

**The purpose of encrypting personally identifiable information (PPI) is to protect students' identities and be in compliance with FERPA laws.**

## **Encrypting a File and / or Email Message**

Encryption is defined as the conversion of something to code or symbols so that its contents cannot be understood if intercepted. There are two methods that can be used to encrypt a file.

### **Method 1: Using Adobe Acrobat DC**

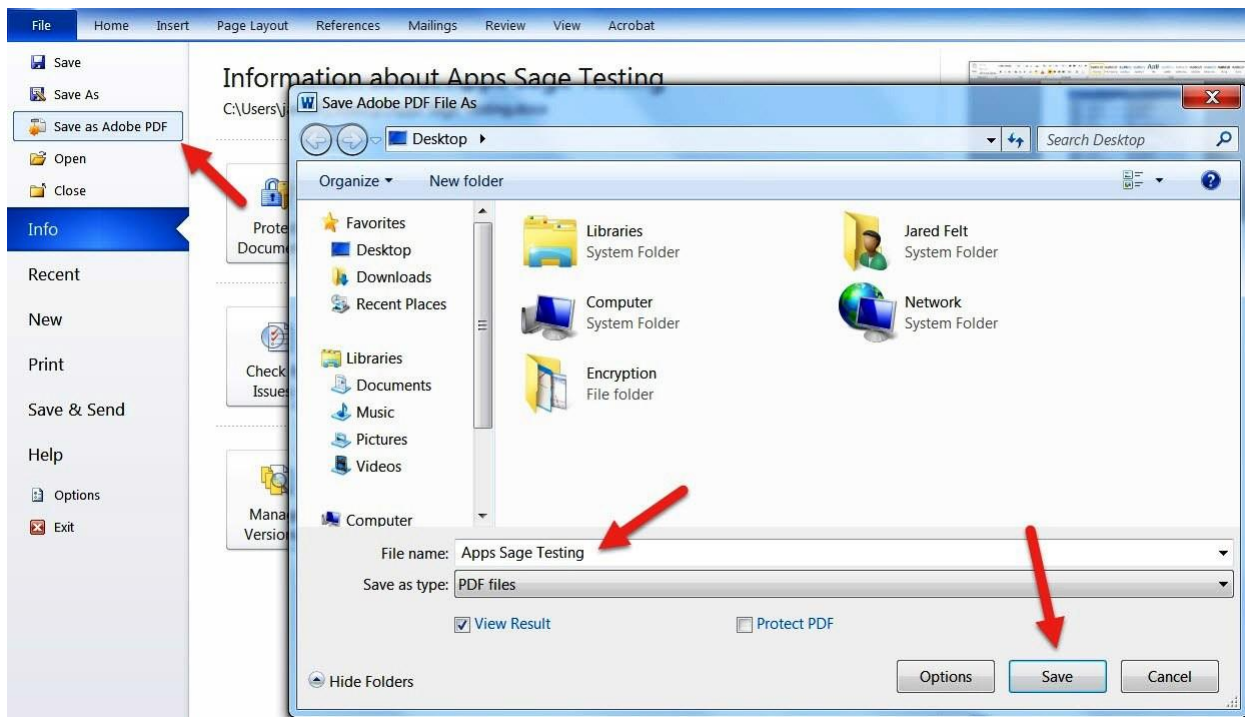
NOTE: Adobe Acrobat Professional software must be installed.

The recipient of the encrypted file will need Adobe Acrobat Reader DC or higher in order to open the file. Adobe Acrobat Reader DC or higher can be downloaded for free from Adobe's Website: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>

You'll first need to convert the documents with sensitive PII into PDF format if they are not already. Below we show you how to convert a Microsoft Word document into a PDF.

### Converting an MS Word document to a PDF

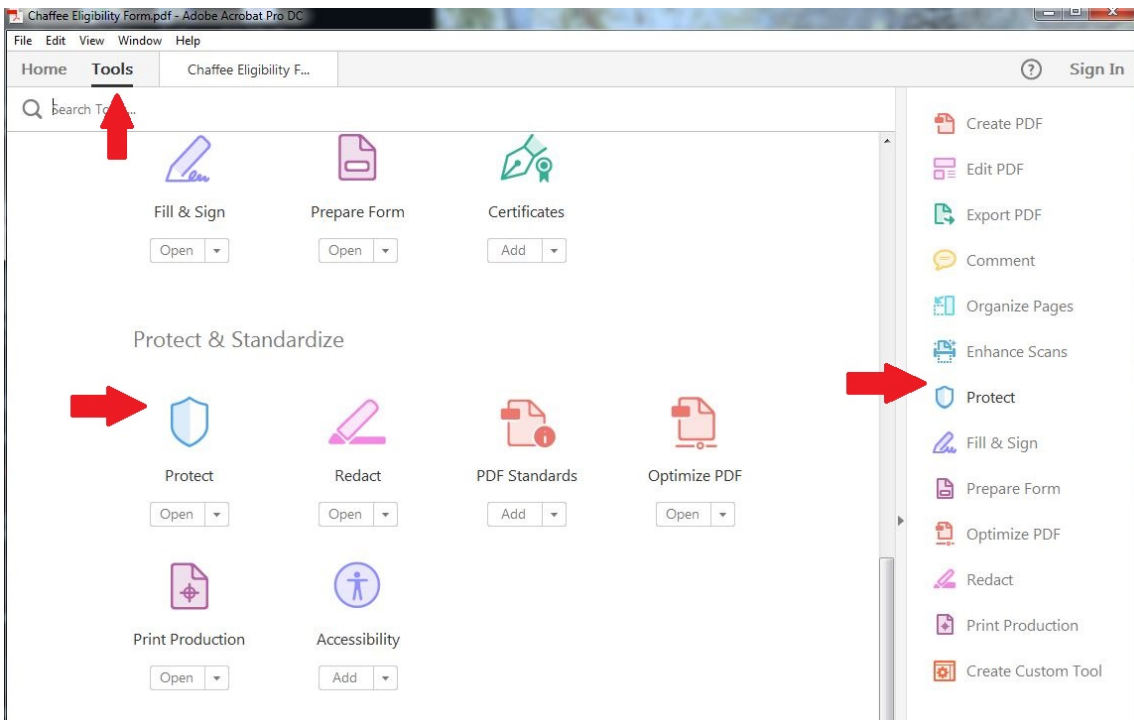
1. Open the MS Word document.
2. Go to File > Save as Adobe PDF (pictured below).



3. Open the converted PDF document in Adobe Acrobat DC.

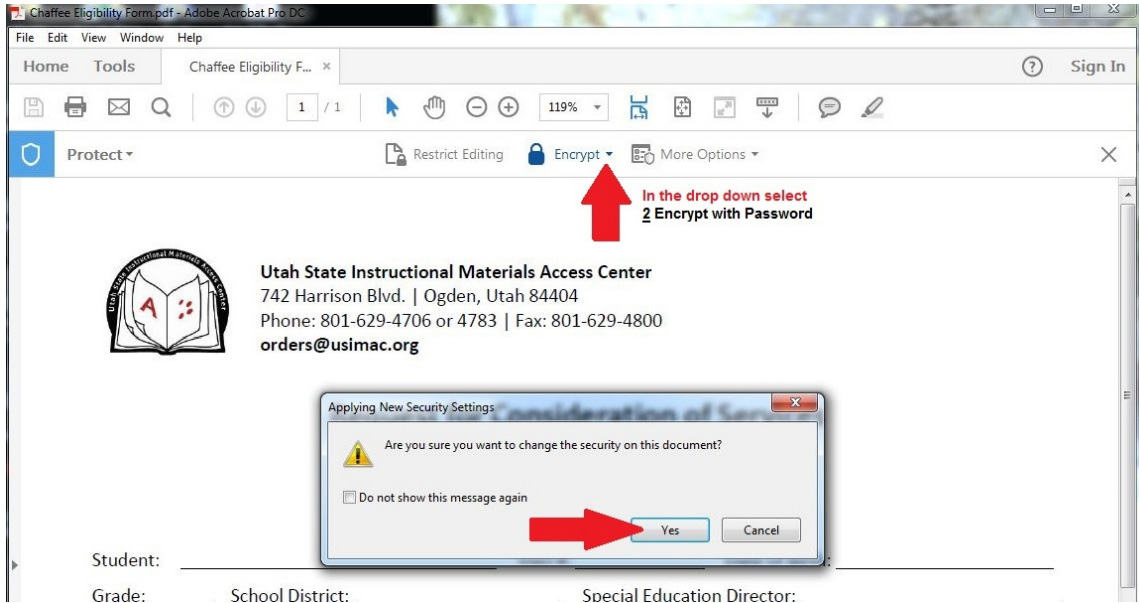
4. Select “Tools > Protection > Encrypt > Encrypt with Password” (pictured below in three parts).

### Part 1 of 3



5. Click **“Yes”** when prompted to change the security of the document (pictured below).

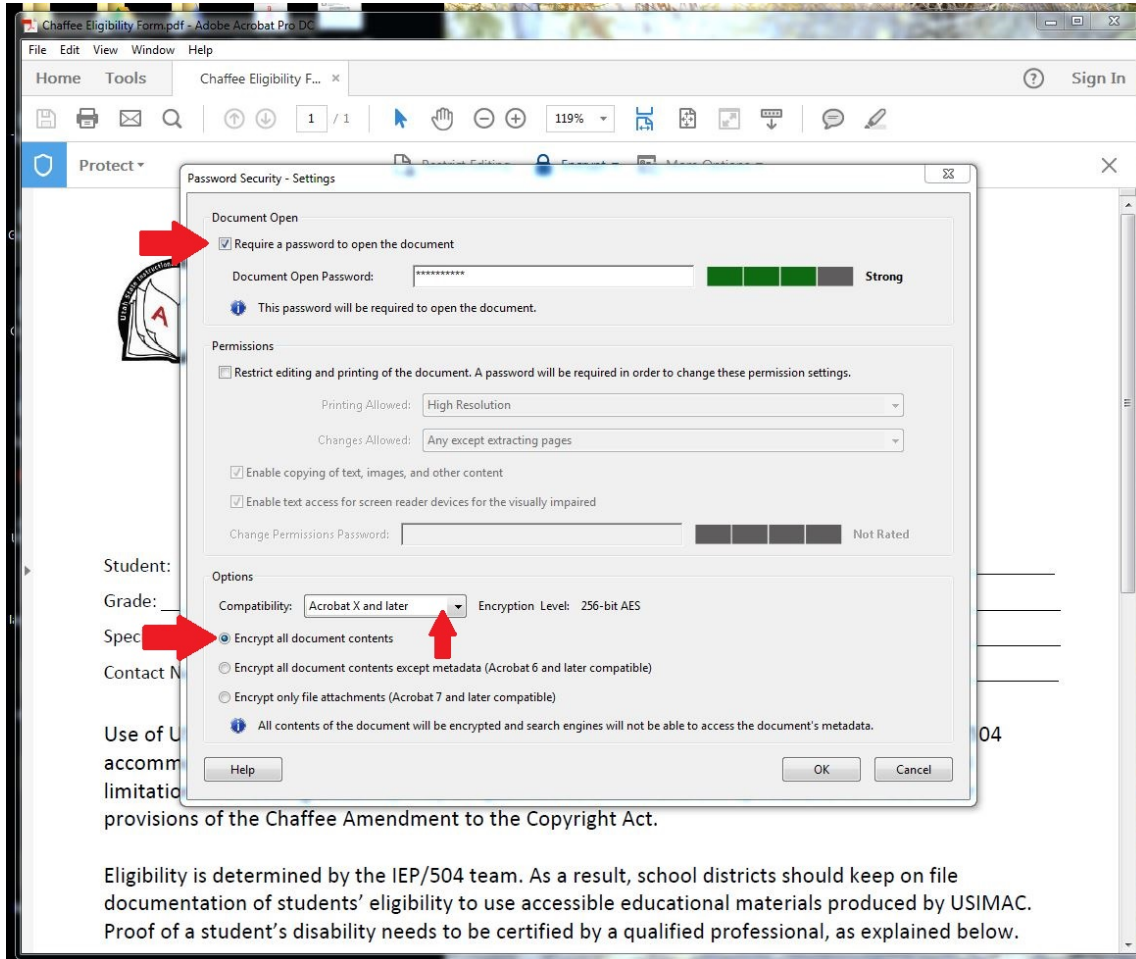
### Part 2 of 3



6. Check the box **“Require a password to open the document”**.
7. Enter a password such as U\$imac1617
8. Change the compatibility to Acrobat X and later. This will allow the document to use a stronger encryption level (pictured below).

Note: You can also set additional permissions to restrict editing and printing if needed.

### Part 3 of 3



9. You will be asked to confirm the “Document Open Password”. Retype the password that you entered on the previous screen, in the text box.

10. Save and close the document.

11. The new encrypted PDF file can now be sent to the recipient.

NOTE: In a **SEPARATE** medium (i.e. by phone or in person), provide the password to the recipient(s) of the email. Never include the password in the same email as the encrypted PDF.

**Method 2:** Using Google Drive to Send a Secure Link (if using this method, please share access with the following three e-mail addresses, **mandyk@usdb.org**, **amyy@usdb.org** and **orders@usimac.org**). This will allow either of us to access your documents in a timely manner.

NOTE: The recipient of the shared Google Drive document **MUST** access it by using their individual Google account.

### Sharing a Document Using Google Drive

1. Upload the document you would like to share, to your Google Drive account.
2. Follow the the link below for instructions on how to share a document or folder:

<https://support.google.com/drive/answer/2494822?hl=en>

3. Make sure that you only share with specific people that need to have access. Follow the link below for instructions on how to share permissions on Google Drive:

<https://support.google.com/drive/answer/2494886>

## What is PII

*Personally identifiable information, as defined in FERPA, includes, but is not limited to:*

- The student's name
- The name of the student's parent or other family members
- The address of the student or student's family
- A personal identifier, such as the student's Social Security Number, student number, or biometric record
- Other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name
- Other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty
- Information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes, knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

For more information on student privacy, you can visit the Privacy Technical Assistance Center website for the U.S. Department of Education.

<http://ptac.ed.gov>