

FSA APPLICATION, SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY AND DELIVERY SERVICES

FSA Application, School Eligibility and Delivery (ASED) is responsible for providing best in business service to aid recipients and schools. To accomplish this mission, the FSA Application, School Eligibility and Delivery Services has three principal components:

- Students Channel
- School Delivery Channel
- School Eligibility Channel

STUDENTS CHANNEL

Within ASED, the Students Channel is responsible for providing best in business service to potential aid recipients, while ensuring that students and families understand their options to finance their education. To accomplish this mission, the Students Channel performs the following functions:

- Student Aid Awareness Division
- Application Processing Division
- Customer Service and Support Call Center Division

Student Aid Awareness Division

The Student Aid Awareness Division is responsible for targeting segments of the student population (both students and families) for Student Aid Awareness programs, providing information and guidance to assist in postsecondary school planning and decision making and educating potential program participants. To accomplish this mission Student Aid Awareness performs its functions through the following:

- Program Outreach
- Program Information and Publications; and
- Student Population Research

In addition, the Division manages the Students Portal for accurate and up-to-date information, and manages written correspondence from the students, borrowers, parents and Congress.

Application Processing Division

The Application Processing Division is responsible for collecting and managing aid application information, verifying this information, and creating aid reports and packages for schools and students. To accomplish this mission, Application Processing Division:

- Receives and processes FAFSA applications.
- Verifies participant eligibility using the Central Processing System by matching applicant data with Federal databases (NSLDS, Selective Service System, Social Security, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and Department of Justice).
- Calculates Expected Family Contribution.
- Reports eligibility to borrowers through the Student Aid Report (SAR).
- Generates and electronically sends (via Student Aid Internet Gateway) the Institution Student Information Report (ISIR) to no more than six schools of student's choice.
- Receives SAR corrections from students and processes changes.
- Assigns PINS.
- Generates (via the Central Processing System) the renewal application (with prepopulated data) and sends to each eligible aid recipient from previous year.
- Verifies eligibility of applicants for the academic year and notifies applicants and schools.
- Manages FAFSA Express, FOTW, CPS, PIN Systems, and EDEXpress.
- Manages annual regulatory change modifications related to application processing.

Customer Service Support and Call Center Division

The Customer Service and Support Call Center Division is responsible for responding to incoming questions, requests and complaints in a timely fashion, collecting information about customer preferences and satisfaction, and providing feedback as to patterns, trends, gaps in performance and opportunities within customer service. To accomplish this mission, the Customer Service and Support Call Center Division:

- Operates a call center to respond to phone calls and correspondence regarding program information and account inquiries, such as the following:
 - Requests for FAFSA and related information (students, high schools, libraries, etc.)
 - Technical assistance and support for FAFSA on the Web and FAFSA Express.
 - General information on consolidation, loan deferments and repayment options based on guidance provided by Borrower Services
 - Identify the current holder of a student loan that is in repayment.
 - Resolve aid recipient disputes.
- Compiles and analyzes customer contact data (e.g., complaint information and inquiry data), and shares with business process owners.

- Identifies and communicates service improvement opportunities.
- Responds to issues raised by defaulted borrowers based on guidance provided by Borrower Services.

SCHOOL DELIVERY CHANNEL

The School Delivery Channel has primary responsibility for providing best in business service to schools, while maintaining strong oversight and comprehensive partner support. The School Delivery Channel accomplishes this mission by performing the following functions:

- Title IV Delivery Division
- School Relations Division

In addition, the School Delivery Channel provides technical support for training facilities.

Title IV Delivery Division

The Title IV Delivery Division has the following functional responsibilities:

- Develops, monitors, and implements operational policies and procedures for the delivery, control and accountability of funds and financial reporting requirements of the Federal Student Aid Programs.
- Designs, tests, and implements operational systems and modifications.
- Administers the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System that is a new, streamlined method for processing Direct Loan, Pell Grant, and Campus-Based data.
- Performs contract and interagency agreement administration and monitoring.
- Conducts quality control reviews and other analyses to assess adherence of contractors.
- Plans and conducts short-and long-term studies to evaluate computer or operation systems effectiveness and efficiency and recommends improvements; provides technical assistance in implementing recommendations and conducts follow-up reviews to determine the effectiveness of revised procedures.
- Proposes approaches, designs, techniques, and points of emphasis for reports on Departmental management matters being prepared for OMB, GAO, or OIG.
- Provides technical assistance for training programs for staff.
- Reviews and evaluates systems processing activities to ensure compliance with standards and to correct deficiencies.
- Develops operational policies and procedures for institutional data computer system processing, and ensures compliance.

To accomplish this mission, Title IV Delivery Division performs its functions through the following:

- Common Origination and Disbursement Operations
- Common Origination and Disbursement Systems
- Campus-Based Operations
- Postsecondary Education Participants System
- Customer Service Call Center

Common Origination and Disbursement Operations Branch

The Title IV Delivery Division, the Common Origination and Disbursement Operations Branch is responsible for the overall management of the Direct Loan and Pell Grant Programs. To accomplish this, the branch is composed of two Sections, Pell Operations and Direct Loan Operations:

Pell Operations Section

The Pell Operations Section provides leadership to the financial aid community concerning Pell Grant Financial operations. To accomplish this mission, Pell Operations:

- Serves as subject matter experts on the Pell Grant program, including funding laws, regulations, and established policies.
- Coordinates with ED Budget Services for new award year set-up and initial authorization of funding to schools.
- Assists in projecting program funding requirements.
- Monitors schools' compliance with student-level reporting requirements for Pell Grants and cash management principles.
- Supports school reconciliation of Pell program funds among financial management systems, assists ED and FSA CFOs in collecting Pell Grant funds from schools, and resolves issues from prior years.
- Grants administrative relief to schools for processing increases in Pell Grant awards after the September 30 deadline.
- Drafts business rules and procedures for the administration of the Pell program at FSA.
- Supports school training, FSA-sponsored conferences and professional meetings, systems testing, and interface with other systems (CPS, NSLDS, DCS, and PEPS).
- Analyzes proposed and pending policies and regulations for systems and operational impacts, and assists in identifying systems requirements.
- Develops communications to schools about operational matters.

Direct Loan Operations Section

The Direct Loan Operations Section is responsible for providing program management oversight and performing Direct Loan Program coordination functions. To accomplish this mission, Direct Loan Operations Section:

- Serves as subject matter experts on the Direct Loan Program, including federal funding laws, regulations, and policies.
- Assists in projecting program funding requirements.
- Monitors schools' compliance with student-level reporting requirements for Direct Loans and cash management principles.
- Works with ED GAPS and FSA FMS staff to implement correct interface processes and procedures, to support reconciliation of Direct Loan program funds among financial management systems and at schools, and to collect Direct Loan funds from schools from prior years.
- Drafts business rules and procedures for the administration of the Direct Loan Program at FSA
- Supports school training, FSA-sponsored conferences and professional meetings, systems testing, and interface with other systems (CPS, NSLDS, DCS, and PEPS).
- Analyzes proposed and pending policies and regulations for systems and operational impacts, and assists in identifying systems requirements.
- Develops communications to schools about operational matters

Common Origination and Disbursement Systems Branch

The Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) Systems Branch is responsible for the design, implementation, and operation of an integrated system to support the origination, disbursement and reconciliation of Direct Loans and Pell Grants at eligible institutions. To accomplish this mission, the branch is composed of two teams, COD Systems Development Section and COD System Operations Section.

Common Origination & Disbursement Systems Development Section

The COD Systems Development Section:

- Gathers systems requirements
- Validates systems design
- Resolves data discrepancies with interfacing systems (DLSS, EDEExpress, etc.)
- Tests system output for correctness and adherence to requirements
- Analyzes proposed and pending policies and regulations for systems and operational impacts, and develops and issues publications, training materials, and technical references to ensure consistency and clarity.
- Works with software developers, vendors, and schools to develop software products that are compatible with COD.
- Maintains system functionality to support program reconciliation and close-out.

Common Origination & Disbursement Systems Operations Section

The COD Systems Operations Section:

- Works as part of contract monitoring team.
- Oversees system production processing.
- Oversees Customer Service Center.
- Performs or oversees system communication, training and outreach.
- Manages system security requirements.
- Performs contract and interagency agreement administration and monitoring.
- Conducts user feedback sessions with institutions and internal users to determine areas for improvement.

Campus-Based Operations Branch

The Campus-Based Operations Branch is responsible for managing and accounting for Campus-Based program funds (Perkins Loans, Federal Work-Study, and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants) within Federal accounting standards, as well as program regulation/laws, with accurate and timely delivery of Campus-Based funds to institutions. Under the Campus-Based programs, schools annually submit a FISAP (fiscal operations report for the previous year and application for the coming year).

The principal program management activities of this unit are:

- Managing the FISAP software and processing of FISAP data.
- Allocating, delivering, and managing Campus-Based funds.
- Placing tentative and final CB awards funds in GAPS, and closing out awards in GAPS.
- Acting on requests for waivers from program requirements.
- Coordinating the Default Reduction Assistance Program.
- Engaging in skip tracing for Perkins Loans.

Postsecondary Education Participants Systems Branch

The Postsecondary Education Participants Systems (PEPS) Branch is responsible for the design, implementation, and operation of a computer system to support FSA's responsibility for determining the eligibility of institutions to participate in the Title IV programs. To accomplish this mission, PEPS:

- Designs, tests, and implements operational systems and modifications.
- Performs contract and interagency agreement administration and monitoring.
- Conducts quality control reviews and other analyses to assess adherence of contractors.
- Provides technical assistance for training programs for staff.

Customer Service Call Center Branch

The Customer Service Call Center Branch is responsible for interfacing with school partners to respond to inquiries and requests for information. To accomplish this mission, the Customer Service Call Center Branch:

- Operates a toll-free technical inquiry line for financial aid professionals.
- Operates an interactive web site for financial aid administrators that contains all relevant FSA technical information, communications, etc.
- Conducts outreach to the community via briefings and presentations at conferences and professional meetings.
- Compiles a database of frequently asked questions and best practices.
- Manages the Schools Portal for accurate and up-to-date information.

School Relations Division

Within School Delivery Channel, the School Relations Division is responsible for providing best in business service and product support to schools and partners. The Division also develops and manages the Quality Assurance Program and the Experimental Sites Program, coordinates and supports special initiatives with school partners, and provides support to school participation in Title IV Program. To accomplish this mission, the School Relations Division performs its functions through the following:

- School Relations Branch
- External Training Branch

School Relations Branch

The School Relations Branch is responsible for assisting institutions in the successful implementation and operation of the programs. To accomplish this, School Relations Branch provides the following services through DC and 10 regional offices:

- Provides telephonic, written, and on-site technical assistance on all aspects of the programs.
- Provides strategic, issue-driven assistance and training to institutions to resolve program issues and promote improved funds management of Federal student aid programs to reduce their high-risk status.
- Supports training development and delivery to school personnel and ED staff.
- Supports FSA-sponsored conferences and professional meetings.
- Assesses schools' satisfaction with the Title IV programs.
- Assists in the development and testing of ED's software programs and systems.
- Develops and disseminates information to schools.
- Supports special initiatives with school partners that foster program integrity.

External Training Branch

The External Training Branch is responsible for designing, developing, and delivering high quality learning products targeted to FSA's school partners, and, as appropriate, ED and operating partner staff. To accomplish this mission, the External Training Branch provides the following services through DC and 10 regional offices:

- Ensures that products and services are aligned to FSA's strategic goals.
- Works with FSA components and school partners to identify and analyze partner learning needs and to develop and deliver training to meet these needs.
- Coordinates the design and development of learning products for school partners.
- Works with subject matter experts from FSA, ED, etc., to determine the appropriate content to be included in school partner learning products.
- Coordinates "train-the-trainer" sessions to prepare trainers to deliver learning products.
- Delivers or coordinates the delivery of the learning products to school partners.
- Manages the contract to assist in development and delivery of training.
- Evaluates and advises on curriculum development for school partners.
- Gathers and analyzes feedback from customers regarding satisfaction with learning products delivered.

School Eligibility Channel

The School Eligibility Channel is responsible for providing integrated oversight and management improvement services to institutions receiving student financial assistance program funds, in accordance with policies and procedures established by Performance Improvement and Procedures. To accomplish this mission, School Eligibility Channel performs its functions through the following organizations:

- Case Management (performed by 10 Case Management Teams with staff in 10 Regional Offices and DC).
- Default Management Division
- Data Management and Analysis Division
- Performance Improvement and Procedures Division
- Administrative Actions and Appeals (AAA) Division

In addition to the above functions, School Eligibility also maintains and coordinates closed school activities including: identifying closed, bankrupt, and troubled schools and notifying appropriate Department of Education offices; approving loan discharge applications; resolving student loan discharge problems; working with state agencies and accrediting agencies on closed schools issues; working with Title IV concerning related accreditation issues; and identifying institutional performance bonds and tuition recovery programs and coordinating these activities.

Case Management Teams

Case Management Teams are responsible for using a team approach to provide integrated oversight and management improvement services to institutions receiving student

financial assistance program funds. The Case Management Teams, working out of the 10 regional offices and Washington, DC:

- Develop, plan, and implement a nationwide program for monitoring and improving institutional compliance with legislation and regulations.
- Consistently monitor schools and their agents through on-site reviews and analysis of various reports to provide early warning of program compliance problems.
- Conduct analyses and approve institutional applications for Federal Student Aid program funding of all schools seeking initial or renewal certification.
- Process and maintain schools' Program Participation Agreements, and notices of eligibility for institutions to participate in various Federal Student Aid programs.
- Recommend appropriate actions e.g., methods of funding (reimbursement, heightened cash monitoring, etc.), emergency actions, and limitation, suspension, termination, or fine actions.
- Provide input to and coordinate with Performance Improvement and Procedures and AAA regarding settlement terms for liabilities identified in program reviews, audits, or financial or recertification reviews and maintain appropriate institutional files, logs, fiscal records, and correspondence.
- Review, maintain, and update pertinent institutional and student data in various databases
- Direct all functions related to certification determinations for foreign institutions of higher education.

Within School Eligibility, the Case Management Teams are organized under the direction of four Divisions:

Northeast Division

- Boston Team
- New York Team
- Philadelphia Team

Southeast Division

- Atlanta Team
- Kansas City Team

Northwest Division

- Chicago Team
- Denver Team
- Seattle Team

Southwest Division

- Dallas Team
- San Francisco Team

Default Management Division

The Default Management Division is responsible for administering the Student Loan Default Prevention Act of 1990 and the FFEL and Direct Loan Program cohort default rate appeals, and coordinating the School Eligibility Channel's efforts as they relate to other government oversight entities, such as OIG and GAO. To accomplish its mission, the Default Management Division:

- Ensures accurate calculation of the statutorily-mandated cohort default rates for all schools.
- Publishes cohort default rates for 6,000 schools annually.
- Initiates administrative action against institutions that exceed cohort default rate thresholds.
- Reviews and resolves schools' cohort default rate appeals and challenges.
- Develops and presents guidance to the community on cohort default rates and appeals.
- Administers a contract to assist in the processing of appeals.

Data Management and Analysis Division

The Data Management and Analysis Division is responsible for reviewing and analyzing internal and external data related to school performance, including risk management analysis. To accomplish this mission, the Data Management and Analysis Division:

- Operates a risk analysis system relating to postsecondary schools.
- Provides analytical support services to Case Management and FSA on monitoring of postsecondary institutions.
- Operates a document receipt, imaging, and control function.
- Monitors contract performance.
- Maintains school files.
- Administers the eZ-Audit System that provides schools with a paperless single point of submission for mandatory financial statements and compliance audits through the web.

Performance Improvement and Procedures Division

The Performance Improvement and Procedures Division is responsible for operational procedures for case management. It also develops, implements, and refines alternative oversight programs and alternative approaches to meet legislative goals. To accomplish this mission, Performance Improvement and Procedures Division:

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- Develops policies, guidelines and procedures for the case management processes.

- Evaluates the effectiveness of case management operation, and provides needed training and enhancements.

Administrative Actions and Appeals Division

The Administrative Actions and Appeals Division administers the Secretary's authority to fine, limit, suspend, terminate and take emergency actions against postsecondary educational institutions, which participate in the FSA programs. In performing its responsibilities the Administrative Actions and Appeals Division:

- Coordinates appeals by institutions from final audit and program review determinations.
- Initiates emergency action, limitation, suspension, termination, fine and debarment against institutions, individuals and corporations that have seriously violated Title IV, HEA programs or lack business integrity.