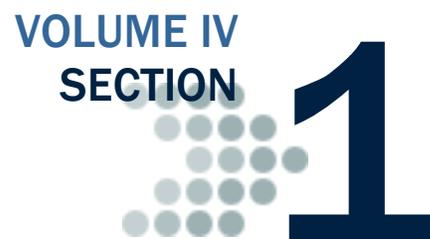


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# Direct Loan Tools for Windows, Release 20.0



*This section contains general overview information and guidance for schools and other agencies who use Direct Loan (DL) Tools Release 20.0 in combination with EExpress, third-party software and/or other in-house systems to track, analyze, reconcile, and rebuild William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan data processed by the COD System for the 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 Award Years.*

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## Overview

William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (DL) Tools for Windows, Release 20.0 is a supplemental software product for Direct Loan participants. You can download software and related user documentation from the [Software and Other Tools](#) page of the U.S. Department of Education's Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, located at [ifap.ed.gov](http://ifap.ed.gov).

DL Tools is a Windows-based application designed to provide the following functionality related to all Direct Loan schools' software:

- Compare the Direct Loan School Account Statement (SAS) to loans and actual disbursements recorded in EDEXpress or an external file, and/or compare the SAS to the DL Tools Cash database.
- Print the SAS in a readable format.
- Track Cash Receipts (drawdowns) and Refunds of Cash.
- Rebuild your Direct Loan origination and disbursement records in EDEXpress using an automated process.
- Run the Disbursement Measurement Tool Report to help monitor Direct Loan records in your EDEXpress database.

DL Tools Release, 20.0 includes functionality for the 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 award years. Each annual release of DL Tools adds functionality for the new processing cycle and removes the oldest cycle, enabling you to use the current version for Direct Loan tasks for the three most recent cycles.

### DL Tools Comparison

DL Tools Loan and Disbursement Comparison Reports, located in the Compare dialog box, are designed to be run using the SAS Reports with YTD detail, not monthly detail. See Volume IV, Section 8 of this technical reference for information about default settings and SAS option selections. You can change your report options (YTD detail, for example) by accessing the COD System Web site at [cod.ed.gov](http://cod.ed.gov).

All Direct Loan schools can use the Compare and Cash Management functionality. The Rebuild function is used by schools to rebuild accepted Direct Loan records in EDEXpress for Windows databases. However, non-EDEXpress users can export data from a rebuilt EDEXpress database to recreate non-EDEXpress loans or databases.

The Disbursement Measurement Tool Report (available in DL Tools if connected to EDEXpress) and the List–Document Activity report (available in EDEXpress) assist schools with monitoring current operations, procedures, and program status, and can also help meet the Quality Assurance requirement in the Direct Loan program. Tolerances can be applied when running these reports. Tolerances are guidelines you set for evaluating the effectiveness of your school's Direct Loan processes and procedures. Your school decides which reports to use, when to run them, and what action to take as a result. You can use them to review progress as part of a continuous improvement plan.

## Using DL Tools without EExpress

If you do not use EExpress, you can still use DL Tools to assist in reconciling. You can import cash, loan, or disbursement data from your external Direct Loan system into DL Tools, thus creating a temporary database you can use to compare your data to the SAS.

- To add school cash data to the newly created database, import the External Cash file (DLEXCASH).
- To add school loan data to the newly created database, import the External Loan file (DLEXLOAN).
- To add school disbursement data to the newly created database, import the External Disbursement file (DLEXDISB).

Fixed-length record layouts for each of these file types are included in Volume IV, Section 3 of the *2020-2021 Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) Technical Reference*.

When creating your external files, use the standard file names of DLEXCASH, DLEXLOAN, and DLEXDISB as noted at the top of each record layout. You need to include a carriage return/ line feed (CR/LF) (ASCII characters 13 and 10) at the end of each data record. At the end of the file, no end of file (EOF) marker is required, just the CR/LF markers.

These record layouts are used without header or trailer records.

Users always see the “-R” label added to software fields.

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## Section 508 Compliance

To comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, DL Tools for Windows, Release 20.0 is compatible with screen reader technology used by the visually impaired.

Screen reader software cannot interpret color shading in DL Tools software entry fields. To accommodate this restriction, DL Tools fields that are shaded yellow to indicate they are required also display a “-R” after the software label. The “-R” indicates the field is required.

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## DL Tools Release 20.0 Enhancements & Changes

The following enhancements and changes are available in DL Tools Release 20.0:

### General

- **Program Year 2020-2021 Added** – We added DL Tools functionality and message classes applicable to program year 2020-2021.

### Disbursement Detail External Add (DLEXDISB)

- **Disbursement Date Range Updated for 2020-2021** – We updated import functionality for the Disbursement Detail External Add file (message class DLEXDISB) to only allow a date range of 10/1/2019 to 12/28/2024 for 2020-2021 disbursement transactions.

### Rebuild

- **Informed Borrowing Fields Added to Rebuild** – DL Tools now rebuilds the three new informed borrowing fields added by the COD System for 2020-2021 and forward. The new fields (Informed Borrowing Complete, Informed Borrowing ID, and Informed Borrowing Completion Date) are located on the new Inform Borr (Informed Borrowing) sub-tab of the Origination (Direct Loan) tab in EDEExpress 2020-2021.

Direct Loan borrowers can now access Federal Student Aid's [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) Web site and review their outstanding loan balance or, if they have no balance, the average loan balance at the school they plan to attend. This online process is available to student and parent borrowers for all loan types and is optional for the 2020-2021 award year.

The borrower's completion of Annual Student Loan Acknowledgement process automatically updates the values for the new informed borrowing fields on the COD Common Record, which are then provided to schools in response files.

## Getting Help

### *Software Help*

DL Tools Release 20.0 provides a help system to assist you with system setup and more details regarding use of this software tool.

General help is available from the menu bar and field help is available by pressing the F1 key. See the Using Help topic for more information.

Make sure you include both your TG number and your telephone number in your e-mail message.

### *CPS/SAIG Technical Support*

For questions regarding technical assistance and software functionality, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support. You can reach CPS/SAIG Technical Support Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. (ET), at **800/330-5947**. You can also send e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions to [CPSSAIG@ed.gov](mailto:CPSSAIG@ed.gov).

### *Additional Assistance*

If you have questions regarding the Direct Loan reconciliation or closeout process, please contact the COD School Relations Center at 800/848-0978 or send an e-mail to [CODSupport@ed.gov](mailto:CODSupport@ed.gov).

You can also post questions regarding DL Tools on FSATECH. FSATECH is an electronic mailing list for technical questions about Federal Student Aid systems, software, and mainframe products. For more information on subscribing to FSATECH, go to [ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html](http://ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html).

Federal Student Aid staff or the financial aid partner responsible for the system will research your question and post a response to the listserv so that everyone can benefit from the information.