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**OpenID Foundation**

**OpenID Connect**

**Self-Certification FAQ**

(Effective February 1, 2015)

**NOTICE: This OpenID Connect Self-certification Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is designed to assist in understanding the concept of, process for, and rules applicable to self-certification of conformance with conformance profiles of the OpenID Connect protocol. This FAQ is subject to change at any time by OpenID Foundation.**

1. **What is OpenID Connect self-certification?**

Self-certification is a formal declaration by an entity that its specific deployment of a product or service conforms to a specific conformance profile of the OpenID Connect protocol.

1. **Why are the benefits of certification?**

Entities looking to use or rely on a deployment of a product or service that implements a specific conformance profile of the OpenID Connect protocol often need some assurance that the deployment actually conforms to the profile. A certification can help provide that assurance.

1. **What certification profiles of OpenID Connect are available?**

The initial conformance profiles of OpenID Connect are posted at http://openid.net/certification/. For OPs, the initial profiles are Basic OP, Implicit OP, OP Publishing Config Info, and Dynamic OP. There are also corresponding RP profiles Basic RP, Implicit RP, RP Using Config Info, and Dynamic RP. The set of defined conformance profiles is likely to be expanded in the future.

1. **How does self-certification differ from third party certification?**

In the case of self-certification, the party implementing a deployment of a product or service conducts its own review to determine whether its deployment complies with a specific conformance profile, and upon successful completion of such review, issues its own declaration of compliance.

In the case of third-party certification, someone other than the entity deploying the product or service (usually a specially accredited and trustworthy auditor or assessor authorized to conduct such a review) reviews, tests, assesses, and verifies that the entity’s deployment of the product or service conforms to a specific conformance profile, and then issues a statement to the effect that it has conducted the appropriate assessment, and certifies that the entity’s deployment of the product or service conforms to the specified conformance profile.

In the case of self-certification, the trustworthiness of the certification is a function of the trustworthiness of the entity that is assessing itself. In the case of third-party certification, the trustworthiness of the certification is a function of the trustworthiness of the assessing entities/certifying entity as well as the trustworthiness of the entity requesting the assessment.

Self-certification is also easier, quicker, and significantly cheaper than third-party certification.

1. **Why is a self-certification trustworthy?**

The trustworthiness of a self-certification is partially a function of the trustworthiness of the entity that is certifying itself, discounted, perhaps, by the self-interest involved. When an entity makes a self-certification, it puts its reputation on the line. In addition, it undertakes potential liability for damages suffered by those who rely on its self-certification in the event that the self-certification is not accurate. And it also exposes itself to potential liability under government regulatory statutes and regulations, such as laws that prohibit unfair and deceptive business practices.

1. **What can be self-certified to the OpenID Foundation?**

Any online deployment of a product or service that implements a conformance profile of the OpenID Connect protocol is eligible for self-certification.

1. **What about a deployment is being certified?**

An entity that submits a self-certification to the OpenID Foundation is certifying that it has conducted appropriate testing of its deployment of a product or service, including the use of the OpenID Connect Software Test Suite, and that it has verified that its deployment conforms to one or more specific conformance profiles of the OpenID Connect protocol.

1. **Who can self-certify?**

Currently, only members of the OpenID Foundation are eligible to self-certify that their deployments of products or services conform to the OpenID Connect protocol. In the future, it is anticipated that non-members may also be eligible to self-certify.

1. **Do certifications expire?**

They do not expire. The date that the certification was performed is part of the certification.

1. **Who is operating the OpenID Connect self-certification program?**

The OpenID Connect self-certification program is operated by the OpenID Foundation. OpenID Connect is a trademark of the OpenID Foundation.

1. **Is payment of a fee required to self-certify?**

At present, the payment of a fee is not required. It is anticipated that a fee may be charged non-members seeking certifications in the future.

1. **Is the Certification of Conformance legally binding?**

Yes. By signing and submitting the Certification of Conformance, the organization is declaring both to the OpenID Foundation and to the general public the accuracy of the matters set forth in the Certification.

1. **How is a self-certification publicized?**

Self-certifications submitted to the OpenID Foundation self-certifications are publicized on one or more websites or registries of the OpenID Foundation’s choosing, which may include third-party websites and registries authorized by the OpenID Foundation.