

# Chapter 1

## The Student Financial Aid Programs

### Summary

This chapter provides an overview of federally funded student financial aid programs. The chapter begins with a discussion of Title IV of the Higher Education Act, the legislation that created these federal programs. The chapter also discusses an institutional fiscal year and explains the terms “academic year” and “award year.”



### Key Terms

academic year	<i>Federal Register</i>
administrative cost allowance (ACA)	Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
award year	gift aid
campus-based programs	Higher Education Act (HEA)
<i>Code of Federal Regulations</i> (CFR)	Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR)
cost of attendance (COA)	reauthorization
delivery system	self-help aid
Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	Student Aid Report (SAR)
federal master calendar	Title IV programs
Federal Pell Grant Program	

### 1.1 Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and Federal Regulations

Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), authorizes the Federal Pell Grant, William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan, Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL), Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study (FWS), and Federal Perkins Loan Programs. These programs are collectively known as Title IV programs. They are administered by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and provide at least \$40 billion annually in financial assistance to eligible students enrolled in eligible postsecondary programs of study. Title IV programs are governed by the HEA and by policies and regulations published by ED.

## **Reauthorizing and Amending the HEA**

Approximately every six years, Congress reviews all the Title IV programs authorized by the HEA to ensure that they are serving the purposes for which they are intended. After reviewing the programs, Congress decides whether to reauthorize them (that is, allow the programs to continue) and, if so, what changes should be enacted to serve students and the taxpayers properly and efficiently.

Congress also can make changes (or amend) the HEA between these periodic reauthorizations. This happens when Congress modifies particular HEA provisions rather than the entire law.

### **Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations**

ED implements the HEA through regulations. Title IV regulations supplement the HEA; however, regulations cannot supersede any part of the law. Regulations affecting Title IV programs are contained in Title 34 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR). The sections of Title 34 that most frequently affect how schools administer federal financial aid programs are in Parts 600 and higher. When ED issues regulations, they are published in the *Federal Register*. ED posts the regulations on its Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. ED also publishes an annual compilation of current regulations called *Compilation of Student Financial Aid Regulations*.



**Reference:**

- <http://ifap.ed.gov>



**Reference:**

- *Compilation of Student Financial Aid Regulations*

## **1.2 Family Contribution, Financial Aid Application, and Delivery System**

### **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)**

The basic premise underlying Title IV programs is that a student and the student's family have primary responsibility for paying for the student's postsecondary education. Because the programs are intended to help students with financial need, eligibility for assistance from most of the programs is need based. Congress developed an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) formula to determine the financial strength of a student's family and the student's need for Title IV assistance.

### **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

To apply for Title IV financial aid funds, students must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Most continuing postsecondary students may file a streamlined Renewal FAFSA. The FAFSA and Renewal FAFSA collect financial and other information from

the student and the student's spouse (and parents of a dependent student) to calculate the student's EFC. The EFC represents the amount of money a student's family is expected to contribute toward the cost of the student's postsecondary education. The resulting EFC is reported on the Student Aid Report (SAR). Schools receive an electronic version of the same information, called the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). The EFC is used with the cost of attendance (COA) in determining an eligible student's need and the amount of aid that the student receives from each of the Title IV aid programs.

All students (undergraduate and graduate) can complete the paper, software application, or electronic versions of the FAFSA. FAFSA Express is the software application for PCs and may be obtained in diskette format or downloaded from the Internet. FAFSA on the Web is a dedicated Web site where students can apply on the Internet. Schools can also transmit students' FAFSAs through ED's Electronic Data Exchange (EDE). Students may use the condensed Renewal FAFSA to file after the first time. Each format has renewal options, except FAFSA Express.

### **Delivery System**

The "delivery system" refers to the process by which students apply for financial aid, are awarded federal funds, and use those funds to pay the costs of attendance they incur when they enroll in an eligible program of study.

Title IV programs may be categorized as either "gift aid" or "self-help aid." Gift aid consists of grants and scholarships that are given to students; it does not have to be repaid. Self-help aid takes the form of loans (which must be repaid) and employment (which pays students wages for hours worked at jobs provided on campus or off campus).

The sections that follow provide a brief overview of ED's federal financial aid programs. For more complete information, please refer to the *Student Financial Aid Handbook*.

## **1.3 Federal Pell Grant Program**

Federal Pell Grants are gift aid and available to eligible undergraduate students who have not yet received a bachelor's degree or professional degree, are enrolled in a degree or certificate program, and meet other program eligibility requirements, including financial need.



#### **Reference:**

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Federal Pell Grant Program Reference*
- 34 CFR Part 690

**Reference:**

- HEA, Part A

**\*The Higher Education Amendments of 1998 include a provision for a reasonable allowance for the documented purchase or rental of a personal computer.**

**Reference:**

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Campus-Based Programs Reference*
- 34 CFR Part 673

**Reference:**

- HEA, Part E
- 34 CFR Part 674

**Reference:**

- HEA, Part C
- 34 CFR Part 675

ED, on a case-by-case basis, may provide a Federal Pell Grant to students enrolled in a teacher certification program. These students must be enrolled:

- at least half time,
- at a school that does not offer a baccalaureate degree in education,
- in a postbaccalaureate program not leading to a graduate degree, *and*
- in teacher certificate courses required by a state to teach in that state.

Various components determine the amount of a student's award, including EFC; COA (tuition, fees, room and board, and so forth\*); enrollment status; and the length of the program of study. Funds that an eligible student receives from this program do not have to be repaid. Each participating institution may claim an administrative cost allowance (ACA) for administering the Federal Pell Grant Program.

## 1.4 The Campus-Based Programs

The Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Work-Study (FWS), and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) Programs are referred to as campus-based programs because ED allocates these funds to participating institutions on the basis of their FISAPs. The schools then manage the programs and award funds to students on behalf of ED. Students must complete a FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA each year to apply for these funds. Schools award the funds to eligible students according to federal laws and regulations. Each participating institution may claim an ACA for administering each campus-based program.

### ***Federal Perkins Loan Program***

Federal Perkins Loans are low-interest (5 percent) student loans that participating schools make to eligible undergraduate and graduate students. No interest accrues on a loan while a student is enrolled at least half time in an eligible program. A school must give priority to students who demonstrate exceptional financial need as defined by the school.

### ***Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program***

The Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program provides on-campus jobs and off-campus jobs for undergraduate and graduate students.



Beginning with the 2000-01 award year, which begins July 1, 2000, a school must use at least 7 percent of its total FWS allocation for an award year to pay students employed in community-service activities, unless ED approves a waiver. Further, at least one community-service project must be in reading tutoring or family literacy and employ FWS students. Students must be paid at least the current federal minimum wage, and the institution or off-campus employer pays a portion of their wages.

### America Reads Challenge

Schools are encouraged to place FWS students as reading tutors of preschool-age children and children in elementary school as part of their efforts to support the America Reads Challenge. For schools that participate, ED authorizes a 100 percent federal share of such students' FWS wages. Students must perform the work for the school itself; a federal, state, or local public agency; or a private nonprofit organization.

### **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) Program**

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOGs) are gift aid and do not have to be repaid. These funds are for undergraduate students with financial need who have not yet received a bachelor's degree or a first professional degree. When selecting FSEOG recipients, a school must make awards first to applicants with exceptional financial need and give priority to applicants who receive Federal Pell Grants.



#### Reference:

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Campus-Based Programs Reference*
- HEA, Part A
- 34 CFR Part 676

## 1.5 Major Loan Programs

The largest amounts of Title IV funds come from the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program and the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program.

### **William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program**

The William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program consists of the Federal Direct Stafford/Ford Loan (Direct Subsidized Loan) and Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford/Ford Loan (Direct Unsubsidized Loan), Federal Direct PLUS Loans (Direct PLUS Loan), and Federal Direct Consolidation Loans (Direct Consolidation Loan). Direct Subsidized, Direct Unsubsidized, and Direct Consolidation Loans are for students, while Direct PLUS and Direct Consolidation Loans are available for parents. The federal government makes Direct Loans to eligible undergraduate and graduate students and their parents through financial aid offices at participating schools. Generally, subsidized Direct Subsidized



#### Reference:

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Direct Loan and FFEL Programs Reference*
- HEA, Part D
- 34 CFR Part 685

Loans and Direct Unsubsidized Loans are made to eligible students enrolled at least half time in an eligible program of study, and Direct PLUS Loans are made to eligible parents of dependent undergraduate students enrolled at least half time in an eligible program of study. These loans can also be made to students to cover coursework necessary as a prerequisite to enroll in an eligible program or for teacher certification programs.

### Interest Subsidy

Borrowers are not charged interest on Direct Subsidized Loans during certain periods, such as when they are enrolled at least half time and during grace periods and deferment periods.

Because the federal government subsidizes the interest on students' Direct Subsidized Loans, students must show financial need to qualify for these loans. The student's COA, EFC, and the amount of other aid the student is receiving determine the loan amount.

Eligibility for *unsubsidized* loans (Direct Unsubsidized Loans and Direct PLUS Loans) is not determined on the basis of financial need. All or a portion of a Direct Unsubsidized Loan or Direct PLUS Loan can replace a student's EFC. Borrowers are charged interest on Direct Unsubsidized Loans and Direct PLUS Loans throughout the lives of the loans.

ED's Direct Loan Servicing Center (DLSC) services all Direct Loans and collects payments from borrowers.

### Direct Consolidation Loan

A Direct Consolidation Loan is designed to help student and parent borrowers simplify loan repayment by consolidating their federal student loans so that they make only one payment each month. Students can consolidate subsidized and/or unsubsidized Direct Loans and parents can consolidate PLUS Loans. The Direct Loan Consolidation program offers a number of repayment options.

### ***Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program***

The Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program consists of subsidized and unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans (for students), Federal PLUS Loans (for parents), and FFEL Consolidation Loans (for both students and parents). Participating lending institutions, such as banks, credit unions, and the like make these loans, which are guaranteed by state or national guaranty agencies and underwritten by the federal government. FFEL Program loans are made to eligible undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at least half time in an eligible program or, in the case of Federal



#### **Reference:**

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Direct Loan and FFEL Programs Reference*
- HEA, Part B
- 34 CFR Part 682

PLUS Loans, to the eligible parents of dependent undergraduate students enrolled at least half time in an eligible program.

### Interest Subsidy

The federal government pays the interest on *subsidized* Federal Stafford Loans during certain periods, such as when a borrower is enrolled in school, during a deferment, and during a borrower's grace period preceding repayment. A borrower makes payments to his or her lender (or to a servicing agent employed by the lender), unless the lender sells the borrower's loan to a secondary market. Then, the secondary market becomes the holder of the loan and the borrower makes his or her payments to the new loan holder.

Because the federal government pays the interest on *subsidized* Federal Stafford Loans, students must show financial need to qualify for these loans. The student's COA, EFC, and the amount of other aid the student is receiving determine the loan amount.

Eligibility for *unsubsidized* loans (unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans and Federal PLUS Loans) is not determined on the basis of need, and all or a portion of these loans can replace a student's EFC. A borrower is responsible for paying all interest on an unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan or a Federal PLUS Loan.

### FFEL Consolidation Loan

A FFEL Consolidation Loan is designed to help student and parent borrowers consolidate several types of federal student loans with various repayment schedules into one loan. Borrowers make only one payment a month, and the interest rate may be lower than for other federal student loans. There are two types of FFEL Consolidation Loans: subsidized and unsubsidized.

## 1.6 Other Title IV Programs

### ***Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) Program (formerly State Student Incentive Grant [SSIG] Program)***

The Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) Program assists states in providing grants to eligible students who attend postsecondary schools and who have financial need. Each state receives an annual allocation of federal LEAP funds that must be matched with a certain amount of state funds. The name of the program, amount of funds available, application procedures, and other aspects of the LEAP Program



#### Reference:

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: State Grant Programs Reference*
- HEA, Part A, Section 415 E and F
- 34 CFR Part 692
- DCL GEN 98-28



may vary from state to state. For specific information about the LEAP Program in your state, contact your state education agency.

### Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (SLEAP) Program

When Congress appropriates amounts in excess of \$30 million for the LEAP Program, those excess funds must be applied to the Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (SLEAP) Program. Although presently unfunded, the SLEAP Program authorizes states to use the funds for any or all of the following eight activities:

- increasing the dollar amount of grants under the LEAP Program,
- carrying out transition programs from secondary school to postsecondary education for needy students,
- carrying out a financial program for needy students who wish to enter careers in information technology or other fields determined by the state to be needed in its workforce,
- making funds available for community service work-study activities for needy students,
- creating a scholarship program for needy students who wish to be teachers,
- creating a scholarship program for needy students who wish to enter a degree program in mathematics, computer science, or engineering,
- carrying out early intervention, mentoring, and career education programs, and
- awarding merit or academic scholarships to needy students.

The maximum federal share under the SLEAP Program is 33 1/3 percent. Funds will be allocated to states in the same manner as LEAP, and these funds will pay the federal share of costs for any or all of those authorized program activities. States will be required to assure ED that they are matching expenditures of nonfederal funds according to program requirements.

**Reference:**

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: State Grant Programs Reference*
- HEA, Part A, Section 419 A-K
- 34 CFR Part 654

**Reference:**

- HEA, Part A, Section 404 A-H
- See Appendix A of this book for further details on GEAR-UP.

**\*Please note that the former NEISP provisions make up only a small part of the GEAR-UP provisions.**

**Reference:**

- HEA, Part A, Sections 406A-407E

### ***Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program***

This program provides federal grants to states so that scholarships may be made to exceptionally able students for postsecondary study. The purpose of the program is to promote academic excellence and achievement. Each state establishes its own application procedures for Byrd Scholarships. For specific information about how the Byrd Scholarship Program is administered in your state, contact your state education agency.

### ***Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduates Program (GEAR-UP)***

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduates Program (GEAR-UP) replaced the National Early Intervention Partnership and Scholarship Program (NEISP)\*. Certain GEAR-UP provisions allow states to receive grants that:

- provide or maintain a guaranteed amount of financial assistance necessary to permit eligible low-income students who obtain high school diplomas or the equivalent to attend institutions of higher education;
- provide financial incentives in cooperation with local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, community organizations, and businesses; *and*
- provide a variety of early-intervention services.

### ***Academic Achievement Incentive Scholarship Program***

The purpose of Academic Achievement Incentive Scholarships is to help financially needy students who have demonstrated their academic abilities. The scholarships are for students who are eligible for Federal Pell Grants and graduate after May 1, 2000 in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class. The scholarship equals up to the amount of the Federal Pell Grant for which the student is eligible, which can result in doubling the student's grant amount. However, this program is currently unfunded by Congress.

## **1.7 Other Federal Student Aid Programs**

In addition to the Title IV programs described previously, there are other federal financial assistance programs for students.

**Reference:**

- [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)

**Reference:**

- 26 CFR, Part 1, 1.25A-3, (Department of the Treasury: Internal Revenue Service-Education Tax Credits) of January 6, 1997, NPRM
- DCL ANN-98-16

**Reference:**

- [www.ed.gov/inits/hope](http://www.ed.gov/inits/hope)

**Reference:**

- 26 CFR, Part 1, 1.25A-4, (Department of the Treasury: Internal Revenue Service-Education Tax Credits) of January 6, 1997, NPRM
- DCL ANN-98-16

**Reference:**

- [www.ed.gov/inits/hope](http://www.ed.gov/inits/hope)

**AmeriCorps**

AmeriCorps, a program of national and community service, provides full-time education awards of up to \$4,725 a year. Individuals may work before, during, or after their postsecondary education and can use the funds either to pay current or future education expenses or to repay federal student loans. Participants must be high school graduates, have GEDs, or be working toward their GEDs. For more information students may call 1-800-942-2677 or write to:

The Corporation for National Service  
1201 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20525

**The Hope Scholarship**

The Hope Scholarship is really a federal tax credit authorized by Congress in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. For students in the first two years of postsecondary school, taxpayers are eligible for a tax credit equal to 100 percent of the first \$1,000 of tuition and fees and 50 percent of the second \$1,000 (the amounts are indexed for inflation after 2001). The credit became available on a per-student basis for net tuition and fees (less grant aid) paid for college enrollment after December 31, 1997. The credit is phased out for joint filers who have between \$80,000 and \$100,000 of income and for single filers who have between \$40,000 and \$50,000 (indexed after 2001). The credit can be claimed in two taxable years (but not beyond the year when the student completes the first two years of college) for any individual enrolled on at least a half-time basis for any portion of the year.

Schools must report certain information to students and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), such as students' tuition and fees. Specific institutional reporting requirements are published by IRS.

**Lifetime Learning Credit**

The Lifetime Learning Credit is also a federal tax credit authorized in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. It is for students beyond the first two years of college or taking classes part-time to improve or upgrade their job skills. Families receive a 20 percent tax credit for the first \$5,000 of tuition and fees through 2002, and for the first \$10,000 thereafter. The credit is available for net tuition and fees (less grant aid) paid for postsecondary enrollment after June 30, 1998. The credit is available on a per-taxpayer (family) basis, and it is phased out at the same income levels as the Hope Scholarship.

**Reference:**

- [www.hrsa.dhhs.gov/bhpr/dsa](http://www.hrsa.dhhs.gov/bhpr/dsa)

Like the Hope Scholarship, schools must report certain information to students and the IRS, such as students' tuition and fees. Specific institutional reporting requirements are published by the IRS.

### ***Programs Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)***

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) offers a variety of financial aid programs for students who are interested in becoming health professionals, such as physicians, nurses, and dentists. Some of the programs require students to make a commitment to work as a health-care provider in an area of need, such as in a geographically underserved area.

## **1.8 The Fiscal Activity Calendar**

Fiscal activities managed by postsecondary institutions occur at various points during the academic year, the award year, and the fiscal year.

**Reference:**

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Institutional Eligibility and Participation*
- HEA, Section 481
- 34 CFR 668.2(b)(1)(i)(ii)

### ***The Academic Year***

The HEA establishes the definition of an academic year. ED regulations guide schools in complying with the definition.

Every eligible program, including graduate programs, must have a defined academic year that contains a minimum of 30 weeks of instructional time. In addition, for undergraduate programs, an academic year must contain at least 30 weeks of instructional time during which a full-time undergraduate student must be expected to complete at least 24 semester or trimester hours, 36 quarter hours, or 900 clock hours, as appropriate. A school may determine the amount of work a full-time graduate or professional student is expected to complete over an academic year.

### **Reduction of Academic Year**

ED may grant waivers of the 30-week requirement for schools that provide two-year or four-year programs of study for which they award associate or baccalaureate degrees. ED may grant a reduction in the length of an academic year to no less than 26 weeks of instructional time.

- If an reduction is approved, a school is permitted to have an academic year of less than 30 weeks of instructional time (not less than 26 weeks) without reducing the amount of Title IV funds that a student enrolled in an eligible program is eligible to receive for an entire academic year.

**Reference:**

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Institutional Eligibility and Participation*
- HEA, Section 481
- 34 CFR 668.3(a)(1)



**Reference:**

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Institutional Eligibility and Participation*
- 34 CFR 668.3(c)(1)(i-iv)

A reduction is available to schools that want to begin or continue to operate with a reduced academic year on a long-term basis. This reduction must be renewed each time a school is required to apply for recertification.

When evaluating a school's application for a reduction, ED will consider such factors as:

- The school's compliance with awarding and disbursement procedures based on the academic year requirements of the HEA,
- The approval of the academic year by the school's accrediting agency or state agency,
- The hours of attendance and other coursework that a full-time student is required to complete in the academic year, *and*
- Any unique circumstances that justify granting the request.

ED has granted this waiver to very few schools. Schools can request the waiver by two methods. One method is submitting their request to either of the following addresses:

*By U.S. Postal Service:* U.S. Department of Education  
Institutional Participation and Oversight Service  
P.O. Box 44805  
L'Enfant Plaza Station  
Washington, DC 20026-4805

*By commercial overnight mail or courier delivery:*

U.S. Department of Education  
Institutional Participation and Oversight Service  
7th and D Streets, S.W.  
GSA Building, Room 3514  
Washington, DC 20407

The other method is submitting their request electronically at [www.eligcert.ed.gov](http://www.eligcert.ed.gov). The school must complete questions 1 and 69 *and* the signature page at this Web site. With either method, the school must submit documentation supporting its request for the waiver. If a school has questions regarding the waiver, the school should contact the Case Management Team that serves its state.

A school may have different academic years for different programs, but must use the same academic year definition for:

- calculating all Title IV awards for students enrolled in a particular program and



**Reference:**

- [www.eligcert.ed.gov](http://www.eligcert.ed.gov)



**Reference:**

- See Appendix D for further details on Case Management Teams.

**Reference:**

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Institutional Eligibility and Participation*

**Reference:**

- 34 CFR 668.8(3)(i)

**Reference:**

- 34 CFR 668.8(3)(ii)

**Reference:**

- *Student Financial Aid Handbook: Institutional Eligibility and Participation*
- HEA, Section 481

- all other Title IV program purposes, such as certification of loan deferments.

To determine the number of weeks of instructional time, a school must count the period that begins on the first day of classes and ends on the last day of classes or examinations.

### Clock-Hour and Term-Based Programs

For educational programs using semesters, trimesters, or quarters *or* clock hours, a week of instructional time is defined as any consecutive 7-day period in which at least one day of regularly scheduled instruction, examinations, or preparation for examinations occurs.

### Nonterm Credit-Hour Programs

For educational programs measured in credit hours without standard terms (semesters, trimesters, or quarters), a week of instructional time is defined as any consecutive 7-day period in which at least 12 hours of instruction, examinations, or preparation for examination occurs.

### ***The Award Year***

Funds are appropriated by Congress for a specific financial aid award year. That year is the 12-month period during which postsecondary institutions disburse Title IV and other federal financial aid funds to students. The award year runs from July 1 of one calendar year to June 30 of the next calendar year.

- For example, the 1999-2000 award year begins on July 1, 1999 and ends on June 30, 2000. Immediately following the end of the award year, schools must file reports on that award year's activities.

For any award year, financial aid application processing begins on January 1 of the calendar year in which the award year begins; financial aid payment processing ends on September 30 of the calendar year in which the award year ends.

- For example, for the 1999-2000 award year, processing begins on January 1, 1999 and ends on September 30, 2000.

### ***The Fiscal Year***

The fiscal year is defined by the institution. Examples of commonly used fiscal year periods are—

- January 1 to December 31 (the calendar year),
- July 1 to June 30 (the financial aid award year), and
- October 1 to September 30 (the federal fiscal year).

For many institutions, the school fiscal year differs from the federal fiscal year.

**Reference:**

- HEA, Section 482

***The Federal Master Calendar***

To ensure timely delivery of Title IV funds to students, federal law requires that ED adhere to a master calendar when developing required publications, communicating with postsecondary institutions, issuing regulations, and performing other activities necessary to both ED's and institutions' administration of Title IV programs.

For allocations of campus-based and Federal Pell Grant funds, the law mandates that ED adhere to the following master calendar dates in the year preceding the award year.

- August 1—distribution of application for campus-based funds (Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate or FISAP) to institutions
- October 1—final date for institutions to submit FISAP to ED
- November 15—ED sends FISAP edits to institutions
- December 15—institutions return any needed FISAP edits to ED
- February 1—institutions receive tentative ED award levels for campus-based programs; institutions also receive final Federal Pell Grant Program Payment and Disbursement Schedule
- February 15—closing date for institutional appeals of campus-based awards ED to be received by ED
- March 1—appeals process completed
- April 1—final award notifications for campus-based programs sent to institutions by ED
- June 1—Federal Pell Grant Program authorization levels sent to institutions by ED

**Reference:**

- HEA, Section 482

The master calendar also requires that regulations affecting a given award year be published by ED no later than November 1 of the preceding calendar year.

- For example, for the 2000-01 award year, all final regulations must be issued on or before November 1, 1999. These regulations may take effect no earlier than July 1, 2000.