



FINANCIAL AID DEVELOPMENTS

By Kim Slote, policy analyst

FISAP

The USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#) on July 1, 2014: Final FISAP Form, Instructions, Desk Reference, Technical Reference and eSignature Information for FISAP Due by Oct. 1, 2014. [The Fiscal Operations Report for 2013-2014 and Application to Participate for 2015-2016](#) was approved by the Office of Management and Budget and is now available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals Web site. The announcement provides information on updates and outlines changes to the form and instructions. New information regarding submitting electronic signatures for eCampus-Based Processes is also included.

A follow up [Electronic Announcement](#) was published by USDE July 21, 2014: eCampus-Based Application for the Fiscal Operations Report for 2013-2014 and Application to Participate for 2015-2016 Now Available. The application can be found on the [e-Campus Based Website](#). This announcement includes important reminders and instructions regarding completion of the FISAP.

FFELP VARIABLE INTEREST RATES

On July 1, 2014, the USDE published the Annual notice of variable interest rates on

FFELP Loans made prior to July 1, 2010. The interest rates provided are [Federal Stafford, Federal PLUS, Federal SLS and Federal Consolidation Interest Rate Calculations for the Period July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015](#). The attached [PDF](#) version of the charts contains the loan types, disbursement periods and current variable interest rates.

HEAL PROGRAM

An [Electronic Announcement](#) was published by the USDE July 2, 2014: HEAL Program Information – HEAL Program Transferred to U.S. Department of Education Effective July 1, 2014. Health Education Assistance Loan Program insured loans were made to eligible graduate students from fiscal year 1978 through fiscal year 1998. The loans were allotted for study of medicine, osteopathy, dentistry, veterinary medicine, optometry, podiatry, public health, pharmacy, chiropractic and programs in health administration and clinical psychology. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 directed the transfer of the HEAL Program from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to the U.S. Department of Education. Information in the announcement covers the HEAL Program Transfer Overview, Information on the Web and Contact



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Information. Links to HEAL Program Web pages are as follows:

- [HEAL Policy Memoranda](#)
- [Health Education Assistance Loan Information](#)
- [HEAL Forms](#)
- [HEAL Defaulted Borrower Information](#)
- [HEAL Interest Rates](#)
- [July 18, 2014, Electronic Announcement: HEAL Program Information-Maximum HEAL Program Interest Rates for Quarter Ending September 30, 2014.](#)

FFEL SPECIAL ALLOWANCE RATES

The USDE published a [SAP Memo](#) July 2, 2014: Federal Family Education Loan Program Special Allowance Rates for the Quarter Ending June 30, 2014. Attachments to the memo contain the quarterly special allowance rates computed for the quarter ending June 30, 2014. The bond equivalent rates of the 91-day Treasury Bills auctioned during the quarter are also provided. The average rates are below.

- Commercial Paper Rate .11 percent
- LIBOR Rate .15 percent
- Treasury Bill Rate .03 percent

REFERENCE GUIDES

Several updates were published by the USDE for the [2014-2015 Federal Student Aid Handbook](#). Links to the announcements with dates of publication are listed.

- [2014-2015 FSA Handbook Errata and Updates – May 30, 2014](#)
- [Volume 4 Processing Aid and Managing FSA Funds – July 3, 2014](#)
- [Volume 5 Withdrawals and the Return of Title IV Funds – July 9, 2014](#)
- [Volume 3 Calculating Awards & Packaging – July 11, 2014](#)
- [Volume 6 The Campus-Based Programs – July 11, 2014](#)
- [Errata and Updates – Volume 3 Calculating Awards & Packaging – July 30, 2014](#)

An [Electronic Announcement](#) was published by the USDE July 23, 2014: Availability of the New NSLDS Enrollment Spreadsheet Submittal Format and Updated NSLDS Enrollment Reporting Guide (July 2014). The new NSLDS Enrollment Spreadsheet Submittal Format is available on the [Federal Student Aid Download website](#). An [Instruction Guide](#) for the new NSLDS Enrollment Spreadsheet Submittal is also provided on the FSA Download website.



FINANCIAL AID DEVELOPMENTS

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The updated NSLDS Enrollment Reporting Guide for July 2014 is available on the [Information for Financial Aid Professionals](#) website with the [NSLDS Reference Materials](#).

NEW TFA SUPPORT CENTER

On July 7, 2014, the USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#): New TFA Support Center Telephone Number and E-Mail Address. A support center specifically for questions related to Two Factor Authentication is now available for authorized users of the Federal Student Aid systems. Questions about TFA tokens are to be directed to “CPS/SAIG Technical Support and the TFA Support Center” at 800-330-5947, option 2. TFA questions may also be submitted by e-mail to the TFA Support Center at TFASupport@ed.gov.

FAFSA

Dear Colleague Letter [GEN-14-12](#) was published by the USDE July 10, 2014: Announcement of “Designated Entities” Eligible to Receive FAFSA Filing Status Information Under the FAFSA Completion Initiative. The FAFSA Completion Initiative was recently implemented to help increase the number of students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid to apply for Federal, State and other student

financial aid. This DCL identifies two sets of designated entities that may receive FAFSA Filing Status Information from State Grant Agencies under the initiative. Additional information attached to the DCL includes:

- The revised SAIG Application;
- The March 14, 2014, letter that was provided to all state grant agencies announcing the revised SAIG Application; and
- The set of *Questions and Answers (Q&As)* that was provided to state grant agencies that explains the new *FAFSA Completion Initiative*.

An [Electronic Announcement](#) was published by the USDE July 18, 2014: FAFSA Filers Under the Age of 13. FAFSA Filers under the age of 13 who are otherwise eligible can apply for and receive Title IV, HEA program assistance. Very young applicants do require special procedures for filing and correcting the FAFSA per the provisions of the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998. In general, the COPPA prohibits all entities from conducting any business or communication electronically with a person under age 13. Beginning with the 2014-2015 FAFSA, the USDE has developed a process which allows FAFSA filers under the age of 13 to submit a paper *COPPA Compliant Special Handling*



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FAFSA for special processing. Important instructions and additional information institutions should consider are outlined in this announcement.

FEDERAL STUDENT AID DEADLINES

On July 11, 2014, the USDE published a [Federal Register](#) providing Deadline Dates for Reports and Other Records. Tables provided include deadline dates for the 2014-2015 Award Year related to the associated programs.

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Federal Pell Grant Program
- William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant Program

TECHNICAL

The USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#) July 11, 2014: EDEXpress 2014-2015, Release 3.0 Update Available to Resolve Issue with Originating PLUS/Grad PLUS Loans Created by Importing PLUS Application Acknowledgment (CRSP150P).

This notice only applies to PLUS and Grad PLUS records created as a result of importing a PLUS Application Acknowledgment file into the Direct Loan module of EDEXpress 2014-2015, Release 3.0. The issue identified is incorrectly preventing the origination of Federal Direct PLUS and Grad PLUS loan records created when importing a PLUS Application Acknowledgment (message class CRSP150P) into Release 3.0, in spite of all data elements required being present on the record. An updated program file has been posted to the Federal Student Aid Download Website at <https://www.fsadownload.ed.gov> to resolve the issue. Additional information and tips on loading the program file to your system is in the announcement.

An [Electronic Announcement](#) was published by the USDE July 24, 2014: 2015-2016 EDE Technical Reference (Summer Draft). This update contains revisions to the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) Record Layout and ISIR Cross-Reference Table. This draft cross-reference will become part of the Processing Codes section of the [2015-2016 Electronic Data Exchange Technical Reference](#) scheduled for posting in Oct. 2014. The reference is currently available on the Federal Student Aid Download website at <https://www.fsadownload.ed.gov>.



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CLERY ACT

Dear Colleague Letter [GEN-14-13](#) was published by the USDE July 14, 2014: Implementation of Changes to the Clery Act made by the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013. This letter contains important guidance to institutions regarding their responsibility to comply with Section 485 (f) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by VAWA, before final regulations take effect. The Clery Act with the VAWA Amendments is attached to the announcement. Links to previous guidance and questions and answers on Title IX and Sexual Violence are included, as well.

FOREIGN SCHOOLS

A [Foreign School Update](#) was published by the USDE July 23, 2014: Foreign School Information Web Page Updates – SAIG Enrollment Information and Forms. The USDE’s guidance and information for foreign schools is consolidated in one location on the [Foreign School Information Web page](#). The Student Aid Internet Gateway set up information has been updated, to include SAIG Enrollment forms and instructions. “SAIG Overview and Contact Information” is located in the first main box on the web page.

TPD DISCHARGE INFORMATION

On July 23, 2014, the USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#): TPD Discharge Information-SAIG Service for Total and Permanent Disability Discharge Loan Holder Notification File Delivery Now Available for FFEL Program Guaranty Agencies. As stated in a previous electronic announcement May 13, 2014, the TPD LHN file is the primary form of communication of TPD discharge information between the Nelnet TPD Servicer and loan holders. The delivery options have changed and all entities receiving the TPD LHN File via e-mail may now do so through the [Student Aid Internet Gateway](#). Instructions on how to enroll for the new TPD LHN service is provided in an attachment to the announcement. The current TPD LHN File Layout is also attached. Please note that later in 2014 the USDE plans to end the e-mail delivery option for the TPD LHN File. To continue receiving this information, entities must enroll for the new service through the SAIG Enrollment website.

DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT

The USDE published two Dear Colleague Letters July 24, 2014: DCL [GEN-14-14](#) Additional Guidance on the Supreme Court’s Ruling on the Defense of Marriage



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Act and Its Implications for the Title IV Student Financial Assistance Programs and DCL [GEN-14-15](#) Additional Guidance on the Supreme Court’s Ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act. DCL GEN-14-14 explains how the Supreme Court’s Windsor decision affects the eligibility of stepparents to receive Direct PLUS Loans. Information on the treatment of same-sex married borrowers under the Title IV income-driven repayment plans is also provided. In DCL GEN-14-15, information is provided on how the Supreme Court’s Windsor decision affects the eligibility of spouses of certain members of the armed forces to receive in-State tuition at public institutions.

FORMS

A [Federal Register](#) notice was published by the USDE July 24, 2014: Employment Certification for Public Service Loan Forgiveness. The USDE is soliciting comments on a proposed revision of the Employment Certification for Public Service Loan Forgiveness Form. Comments are due on or before Sep. 22, 2014. Contact information and instructions for submitting comments are in the notice.

TRAINING

Dear Colleague Letter [ANN-14-15](#) was published by the USDE July 25, 2014:

Online Training Module – Consumer Information. An online, self-paced training module on required consumer information disclosures is now available on the Federal Student Aid E-Training Web site at <http://fsatraining.info>. All components of consumer information are covered, except disclosures related to campus and fire safety (the Clery Act) and the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act. These topics will be covered in a subsequent training module to be announced in the future.

FEDERAL SCHOOL CODE LIST

The USDE published an [Electronic Announcement](#) July 31, 2014: 2014-2015 Federal School Code List of Participating Schools (August 2014). The updated [Federal School Code List](#) includes schools participating in the Title IV federal student aid programs and the unique codes assigned to them by the U. S. Department of Education. These codes are used by students to indicate which postsecondary schools will receive the processed application results from their Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Instructions are given in the announcement for updating your school’s FSC information.



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EXPERIMENTAL SITES INITIATIVE

On July 31, 2014, the USDE published a [Federal Register](#) notice: Invitation to Participate in the Experimental Sites Initiative. Institutions that participate in the student financial assistance programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, are invited to participate in one or more of the following experiments under the Experimental Sites Initiative.

- Prior Learning Assessment – Provides that a student's title IV cost of attendance (COA) can include costs incurred by the student for assessments of prior learning and that a student's Federal Pell Grant enrollment status may, with limitations, take into account a student's efforts to prepare materials for a prior learning assessment.
- Competency-Based Education – Provides flexibility in how institutions provide Federal student aid to students enrolled in self-paced competency-based education programs.
- Limited Direct Assessment – Provides flexibility for an institution to provide a mix of direct assessment coursework and credit or clock hour coursework in the same program.

- Federal Work Study (FWS) for Near-Peer Counseling – Provides flexibility for institutions to compensate FWS students, who are employed as "near-peer" counselors, to high school students solely with Federal funds.

Letters of application must be received by the USDE no later than Sep. 29, 2014, for an institution to receive priority consideration for participation in the experiment. Instructions on how to apply are given in the Federal Register, along with more detailed information on each experiment.