

§ 685.217

suspends any efforts to collect from the borrower on any affected loan. The Secretary may continue to receive borrower payments.

(2) If a borrower who is sent a discharge application fails to submit the application within 60 days of the Secretary's sending the discharge application, the Secretary resumes collection and grants forbearance of principal and interest for the period in which collection activity was suspended. The Secretary may capitalize any interest accrued and not paid during that period.

(3) If a borrower qualifies for a discharge, the Secretary notifies the borrower in writing. The Secretary resumes collection and grants forbearance of principal and interest on the portion of the loan not discharged for the period in which collection activity was suspended. The Secretary may capitalize any interest accrued and not paid during that period.

(4) If a borrower does not qualify for a discharge, the Secretary notifies the borrower in writing of the reasons for the determination. The Secretary resumes collection and grants forbearance of principal and interest for the period in which collection activity was suspended. The Secretary may capitalize any interest accrued and not paid during that period.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1845-0021)

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087a et seq.)

[64 FR 58969, Nov. 1, 1999. Redesignated and amended at 65 FR 65629, Nov. 1, 2000; 66 FR 34765, June 29, 2001]

§ 685.217 Teacher loan forgiveness program.

(a) *General.* The teacher loan forgiveness program is intended to encourage individuals to enter and continue in the teaching profession. For new borrowers, the Secretary will repay up to a combined total of \$5,000 of subsidized and unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans, Direct Subsidized Loans, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, and, in certain cases, Federal Consolidation Loans or Direct Consolidation Loans. The forgiveness program is only available to a borrower who has no outstanding loan balance under the FFEL Program or the Direct Loan Program on October 1,

1998 or who has no outstanding loan balance on the date he or she obtains a loan after October 1, 1998. In addition, the borrower must have been employed as a full-time teacher for five consecutive complete academic years, at least one of which was after the 1997-1998 academic year, in certain eligible elementary or secondary schools that serve low-income families. The loan for which the borrower is seeking forgiveness must have been made prior to the end of the fifth year of qualifying teaching service.

(b) *Definitions.* The following definitions apply to this section:

Academic year means one complete school year at the same school, or two complete and consecutive half years at different schools, or two complete and consecutive half years from different school years at either the same school or different schools. Half years exclude summer sessions and generally fall within a twelve-month period. For schools that have a year-round program of instruction, a minimum of nine months is considered an academic year.

Elementary school means a public or nonprofit private school that provides elementary education as determined by State law or the Secretary if that school is not in a State.

Full-time means the standard used by a State in defining full-time employment as a teacher. For a borrower teaching in more than one school, the determination of full-time is based on the combination of all qualifying employment.

Secondary school means a public or nonprofit private school that provides secondary education as determined by State law or the Secretary if the school is not in a State.

Teacher means a person who provides direct classroom teaching or classroom-type teaching in a non-classroom setting, including Special Education teachers.

(c) *Borrower eligibility.* (1) A borrower may obtain loan forgiveness under this program if he or she has been employed as a full-time teacher for five consecutive complete academic years, at least one of which was after the 1997-1998 academic year, in an elementary or secondary school that—

(i) Is in a school district that qualifies for funds under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended;

(ii) Has been selected by the Secretary based on a determination that more than 30 percent of the school's total enrollment is made up of children who qualify for services provided under title I; and

(iii) Is listed in the *Annual Directory of Designated Low-Income Schools for Teacher Cancellation Benefits*. If this directory is not available before May 1 of any year, the previous year's directory may be used.

(2) If the school at which the borrower is employed meets the requirements specified in paragraph (c)(1) of this section for at least one year of the borrower's five consecutive complete academic years of teaching and the school failed to meet those requirements in subsequent years, those subsequent years of teaching qualify for purposes of this section for that borrower.

(3) A borrower who is employed as an elementary school teacher must demonstrate knowledge and teaching skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and other areas of the elementary school curriculum, as certified by the chief administrative officer of the school in which the borrower was employed.

(4) A borrower who is employed as a secondary school teacher must teach in a subject area that is relevant to the borrower's academic major as certified by the chief administrative officer of the school in which the borrower was employed.

(5) The academic year may be counted as one of the borrower's five consecutive complete academic years if the borrower completes at least one-half of the academic year and the borrower's employer considers the borrower to have fulfilled his or her contract requirements for the academic year for the purposes of salary increases, tenure, and retirement if the borrower is unable to complete an academic year due to—

(i) A return to postsecondary education, on at least a half-time basis, that is directly related to the performance of the service described in this section;

(ii) A condition that is covered under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) (19 U.S.C. 2654); or

(iii) A call or order to active duty status for more than 30 days as a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces named in section 10101 of title 10, United States Code.

(6) If a borrower meets the requirements of paragraph (c)(5) of this section, the borrower's period of postsecondary education, active duty, or qualifying FMLA condition including the time necessary for the borrower to resume qualifying teaching no later than the beginning of the next regularly scheduled academic year, does not constitute a break in the required five consecutive years of qualifying teaching service.

(7) A borrower who teaches in more than one qualifying school during an academic year and demonstrates that the combined teaching was the equivalent of full-time, as supported by the certification of one or more of the chief administrative officers of the schools involved, is considered to have completed one academic year of qualifying teaching.

(8) A borrower is not eligible for teacher loan forgiveness on a defaulted loan unless the borrower has made satisfactory repayment arrangements to re-establish title IV eligibility, as defined in § 685.200(b).

(9) A borrower may not receive loan forgiveness for qualifying teaching service under this section if the borrower receives a benefit for the same teaching service under subtitle D of title I of the National and Community Service Act of 1990.

(d) *Forgiveness amount.* (1) A qualified borrower is eligible for forgiveness of up to \$5,000 of the aggregate amount of a borrower's Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Loan, or Direct Consolidation Loan obligation that is outstanding after the borrower completes his or her fifth consecutive complete academic year of teaching as described in paragraph (c) of this section. Only the outstanding portion of a Direct Consolidation Loan that was used

to repay an eligible subsidized or unsubsidized Federal Stafford loan, an eligible Direct Subsidized Loan, or an eligible Direct Unsubsidized Loan qualifies for loan forgiveness under this section.

(2) A borrower may not receive more than a total of \$5,000 in loan forgiveness for outstanding principal and accrued interest under both this section and 34 CFR §682.215.

(3) The Secretary does not refund payments that were received from or on behalf of a borrower who qualifies for loan forgiveness under this section.

(e) *Application.* (1) A borrower, after completing the qualifying teacher service, must request loan forgiveness from the Secretary on a form provided by the Secretary.

(2) If the Secretary determines that the borrower meets the eligibility requirements for loan forgiveness under this section, the Secretary—

(i) Notifies the borrower of this determination; and

(ii) Unless otherwise instructed by the borrower, applies the proceeds of the loan forgiveness first to any outstanding Direct Unsubsidized Loan balances, next to any outstanding Direct Subsidized Loan balances, next to any qualifying Direct Unsubsidized Consolidation Loan balances, and last to any qualifying outstanding Direct Subsidized Consolidation Loan balances.

(3) If the Secretary determines that the borrower does not meet the eligibility requirements for loan forgiveness under this section, the Secretary notifies the borrower of this determination.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under the control number 1845–0021)

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087a *et seq.*)

[65 FR 65629, Nov. 1, 2000]

§§ 685.218–685.219 [Reserved]

§ 685.220 Consolidation.

(a) *Direct Consolidation Loans.* A borrower may consolidate one or more education loans made under certain Federal programs into one or more Direct Consolidation Loans. Loans consolidated into a Direct Consolidation Loan are discharged when the Direct Consolidation Loan is originated.

(b) *Loans eligible for consolidation.* The following loans may be consolidated into a Direct Consolidation Loan:

- (1) Federal Stafford Loans.
- (2) Guaranteed Student Loans.
- (3) Federal Insured Student Loans (FISL).
- (4) Direct Subsidized Loans.
- (5) Direct Subsidized Consolidation Loans.
- (6) Federal Perkins Loans.
- (7) National Direct Student Loans (NDSL).
- (8) National Defense Student Loans (NDSL).
- (9) Federal PLUS Loans.
- (10) Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS).
- (11) Direct PLUS Loans.
- (12) Direct PLUS Consolidation Loans.
- (13) Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans.
- (14) Federal Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS).
- (15) Federal Consolidation Loans.
- (16) Direct Unsubsidized Loans.
- (17) Direct Unsubsidized Consolidation Loans.
- (18) Auxiliary Loans to Assist Students (ALAS).
- (19) Health Professions Student Loans (HPSL) and Loans for Disadvantaged Students (LDS) made under subpart II of part A of title VII of the Public Health Service Act.
- (20) Health Education Assistance Loans (HEAL).
- (21) Nursing loans made under subpart II of part B of title VIII of the Public Health Service Act.

(c) *Types of Direct Consolidation Loans.* (1) The loans identified in paragraphs (b)(1) through (8) of this section may be consolidated into a Direct Subsidized Consolidation Loan.

(2) The loans identified in paragraphs (b)(9) through (12) of this section may be consolidated into a Direct PLUS Consolidation Loan.

(3) The loans identified in paragraphs (b)(13) through (21) of this section may be consolidated into a Direct Unsubsidized Consolidation Loan. In addition, Federal Consolidation Loans under (b)(15) of this section may be consolidated into a Direct Subsidized Consolidation Loan, if they are eligible for interest benefits during a deferment