

You might be eligible for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program

Dear Colleague:

Welcome to **Western Washington University**. As you may know, working for our institution means you can join a federal program that could forgive your federal student loans. That’s because the U.S. Department of Education (ED) considers us a qualifying employer for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. Through this program, ED can forgive your student loan debt after 10 years of making payments on your federal student loans while working for a state agency or other qualifying public sector employer (<https://studentaid.gov/pslf/employer-search>).

If you haven’t signed up for PSLF yet, you still can. One important step is working with our institution’s PSLF contact each year to submit a PSLF form. Although the path to loan forgiveness can seem complicated, you could save thousands on your student loans.

To qualify for PSLF, you must:



Have Federal Direct loans. This includes Direct Subsidized, Direct Unsubsidized, Direct Consolidation, and Direct Grad PLUS loans. If you have Perkins or FFEL loans, you must consolidate them into a Direct Consolidation loan. If you have Direct Parent PLUS loans, you may also need to consolidate. **If you consolidate between now and April 30, 2024, you will not lose PSLF qualifying payment credit due to the IDR Account Adjustment**

- **Time-sensitive tip:** Certain periods you spent in forbearance, deferment or non-qualifying repayment plans may count towards PSLF due to the IDR Account Adjustment. **Action MAY be needed before April 30, 2024, for you to benefit.** Visit the payment adjustment page to learn more (<https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/idr-account-adjustment>).



Work full time for one or more public employers. ED defines “full time” as working an average of 30 hours per week. This includes multiple part-time public jobs where your combined work averages 30 hours per week. If you are part-time faculty at an institution of higher education, HR will multiply your in-class teaching hours by 3.35 to calculate your hours worked.



Enroll in an Income-Driven Repayment (IDR) Plan. These include Income-Based Repayment (IBR), Pay As You Earn (PAYE), Saving on A Valuable Education (SAVE, previously REPAYE) and Income-Contingent Repayment (ICR). Payments made on the 10-year Standard Repayment plan are also eligible for the PSLF program.



Make 120 qualifying payments. Your payments do not need to be consecutive. However, you must be employed full time for a public employer at the time you apply for PSLF, and during the month you make a payment for that payment to qualify. **After you make 120 qualifying payments and apply for PSLF, ED will forgive your remaining loan balance. Student loan amounts forgiven under PSLF are not considered income for tax purposes.**

Check out these resources on the Student Loan Advocate’s PSLF page to help you get started: <https://wsac.wa.gov/PSLF>

✓ Quick PSLF Fact Sheet

✓ Steps to Apply for PSLF

✓ PSLF Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Have questions or need help? Submit a question to the Washington Student Loan Advocate:
<https://studentcomplaints.wa.gov>

Certify your employment for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program — or you can opt out of the PSLF Employment Certification Program

To complete a Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) form and submit an employment certification request to our institution’s PSLF contact, please use the PSLF Help Tool (<https://studentaid.gov/pslf/>). For your convenience, our institution’s information is listed below:

Employer Identification Number (EIN): **91-6000562**
PSLF contact email: **HR@wwu.edu**

If you have worked for multiple qualifying employers, you need to submit a separate PSLF form for each employer. If you have worked for one qualifying employer but had a break in service, you will need to submit a separate PSLF form for each period of employment. You may use the PSLF Washington state agency directory to identify the correct EIN and email address for other qualifying Washington state agencies, including public higher education institutions (https://ofm.wa.gov/PSLF_Directory).

Once our institution’s PSLF contact has digitally signed (via DocuSign) your forms through the PSLF Help Tool, our contact will submit it directly to the PSLF servicer (MOHELA) for processing. It may take up to 90 business days for MOHELA to process these forms. You can check the status of your PSLF form on MOHELA’s PSLF Form Status page (<https://www.mohela.com/DL/secure/borrower/PSLF/PSLFINformation.aspx#FormStatus>). If MOHELA is not your current servicer, submitting a PSLF form will initiate a loan transfer from your current servicer to MOHELA. Loan transfers may take an additional 90 business days.

Remember to apply for PSLF before you leave public service, or you will lose eligibility. To ensure you’re on the right track, you should certify your employment annually and when you change employers. That way, you can keep track of your progress and be sure your payments count. If MOHELA is your current servicer, you may create a MOHELA account to check on your qualifying payment count using their PSLF Payment Tracker tool (<https://www.mohela.com/DL/secure/borrower/PSLF/PSLFTTracker.aspx>).

Opt out of the PSLF Employment Certification Program:

You are not required to participate in the PSLF program. However, we are required to give you information about the program, regardless of if you opt out of the employment certification process.

If you do not opt out of this process, you may receive a manual PSLF form with the employer sections completed for you to submit to MOHELA, either on an annual basis (if you have previously requested PSLF employment certification) and/or within 60 days of separation of employment, as required by RCW 41.04.045 (<https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=41.04.045>).

Optional step: You may sign and date this form and return it to the PSLF contact email address listed above to opt out of the PSLF employment certification process. If you choose to do this, you may opt back in at any time by submitting a PSLF form to our institution’s PSLF contact.

I would like to opt out of the PSLF Employment Certification Program.

Name: _____

Date: _____