

EXCLUSIVE WEBINAR SERIES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

# Public Service Loan Forgiveness

Latest Rules, Eligibility, & Strategies for Success

*March 12, 2026*

# Student loan guidance when it matters most

**Horace Mann's Student Loan Solutions program** gives educators no-cost access to the tools and resources they need to take control of their debt.

- Navigate and apply for often-complex forgiveness programs
- Find savings on monthly payments
- Make college funding decisions
- Access to Loan Coaches for 1:1 assistance



**Jeni Burckart, Tuition.io**  
**VP Healthcare & Workforce Services**

- Lead student loan education and support initiatives for borrowers
- 7+ years of experience helping borrowers navigate complex financial and educational systems
- I'm here to empower borrowers with effective strategies to crush their student loan debt

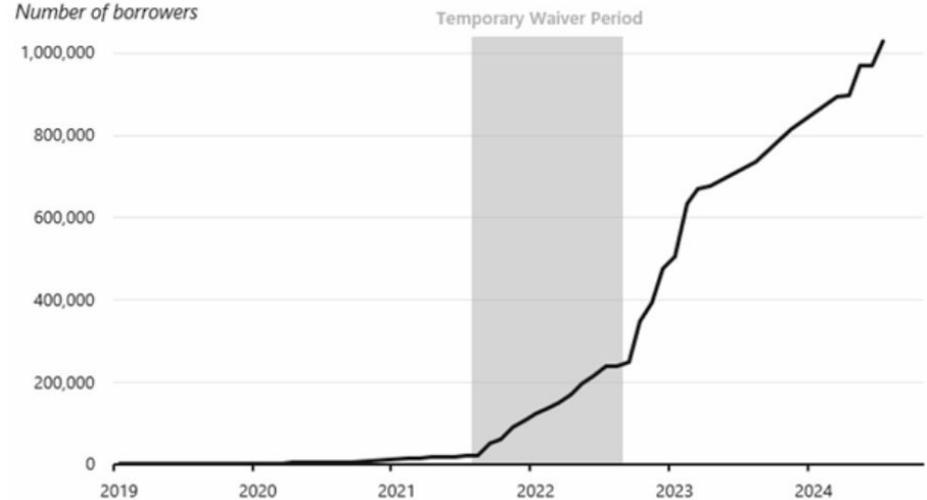
# Learning Objectives

- 1) Understand how Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) works
- 2) Choose the right repayment plan for your situation
- 3) Take the steps to get on track for PSLF and stay on track
- 4) Decide when you may need to leave the SAVE plan
- 5) Understand the impact of the Budget Reconciliation Act passed 7/4/25
- 6) Avoid the most common PSLF pitfalls that delay forgiveness or result in application denials
- 7) Discuss the decision between Teacher Loan Forgiveness and PSLF
- 8) FAQ & ask me anything Q&A

# PSLF has improved & borrowers are succeeding

- >1.1 million public service workers have had **\$85.5Bn forgiven** under PSLF
- The average forgiveness is over \$74,000 per borrower
- Because of the limited waiver, one time account adjustments, and long term PSLF program changes borrowers are succeeding

Figure 1. Total Number of Borrowers with Debt Approved for Discharge through Public Service Loan Forgiveness



Council of Economic Advisers

Sources: Department of Education; Federal Student Aid; CEA calculations.

Note: Data represents the cumulative number of borrowers with processed PSLF, TEPSLF, and waiver discharges.

As of October 16, 2024 at 8:30 am.

# What is Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)?

PSLF is a federal student loan forgiveness program that began on **October 1, 2007**

PSLF forgives the entire remaining balance of **qualifying loans** tax free, after 120 months of **qualifying payments** while working for a **qualifying public service employer**

# The three 'rights' of PSLF eligibility

- 1) **Right Employment:** Work 30+ h/wk for a qualifying employer
  - Qualifying employers include 501(c)3 non-profit organizations, government, and tribal organizations
- 2) **Right Loans:** Federal Direct Loans
  - Private loans are never eligible and can't be made eligible
- 3) **Right Repayment Plan:** Income-Driven Repayment (IDR) plans
  - What to do if you're on the blocked SAVE plan
  - PAYE, IBR, ICR

# Determining if your employment is eligible

- 1) If you have Tuition.io it's easy, just ask us.
- 2) If you're not eligible for Tuition.io use the Dept of Ed PSLF Help Tool <https://studentaid.gov/pslf/>
  - a. You'll need your Employer's FEIN from your W-2

**Search for Employer** ⓘ

Employer Identification Number (EIN)

How do I find my EIN?

This is my current employer

Employment Start Date  To Employment End Date

39-0813416 Eligible ⓘ

**GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER INC**  
1910 SOUTH AVE. LA CROSSE, WI 54601-5467 US

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39-0813416 Eligible ⓘ

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1910 SOUTH AVE. LA CROSSE, WI 54601 US

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39-0813416 Eligible ⓘ

**GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN MEDICAL FDTN, INC**  
1910 SOUTH AVE. LA CROSSE, WI 54601 US

# Get on track for PSLF

## STEP 1

Make sure you  
have Direct  
Loans

## STEP 2

Submit PSLF forms  
for all qualifying  
employers since  
10/01/07

## STEP 3

Switch to an  
income-driven  
repayment plan  
*(if you aren't on one already)*

# STEP 1: Make sure you have the right loan type

- ✓ If you have all Direct Loans that were borrowed for your own education, ***you're on track and can skip to step 2.***
- ✓ Certain non-direct federal loans, including FFEL loans and Perkins loans, can be made eligible for PSLF if these loans are **consolidated into a federal Direct Consolidation Loan.**
- ✓ **Parent PLUS** loan borrowers need to have consolidated their loans **before 7/1/2026** to qualify for PSLF. **The Consolidation Application deadline is 4/1/2026.**
- ✓ Consolidation for ineligible loan types is an option to consider, but it's not right for all borrowers.

**The decision to consolidate is highly personalized**

## STEP 1a: Consolidating ineligible loan types

**Complete the Direct Consolidation Loan application online at**  
<https://studentaid.gov/loan-consolidation/>

➤ **Remember:** *only consolidate if you have an ineligible federal loan type*

- FFEL
- Parent PLUS
- Perkins

# Budget Reconciliation Changes Consolidation

Any loans consolidated after 7/1/2026, will only be eligible for the Repayment Assistance Plan (RAP) and the new standard plan

- Only RAP will qualify for PSLF

Parent PLUS borrowers **MUST** consolidate their existing loans before 7/1/2026 or lose access to PSLF

- **Application must be submitted by 4/1/26**
- Parent PLUS loans do not qualify for RAP

- Parent PLUS loans **MUST** consolidate before 7/1/2026 or lose access to PSLF indefinitely.
- New Parent PLUS loans after 7/1/26 or borrowers with unconsolidated Parent PLUS loan(s) will **NOT be eligible for PSLF** after 7/1/2026

## STEP 2: Submit your PSLF form(s)

### **Submit a PSLF form for all qualifying full-time employment since 10/01/07**

- ✓ You will need a unique form for each unique employer
- ✓ If you've left an employer, and come back you will need to complete multiple forms to capture all your employment
- ✓ Counts are always looking back and giving you credit for payments you've already made

## **STEP 2, option 1:** complete form on Tuition.io

### **It will take you <5 minutes**

- 1) Register and login to your Tuition.io account
- 2) Select the PSLF card on your dashboard
- 3) Complete a "new form" for submission. You will be asked to:
  - a. Provide your address & other basic identifying information
  - b. Select if you've made 120 payments or fewer than 120

### **Provide your form to your school administration to validate**

- If you have the email address for the school where you work, you can send it through the TIO platform
- Or, print the form and provide to your administrator to complete it

## STEP 2, option 2: complete form on Studentaid.gov

### You can use the Dept of Education PSLF Help Tool

- 1) Go to <https://studentaid.gov/pslf/> & log in to your federal student aid account
- 2) Once logged in you'll need to add your employer
  - To do this you'll need your employer's FEIN and select them from the search list
- 3) You'll also need to enter:
  - Employment start & end dates
  - Full time or Part-time status
  - Avg weekly hours worked
- 4) You'll need your employer's email address to send so they to sign

## **STEP 3:** Choose an Income-Driven Repayment (IDR) Plan

### **There are three active income-driven repayment plans (IDR)**

- Income-Based Repayment (IBR): 10 or 15% of discretionary income
- Pay As You Earn (PAYE): 10% of discretionary income
- Income-Contingent Repayment (ICR): 20% of discretionary income

### **PAYE**

- This plan requires a partial financial hardship
- Payments are capped at the 10-year Standard Repayment Plan amount

### **ICR & IBR**

- These plans don't require a partial financial hardship
- Payments under ICR won't exceed the payment under a 12-year standard repayment term, adjusted based on income; Payments on IBR are capped at the 10-Year Standard Repayment plan amount

## Step 3a: Estimate your payments to choose

### Estimate your monthly payments

- Use the federal student aid simulator  
<https://studentaid.gov/loan-simulator/>
- Use the PSLF calculator or strategy finder tool in your Tuition.io account
- You'll need to provide information about your income and household size

**\*\*Choose the income-driven repayment plan with the lowest monthly payment to maximize your forgiveness\*\***

# SAVE Plan: No PSLF progress + interest 8/1/25

## SAVE Plan forbearance does not affect your credit score

- SAVE participants were in 0% interest forbearance through August 2025, but are not currently making progress towards PSLF
- **As of 8/1/2025 SAVE forbearance is accumulating interest**
- Borrowers in the SAVE plan will not be placed into default because of the SAVE forbearance

## Switch plans to continue PSLF progress

- Switch to a different IDR plan to continue making progress towards PSLF
- You can buy back the months of SAVE forbearance once you reach 120 qualifying months of employment
- DOE recently announced that they will automatically switch all SAVE borrowers to an 'available' repayment plan sometime in the near future. Best practice to explore your options now.

## STEP 3b: How to apply for an IDR plan

### Complete the income-driven repayment plan request form

- <https://studentaid.gov/idr>
- This typically takes about 5 minutes to complete
- You will need to either link to the IRS (which will make annual renewals easy) or provide other proof of your income
- If your income has not significantly decreased since your most recent tax return, you will need to provide your most recent tax return
- If your income has significantly decreased since your most recent tax return, you can provide alternative proof of income, such as a paystub

**The Department of Education had over 730,000 IDR application backlog as of 12/31/25 so don't delay. Reviews have long wait times.**

# Budget Reconciliation Impact on PSLF

7/4/25: Budget Reconciliation Bill was signed into law

- **Unchanged:** borrowers still need to switch out of SAVE and can apply for any of the 3 IDR plans (PAYE, IBR, ICR)
- **Unchanged:** PSLF program still available with no significant changes
- **Update:** PAYE & ICR will be phased out between July 2026-2028. Borrowers on either of those repayment plans will have the option to participate in the IBR plan or RAP(not Parent PLUS)
- **Update:** After July 1 2026, Parent PLUS loans that haven't been consolidated and enrolled in an IDR plan won't be able to access any income-driven repayment plan including RAP
  - **Parent PLUS borrowers need to consolidate now & repay under ICR to access PSLF.** After 1 payment is made on ICR, borrowers have the option to switch to IBR if it's cheaper.

# Repayment Assistance Plan (RAP) Details

Replaces all income-driven plans except IBR starting in July 2026

- A tiered system based on AGI - \$50/mo for each dependent child.
- Always a minimum payment of at least \$10/mo
- Forgiveness is extended to 30 years

Adjusted Gross Income	Base Annual Payment (Divide By 12 For Monthly Payment)*
Up to \$10,000	\$120
\$10,001-\$20,000	1% of AGI
\$20,001-\$30,000	2% of AGI
\$30,001-\$40,000	3% of AGI
\$40,001-\$50,000	4% of AGI
\$50,001-\$60,000	5% of AGI
\$60,001-\$70,000	6% of AGI
\$70,001-\$80,000	7% of AGI
\$80,001-\$90,000	8% of AGI
\$90,001-\$100,000	9% of AGI
\$100,001+	10% of AGI

# PSLF Buyback opportunity

Available once you have **worked all 120 months of qualifying employment**

- Receive PSLF credit for periods of ineligible **deferment** or **forbearance** during eligible employment.
- You'll have to make a **lump sum payment** at the end of the program to “buy back” the missed months.
- The SAVE forbearance is a very common reason borrowers are applying for this. Those not yet at 120 payments will likely need to leverage this in the future.
- To request the buyback, you will need to submit a PSLF reconsideration request: <https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/pslf-reconsideration>

**The Department of Education has over 83,000 buyback requests backlogged as of 12/31/25, so note reviews are taking awhile.**

# PSLF Buyback Opportunity - Examples Continued



## Jane

- Jane has been working for a **501c3 non profit employer** for **120 months**. She has been on *SAVE forbearance* for *17 months* and has **103 qualifying payments** towards PSLF.
- Jane is currently eligible to complete a buyback application.
- She should submit her final PSLF form that certifies that she has 120 months of qualifying employment.
- Once that application has been processed, she can submit her buyback application and wait for that application to process and be sent the lump sum invoice.
- Once the invoice is received, Jane has 90 days to make the lump sum payment to redeem those ineligible months of forbearance and receive forgiveness on the remaining balance of her loans.

# PSLF Buyback Opportunity - Examples



## Paul

- Paul has been working for a **public school** for **10 years**. He is on the *Income Based repayment plan* and has **110 qualifying payments** on his eligible loans.
- Paul has 10 months of forbearance on his loans from 2018 during a time when he couldn't afford his payments; those months are not eligible for forgiveness.
- Paul is able to buy back those months of forbearance using the buyback program.
- Paul will submit his final PSLF form and allow that to process. Once the PSLF form is processed, he can submit the buyback request using the same process Jane used.

# Stay on track for PSLF!

**STEP 1:** Keep working full-time (at least 30 hrs / week) for a qualifying employer

**STEP 2:** Renew your income-driven repayment plan annually

- You should also renew any time you have a decrease in income or increase to your family size <https://studentaid.gov/idr/>

**STEP 3:** Submit your PSLF form annually to track your payment progress

**STEP 4:** Make all 120 qualifying payments and submit your final PSLF form

# Avoid these common PSLF pitfalls

## 1) **Don't refinance federal debt!**

- It will make your loans forever ineligible for PSLF

## 2) **Don't make payments on the wrong repayment plan**

- You won't make new progress toward PSLF

## 3) **Don't wait to get on track**

- It's wasted time & money

## 4) **Don't wait to submit your PSLF forms until the 10 years is up**

- Find count errors early, so your forgiveness isn't delayed

# What about Teacher Loan Forgiveness?

**Forgives either \$5,000 or \$17,500 after 5 years of teaching at a low-income school district**

## Very specific eligibility requirements

- You must teach full-time for 5 complete & consecutive years
- Your school must be low income <https://studentaid.gov/tcli>
- You must be a 'highly qualified teacher'

## Forgiveness details

- \$17,500 for secondary math or science teachers and elementary or secondary special education teachers; \$5,000 for others
- Specific repayment plan doesn't matter
- Apply after 5 years of eligible teaching

**Depending on loan balance, PSLF is often a better choice**

# PSLF vs TLF examples

Two borrowers, one with \$25,000 one with \$35,000 of debt both HH size 2 and making \$52,000 per year, both high school math teachers

## TLF

\$25k debt

**Monthly payment:** \$186

**Time in repayment:** 6.5 years

**Total paid:** <\$16k

**Total forgiven:** \$17,500

\$35k debt

**Monthly payment:** \$186

**Time in repayment:** 15 years (PSLF)

**Total paid:** \$44k

**Total forgiven:** \$17.5K(TLF) + \$20K PSLF

## PSLF

\$25k debt

**Monthly payment:** \$186

**Time in repayment:** 10 years

**Total paid:** <\$28k

**Total forgiven:** >\$11k

\$35k debt

**Monthly payment:** \$186

**Time in repayment:** 10 years

**Total paid:** <\$28k

**Total forgiven:** \$31K

# Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) I have Parent PLUS loans. What are my options?
- 2) Do I have to work 10 consecutive years in qualifying employment?
- 3) My income-driven repayment plan request was rejected because my income was too high relative to my debt. What should I do?
- 4) How long will it take for my PSLF form to process?
- 5) I'm trying to make PSLF progress but my loans are on the SAVE plan. What should I do?

# How to check your progress

- ✓ **To check the status of your latest PSLF form:**

- Login to <https://studentaid.gov/>
- Navigate to “My Activity” to track your PSLF form status

- ✓ **To confirm your PSLF payment count:**

- Login to <https://studentaid.gov/>
- Navigate to “My Aid” >> “View Details”
- Then scroll down to the payment progress section

- ✓ **Reach out to a student loan coach**

- ✓ ***Alternatively, you can contact Federal Student Aid: 1-888-303-7818***

# Key PSLF Resources

## Department of Education Resources

- [Federal Student Aid PSLF Program Account Adjustments](#)
- [Federal Student Aid PSLF General Program information](#)
- [PSLF Buyback](#)
- [SAVE Plan Updates](#)
- [NASFAA Summary of Budget Reconciliation Act Impact](#)
- Federal Student Aid Loan Discharge and Forgiveness Customer Support **1-888-303-7818**

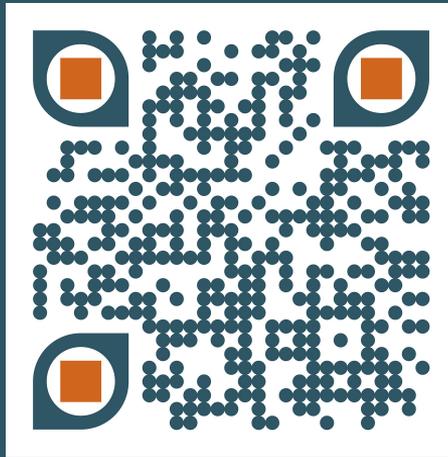
# Questions?



# Thank you!

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[club.horacemann.com](http://club.horacemann.com)



For help registering or adding loans please contact Technical Support:

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