

Every American, no matter what we look like or where we come from, deserves the opportunity to create a better life for ourselves and our families. And for millions of us, going to college was supposed to allow us the ability to decide our futures, not decades of debt.

For years, NEA members have advocated together in favor of [canceling college debt](#) to help fix the educator shortage. Now, because of the Biden Administration's life-changing actions, student loans taken out by [millions of borrowers](#) are being substantially reduced, forgiven, or even canceled outright. This has a ripple effect, impacting not only the borrowers themselves, but parents and grandparents who are helping them repay their debts and the loved ones who depend on them financially.

But the fight is not over, and NEA remains committed to helping you take advantage of these opportunities.

PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS (PSLF)

Due to efforts by the Biden Administration, over 360,000 educators and public service workers have received \$24 billion in student loan forgiveness through the Limited PSLF Waiver. While the Limited Waiver expired on October 31, 2022, **PSLF is still here for educators and other public service workers**. Significant permanent improvements have been made to the program so that more educators can receive the debt forgiveness they were promised.

What is PSLF?

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness program was created in 2007 to forgive the remaining balance of federal student debt for public service workers, including teachers, higher education faculty, and education support professionals, who provide 10 years of public service while making 120 monthly payments on their federal student loans.

However, when the first borrowers became eligible for forgiveness, the Trump Administration prioritized profits for big banks over keeping the promise of PSLF. They denied over 90 percent of applications, forcing public service workers to continue making payments on student loans that should have been forgiven.

After listening to the voices of educators, the Biden Administration has overhauled the program to permanently fix a number of technicalities, allowing hundreds of thousands of educators to become eligible for loan forgiveness sooner, or even immediately.

Who is eligible for PSLF?

You must be employed full-time (30 hours or more per week) by a public service employer, which includes all public-school districts and public and non-profit higher education institutions.

This includes all educators:

- Teachers
- Education Support Professionals
- Specialized Instructional Support Personnel
- Higher Education Faculty, Including Adjunct/Contingent

How to apply for PSLF?

- If you have a Direct Loan, believe you have made 120 payments, and have applied for PSLF, you should receive automatic forgiveness or updates about your payment count soon.
- If you have a Direct Loan and have NOT applied for PSLF, visit studentaid.gov/PSLF to access the U.S. Department of Education's PSLF Help Tool to fill out your PSLF application.
 - ▶ If you have worked for multiple public service employers since October 2007, you will need to file an application for every single employer.
 - ▶ After completing the PSLF Help Tool, you will need to get your employer(s)'s [signature](#) on each completed form, and submit the application(s) to MOHELA, the [student loan servicer](#) that manages the PSLF program.
- If you have a FFEL or Perkins loan, you must first [consolidate into a Direct Loan](#), then apply for PSLF. You will need to **consolidate before May 1, 2023**, to take advantage of the Department of Education's [one-time account adjustment](#), which will credit any payments made on these loans for the purposes of PSLF.
 - ▶ Unsure what type of student loan you have? You can find out easily by logging onto studentaid.gov with your FSA ID and visiting at your aid summary page.
- If you are not currently on an [income-driven repayment plan](#) (which is required for PSLF), apply for one before the payment pause ends. You may qualify for a \$0 monthly payment!
 - ▶ Note, during the student debt repayment pause, all months from the pause count toward PSLF, thus making payments is not necessary. However, enrolling in an IDR plan as soon as possible will ensure you stay on track to receive PSLF, once payments do resume.

Every individual should also go to studentaid.gov and login with your Federal Student Aid ID (or create one if you do not have one) to make sure your contact information is up to date. The Department of Education uses this as their primary method of contact to reach you about the progress of your PSLF application.

PRESIDENT BIDEN'S STUDENT DEBT RELIEF PLAN

Under the White House's student debt cancellation plan, most individuals, including current students, are **eligible for up to \$20,000 in federal student debt relief**.

However, while more than 26 million borrowers have applied for this relief, they are prevented from receiving it due to the rulings of [Trump-appointed judges in several cases](#). As of November 2022, the U.S. Department of Education has been blocked from proceeding with its cancellation program and currently cannot accept applications. The Biden Administration is continuing to defend against those legal attacks.

NEA will not stop advocating for our educators until they get the debt relief they deserve. As the appeals process proceeds, we will update our members on any new developments, including the resumption of the program.

THE NEA STUDENT DEBT NAVIGATOR – POWERED BY SAVI

NEA has partnered with a company called Savi to offer an online student debt navigator tool, free for one year for NEA members.

Visit neamb.com/Savi to receive personalized advice from student debt experts and gain access to Savi's e-filing function, which helps eliminate the common mistakes that bar many applicants from receiving student loan forgiveness.