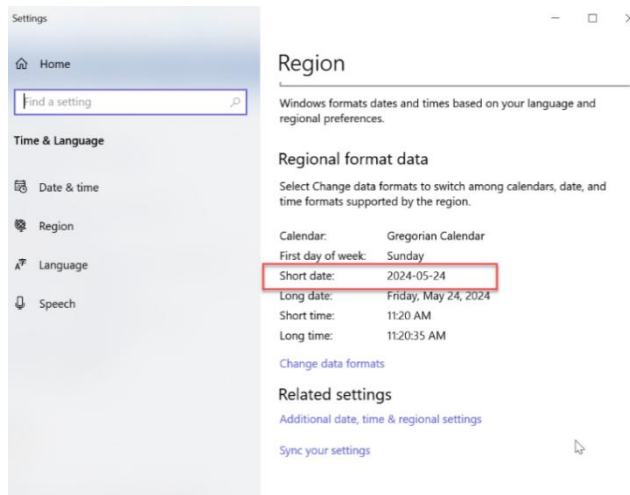
Select Change Data Format



Scroll down to the Short Date format, select the example date in the yyyy-mm-dd format, select the left arrow at the top of the screen.



View the short date format change



# File Upload – Machine to Machine Specifications

Once onboarded to fileX (see fileX user guide [here](#)), FINRA’s centralized and secure file transfer service, you will need to submit your IP addresses for quality assurance and production to [IARCESupport@FINRA.org](mailto:IARCESupport@FINRA.org).

The recommended and preferred method for IAR CE course providers to upload course completions is secure file transfer protocol (SFTP). Detailed instructions are in the Access Methods section of the fileX user guide.

Input File Type: CSV (Comma delimited) or CSV (Comma Separated Values)

Input File Extension: .csv

Use the following naming template for each course file that will be uploaded to FINRA:

*NASAA\_CourseResults\_YYYYMMDD\_HHMM.csv*

- HHMM indicates a manual timestamp created by the course provider that must be a number between 1 and 5 digits (i.e., 1130: 0855 etc.).
- File name must be unique with a different timestamp for each upload.

## Course Provider File Responses

### Successful course file uploads:

Outgoing File Accept from FINRA: *NASAA\_CourseResults\_YYYYMMDD\_seconds\_uuid\_fileaccept.csv*

The file will return a ‘File Validated and Accepted’ message.

Example: “2021-08-11T19:31:07.419943Z,200, “File Validated and Accepted”

### Unsuccessful course file uploads:

Outgoing File Reject from FINRA: *NASAA\_CourseResults\_YYYYMMDD\_seconds\_uuid\_filereject.csv*

The file will return an error message reading “ERRORTYPE”. This message may appear as `FORMAT_VALIDATION`, `SCHEMA_VALIDATION` or `CONTENT_VALIDATION` to identify the type of issue. A format or schema validation error will cause the entire file to be rejected. A content validation error will only reject the course completions with noted errors. The course completions with correct formats will be accepted. When resubmitting course results, only submit remedied results in the new file. Submitting a file with previously accepted course results will result in an additional charge. Refunds will not be provided for these charges.

Examples:

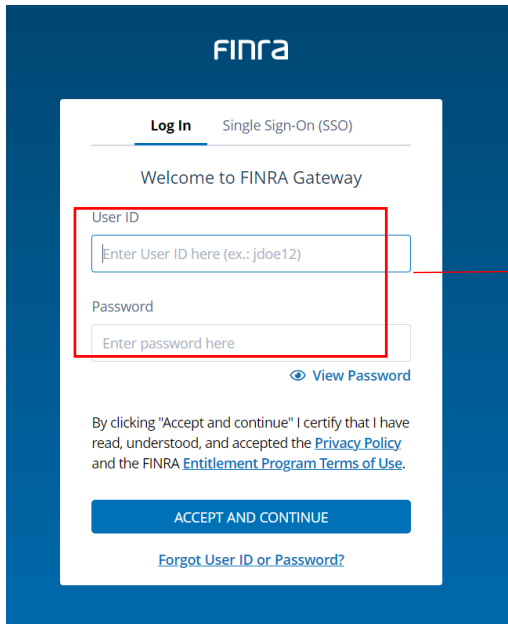
- "2021-10-06T19:46:42.758055Z","400","Invalid Input File", "Input data validation errors","CONTENT\_VALIDATION" "5872806\_C22222\_2022-01-01: Invalid CourseID found. Either C22222 is NOT\_APPROVED or not listed for this provider""2021-10-06T19:46:42.758055Z","400","Invalid Input File", "Input data validation errors","CONTENT\_VALIDATION","5872914\_C33333\_2023-01-01: Invalid CourseID found. Either C33333 is NOT\_APPROVED or not listed for this provider"
- "2021-10-06T19:46:42.758055Z","400","Invalid Input File", "Input data validation errors","CONTENT\_VALIDATION","5872914\_C33333\_2023-01-01: Found Invalid Completion Date 2023-01-01, completion date must be between 2022-01-01 and Today"

	Validation/ErrorType	Error	Message
1	FORMAT_VALIDATION	Invalid File name	Input file name <value> does not match the regex pattern <formatValue>
2	FORMAT_VALIDATION	Invalid File Size	Input file size (<value> bytes) is more than acceptable limit: <expected Value>
3	SCHEMA_VALIDATION	Syntax Errors	Invalid input CSV format. Failed to parse input file content
4	SCHEMA_VALIDATION	Syntax Errors	Failure while validating input schema
5	SCHEMA_VALIDATION	Schema Errors	Based on defined schema - Input length errors, Value, Pattern Errors; Missing mandatory fields errors
6	SCHEMA_VALIDATION	Record Count Mismatch	<Value> item count does not match input value of <expected value>
7	SCHEMA_VALIDATION	Record Count Mismatch	Expected fields missing in input for item count validation
8	CONTENT_VALIDATION	Invalid Completion Date	Found Invalid Completion Date <value>, completion date must be between 2022-01-01 and Today
9	CONTENT_VALIDATION	Invalid Course Id	Invalid CourseID found. Either <value> is NOT_APPROVED or not listed for this provider
10	CONTENT_VALIDATION	Invalid Individual CRD Number/Name	<value> is invalid. Either person details not found or name does not match

# File Upload – User Interface (UI)

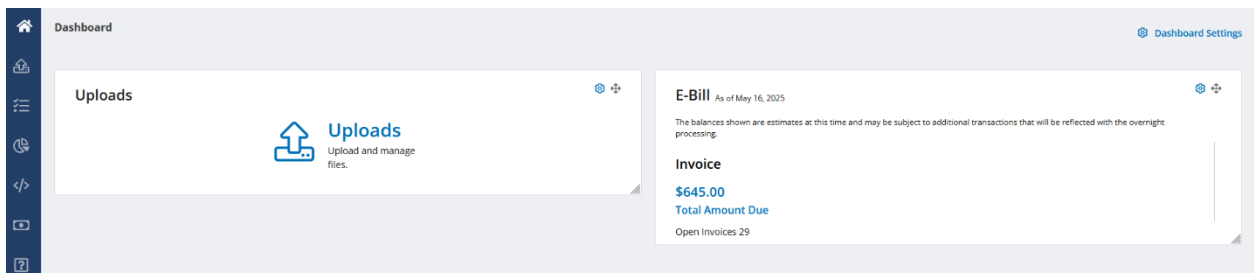
Course providers can upload course results via a file upload component in FINRA Gateway.

**Access FINRA Gateway**  
<https://gateway.finra.org>










Enter User ID and Password. Then, Click ACCEPT AND CONTINUE to log in.

After a successful login, the course provider's home page will look like the image below.



On the left navigation panel, there are shortcuts to the features in FINRA Gateway.

      	<p><b>Home:</b> Central dashboard providing an overview of your account and quick access to key functions.</p> <p><b>Upload:</b> Tool for submitting files and documents to FINRA for processing and review.</p> <p><b>Requests &amp; Filings:</b> Access point for submitting regulatory filings, applications, and managing ongoing requests.</p> <p><b>Reports:</b> Repository of generated reports and data analytics for compliance monitoring and business insights.</p> <p><b>API Console:</b> Interface for developers to access and manage FINRA's application programming interfaces.</p> <p><b>E-Bill:</b> Financial management center for viewing, paying, and tracking invoices and fees.</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Contact options for technical and regulatory assistance.</p>
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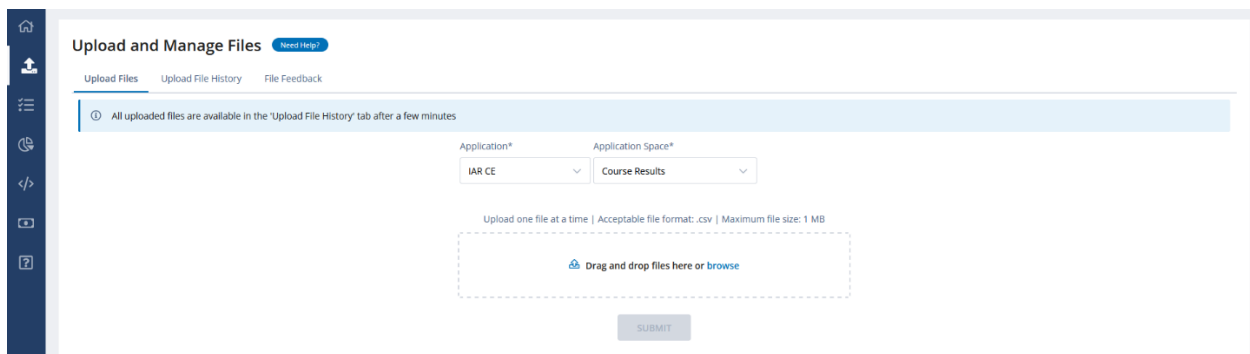
## Uploads

There are three tabs under Uploads:

- Upload Files
- Upload File History
- File Feedback

### Submit course file uploads:

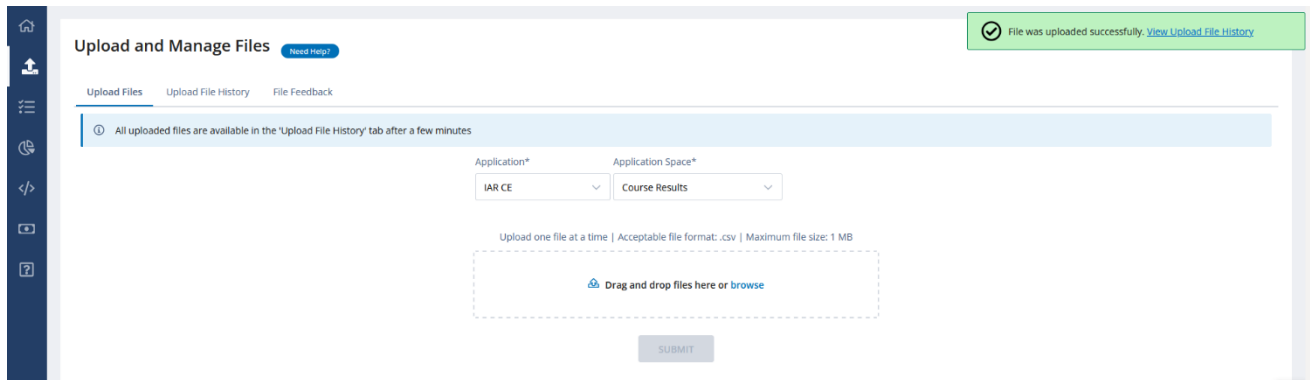
To upload course results files in FINRA Gateway, either drag and drop the files into the dotted area or select and upload them by clicking on Browse -> **Select File** -> **SUBMIT**.



Notes:

- Upload one file at a time with all course results **\*\*\*We strongly encourage one file upload with all course results information. Each file upload generates an invoice based on the total number of credits for courses included in the file\*\*\***
- File size must not exceed 1 MB
- File name format when uploading must be `NASAA_CourseResults_YYYYMMDD_HHMM.csv`
  - HHMM indicates a manual timestamp that must be a number between 1 and 5 digits (e.g., 1130; 0855 etc.)
  - File name must be unique with a different timestamp for each upload.
- Contents must adhere to the required specifications (page 5)
- File format must be Input File Type: CSV (Comma delimited) or CSV (Comma Separated Values)
- Course provider will be charged for the successful uploads and the successful portion of partial reject files

Once the file has been uploaded, a pop-up message will appear on the right corner of the Dashboard: "File was uploaded successfully. View Upload File History."



## Upload File History

Uploaded files are available for 30 days in the “Upload File History” tab with the most recent upload at the top of the list. Download the files on the list by selecting the “Download” link on the right.

Upload and Manage Files [Need Help?](#)

Upload Files Upload File History File Feedback

Files in this directory are stored for 30 days

Status: Select Application\*: IAR CE Application Space\*: Course Results

File Name	Status	Application	Application Space	Date	File Size	Download
NASAA_CourseResults_20250514_0630.csv	Rejected	IAR CE	Course Results	05/14/2025 - 02:30 AM (ET)	150 Bytes	<a href="#">Download</a>
NASAA_CourseResults_20250508_0777.csv	Accepted	IAR CE	Course Results	05/08/2025 - 02:18 PM (ET)	246 Bytes	<a href="#">Download</a>
NASAA_CourseResults_20250508_0666.csv	Accepted	IAR CE	Course Results	05/08/2025 - 02:15 PM (ET)	675 Bytes	<a href="#">Download</a>
NASAA_CourseResults_20250508_0555.csv	Accepted	IAR CE	Course Results	05/08/2025 - 02:09 PM (ET)	320 Bytes	<a href="#">Download</a>
NASAA_CourseResults_20250508_0444.csv	Accepted	IAR CE	Course Results	05/08/2025 - 12:09 PM (ET)	729 Bytes	<a href="#">Download</a>
NASAA_CourseResults_20250507_0207.csv	Received	IAR CE	Course Results	05/08/2025 - 11:53 AM (ET)	302 Bytes	<a href="#">Download</a>

## File Feedback

File Feedback includes files with processing results for the course results file upload. To verify the file upload was successful or to view the error message(s) for a rejected file, download the feedback file by selecting the “Download” icon.

Upload and Manage Files [Need Help?](#)

Upload Files Upload File History File Feedback

Application\*: IAR CE Application Space\*: Course Results Feedback

File Name	Application	Application Space	Date	File Size	Download
NASAA_CourseResults_20240726_1000_c89fd7a-a8e1-40e7-9fc7-51ed4d2c7b47_filereject.csv	IAR CE	Course Results Feedback	05/16/2025 - 02:22 PM (ET)	298 Bytes	<a href="#">Download</a>
NASAA_CourseResults_20240726_1000_2ee90e09-d656-4c69-83a3-262dea4e461e_filereject.csv	IAR CE	Course Results Feedback	05/16/2025 - 02:18 PM (ET)	325 Bytes	<a href="#">Download</a>
NASAA_CourseResults_20220114_90082_ab371f31-5451-4751-a86a-6b8fac3ee94_filereject.csv	IAR CE	Course Results Feedback	05/16/2025 - 02:18 PM (ET)	2.17 KB	<a href="#">Download</a>

### Successful course file uploads:

Feedback for files uploaded successfully will contain a similar message to the one below: Timestamp, Status and Message.

- “2021-08-11T19:31:07.419943Z,200, File Validated and Accepted

### Rejection/Partial Rejection:

Feedback for Rejected or Partial Rejected Files

When a file is rejected, the feedback will include an "ERRORTYPE" categorized as one of the following:

- FORMAT\_VALIDATION
- SCHEMA\_VALIDATION
- CONTENT\_VALIDATION

These categories help identify the specific type of issue. The error messages will follow this format:

FIRSTNAME, LASTNAME, CRDNUMBER, COURSEID, COMPLETIONDATE, SUBMISSIONTIME, ERRORDETAILS, STATUS, ERROR, MESSAGE, ERRORTYPE

When the file is rejected or partially rejected due to content validation, the reject file will include the following fields in the same order as shown in the examples below:

1. FIRSTNAME, LASTNAME, CRDNUMBER, COURSEID, COMPLETIONDATE, SUBMISSIONTIME, ERRORDETAILS, STATUS, ERROR, MESSAGE, ERRORTYPE  
 "JOHN", "DOE", "3565352", "C74653", "2025-04-18", "2025-04-21T17:07:41", "Invalid CourseId. C74653 is not listed for this provider", "400", "Invalid Input File", "Input data validation errors", "CONTENT\_VALIDATION"
2. FIRSTNAME, LASTNAME, CRDNUMBER, COURSEID, COMPLETIONDATE, SUBMISSIONTIME, ERRORDETAILS, STATUS, ERROR, MESSAGE, ERRORTYPE  
 "JOHN", "DOE", "324565", "C27355", "2025-04-22", "2025-04-21T16:59:19", "Invalid CompletionDate. Completion date must be before today", "400", "Invalid Input File", "Input data validation errors", "CONTENT\_VALIDATION"
3. FIRSTNAME, LASTNAME, CRDNUMBER, COURSEID, COMPLETIONDATE, SUBMISSIONTIME, ERRORDETAILS, STATUS, ERROR, MESSAGE, ERRORTYPE  
 "JOHN", "DOE", "302658", "C27355", "2025-04-18", "2025-04-21T16:26:17", "Invalid CRDNumber. Person last name and/or first character of first name does not match the name in our system", "400", "Invalid Input File", "Input data validation errors", "CONTENT\_VALIDATION"
4. FIRSTNAME, LASTNAME, CRDNUMBER, COURSEID, COMPLETIONDATE, SUBMISSIONTIME, ERRORDETAILS, STATUS, ERROR, MESSAGE, ERRORTYPE  
 "JOHN", "DOE", "035678", "C62664", "2025-04-18", "2025-04-21T16:09:50", "Invalid CourseId. C62664 is not listed for this provider", "400", "Invalid Input File", "Input data validation errors", "CONTENT\_VALIDATION"

Important Resubmission Guidelines:

- When resubmitting course results, only include the corrected entries in a new file.
- Do not include previously accepted course results in your resubmission, as this will result in additional charges.
- Please note that refunds will not be provided for charges incurred due to resubmission of already accepted results.

Notes:

- File feedback will be available for every uploaded course result file.
- These feedback files will be available for 30 days.
- Below is a screenshot of a sample feedback file format.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	FIRSTNAME	LASTNAME	CRDNUMBER	COURSEID	COMPLETIONDATE	SUBMISSIONTIME	ERRORDetails	STATUS	ERROR	MESSAGE	ERRORTYPE
2	JOHN	DOE	3565352	C74653	4/18/2025	2025-04-21T17:07:41	Invalid CourseId. C74653 is not listed for this provider	400	Invalid Input File	Input data validation errors	CONTENT_VALIDATION
3	JOHN	DOE	324565	C27355	4/22/2025	2025-04-21T16:59:19	Invalid CompletionDate. Completion date must be before today	400	Invalid Input File	Input data validation errors	CONTENT_VALIDATION
4	JOHN	DOE	302658	C27355	4/18/2025	2025-04-21T16:26:17	Invalid CRDNumber. Person last name and/or first character of first name does not match the name in our system	400	Invalid Input File	Input data validation errors	CONTENT_VALIDATION
5	JOHN	DOE	035678	C62664	4/18/2025	2025-04-21T16:09:50	Invalid CourseId. C62664 is not listed for this provider	400	Invalid Input File	Input data validation errors	CONTENT_VALIDATION

## E-Bill/Invoice Resources

FINRA's financial system, E-Bill, enables entitled course providers to view and pay invoices in Gateway. Invoices must be paid by credit card or Automated Clearing House (ACH).

Refer to the E-Bill User Guide for detailed instructions to add alerts for new and/or aged invoices.

**Key E-Bill links**

[E-Bill resource page](#)  
[E-Bill User Guide](#)  
[Billing and Collections FAQ](#)

Every successful submission will incur the \$3 per credit hour NASAA reporting/roster fee for each course included in the submission, even if the submission is a duplicate record. Partial reject files will generate invoices for the successful portion of the uploaded file. Uploading duplicate course completions will result in additional invoices. Refunds will not be processed for these charges.