

## Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF): Eligibility and Action Plan

If you decide to work in public service, you may be eligible for federal student loan forgiveness after 10 years of full-time work. The information below outlines the qualifying components of the PSLF program, and a timeline of action to enter PSLF is included on page 52.

### Five steps to ensure eligibility for Public Service Loan Forgiveness

- Step 1:** Request a qualifying repayment plan for your eligible loans (re-request annually)  
**Step 2:** If necessary, consolidate eligible FFEL, LDS, and Perkins Loans into a Direct Consolidation Loan  
**Step 3:** Submit an Employment Certification Form (ECF) to FedLoan Servicing (re-submit annually)  
**Step 4:** Make 120 qualifying payments while completing eligible work  
**Step 5:** Upon completion of requirements, apply with FedLoan Servicing for the actual forgiveness

### Checklist for Public Service Loan Forgiveness

#### ELIGIBLE LOANS:

Only the following loan types are eligible:

- Direct Loans (Subsidized and Unsubsidized)
- Direct PLUS and parent PLUS Loans
- Direct Consolidation Loans
- Other federal student loans\* can be made eligible by including them in a Direct Consolidation Loan\*\*

\* FFEL Stafford, Grad PLUS, Federal Consolidation, Perkins, LDS, and certain other FFEL Loans

\*\* For more information, visit [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov)

NOTE: Defaulted loans, private loans, and any consolidation loan containing a spousal consolidation loan are not eligible

#### QUALIFYING PAYMENTS

While simultaneously working in a qualifying public service position, you must make 120 on-time and scheduled payments\* under a qualifying repayment plan. The following plans qualify:

- Income-Based Repayment (IBR)
- Pay As You Earn (PAYE)
- Revised Pay As You Earn (REPAYE)
- Income-Contingent Repayment (ICR)
- Standard Repayment plan or a repayment plan where the monthly amount paid is not less than the monthly amount required under the 10-year Standard Repayment plan

\*Payments do not have to be consecutive, allowing for changes in employers and periods of non-work

#### QUALIFYING WORK

You must be employed full time\* for a total of 10 years in a public service position.

For the work to be considered public service, your employer will be one of the following:

- Nonprofit tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization (includes many medical schools and residency programs)
- Federal, state, local, or tribal government organization, agency, or entity
- Military service
- Public service organization—a private organization providing a public service

Submit questions about eligible employers to FedLoan Servicing ([www.myfedloan.org](http://www.myfedloan.org)). They are the servicer that oversees PSLF.

\* Full-time work is considered 30 hours per week or the number of hours the employer considers full time

**This checklist is a general guideline only.**

For more information regarding eligibility, visit [www.studentaid.ed.gov/publicservice](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/publicservice).

## Action Plan: Entering PSLF

### For Every PSLF Applicant:

**ACTION 1:** The first step in obtaining PSLF is to **request the income-driven repayment plan** that offers you the lowest monthly payment. This action can be initiated online prior to graduation ([www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov)). Final documents needed to complete entry into the plan cannot be submitted until approximately 90 days before the end of your grace period. Thus, before Action 1 is complete, one or more of the items below will also be completed.

### If You Have FFEL or Perkins Loans\*:

**ACTION 2:** After separating from school, you will **apply to consolidate your FFEL/Perkins Loans** ([www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov)), indicate your interest in PSLF, and select FedLoan Servicing as your servicer. (Direct Loans do not need to be consolidated; they are eligible for PSLF as is.) You may also want to **establish an online account** with FedLoan Servicing to track your consolidation application.

*NOTE: Payments made prior to a consolidation will not count toward PSLF. If you want to experience your full grace period and then consolidate, request processing to begin a month or two before grace is over (so that payments aren't due prior to the consolidation being disbursed). Processing of a consolidation takes 30–60 days.*

**ACTION 3:** When you begin full-time work in your residency program, you should **submit an Employment Certification Form (ECF) to FedLoan Servicing**. At this point, all your existing Direct Loans will be transferred to FedLoan Servicing (if the loans aren't already there). (<https://myfedloan.org/documents/repayment/fd/pslf-ecf.pdf>)

*NOTE: Processing of the ECF, including the transfer of loans, may take 30–45 days.*

**ACTION 4\*\*:** **Work toward PSLF by making your required payments** to FedLoan Servicing. It is highly recommended that you **use your online account with FedLoan Servicing** to track payments and enroll in Direct Debit to ensure on-time payments.

### If You Have Only Direct Loans:

**ACTION 2:** When you begin full-time work in your residency program, you should submit **an Employment Certification Form (ECF) to FedLoan Servicing**. At this point, all your existing Direct Loans will be transferred to FedLoan Servicing (if they are not already there). (<https://myfedloan.org/documents/repayment/fd/pslf-ecf.pdf>)

*NOTE: Processing of the ECF, including the transfer of loans, may take 30–45 days.*

**ACTION 3\*\*:** **Work toward PSLF by making your required payments** to FedLoan Servicing. It is highly recommended that you **establish an online account with FedLoan Servicing** to track payments and **enroll in Direct Debit** to ensure on-time payments.

\* For more information on these loans, see the lenders section on page 7.

\*\* Reminder: Each year, you will need to update your income and family size information with FedLoan Servicing so they can accurately calculate future monthly payments. It is also recommended that you annually submit an updated Employment Certification Form (ECF) to FedLoan Servicing.