

confidence level with a plus or minus 5 percent confidence interval, for use in determining the number of borrowers who should be excluded from the calculation of the cohort default rate due to improper loan servicing or collection.

(e) *Loan servicing records.* Loan servicing records are the collection and payment history records—

(1) Provided to the guaranty agency by the lender and used by the guaranty agency in determining whether to pay a claim on a defaulted loan; or

(2) Maintained by our Direct Loan Servicer that are used in determining your cohort default rate.

(f) *Determination.* (1) We determine the number of loans, included in your representative sample of loan servicing records, that defaulted due to improper loan servicing or collection, as described in paragraph (b) of this section.

(2) Based on our determination, we use a statistically valid methodology to exclude the corresponding percentage of borrowers from both the numerator and denominator of the calculation of your cohort default rate.

(3) Our recalculation of your cohort default rate does not affect the number of borrowers who are considered to be in default due to payments made under the Direct Loan Program's income contingent repayment plan, under the criteria in § 668.183(c)(1)(iii).

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1845-0022)

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1085, 1094, 1099c)

§ 668.194 Economically disadvantaged appeals.

(a) *Eligibility.* As described in this section, you may appeal a notice of a loss of eligibility under § 668.187 if an independent auditor's opinion certifies that your low income rate is two-thirds or more and—

(1) You offer an associate, baccalaureate, graduate, or professional degree, and your completion rate is 70 percent or more; or

(2) You do not offer an associate, baccalaureate, graduate, or professional degree, and your placement rate is 44 percent or more.

(b) *Low income rate.* (1) Your low income rate is the percentage of your

students, as described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, who—

(i) For an award year that overlaps the 12-month period selected under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, have an expected family contribution, as defined in 34 CFR 690.2, that is equal to or less than the largest expected family contribution that would allow a student to receive one-half of the maximum Federal Pell Grant award, regardless of the student's enrollment status or cost of attendance; or

(ii) For a calendar year that overlaps the 12-month period selected under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, have an adjusted gross income that, when added to the adjusted gross income of the student's parents (if the student is a dependent student) or spouse (if the student is a married independent student), is less than the amount listed in the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines for the size of the student's family unit.

(2) The students who are used to determine your low income rate include only students who were enrolled on at least a half-time basis in an eligible program at your institution during any part of a 12-month period that ended during the 6 months immediately preceding the cohort's fiscal year.

(c) *Completion rate.* (1) Your completion rate is the percentage of your students, as described in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, who—

(i) Completed the educational programs in which they were enrolled;

(ii) Transferred from your institution to a higher level educational program;

(iii) Remained enrolled and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of their educational programs at the end of the same 12-month period used to calculate the low income rate; or

(iv) Entered active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States within 1 year after their last date of attendance at your institution.

(2) The students who are used to determine your completion rate include only regular students who were—

(i) Initially enrolled on a full-time basis in an eligible program; and

(ii) Originally scheduled to complete their programs during the same 12-

month period used to calculate the low income rate.

(d) *Placement rate.* (1) Except as provided in paragraph (d)(2) of this section, your placement rate is the percentage of your students, as described in paragraphs (d)(3) and (d)(4) of this section, who—

(i) Are employed, in an occupation for which you provided training, on the date following 1 year after their last date of attendance at your institution;

(ii) Were employed for at least 13 weeks, in an occupation for which you provided training, between the date they enrolled at your institution and the first date that is more than a year after their last date of attendance at your institution; or

(iii) Entered active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States within 1 year after their last date of attendance at your institution.

(2) For the purposes of this section, a former student is not considered to have been employed based on any employment by your institution.

(3) The students who are used to determine your placement rate include only former students who—

(i) Were initially enrolled in an eligible program on at least a half-time basis;

(ii) Were originally scheduled, at the time of enrollment, to complete their educational programs during the same 12-month period used to calculate the low income rate; and

(iii) Remained in the program beyond the point at which a student would have received a 100 percent tuition refund from you.

(4) A student is not included in the calculation of your placement rate if that student, on the date that is 1 year after the student's originally scheduled completion date, remains enrolled in the same program and is making satisfactory progress.

(e) *Scheduled to complete.* In calculating a completion or placement rate under this section, the date on which a student is originally scheduled to complete a program is based on—

(1) For a student who is initially enrolled full-time, the amount of time specified in your enrollment contract, catalog, or other materials for comple-

tion of the program by a full-time student; or

(2) For a student who is initially enrolled less than full-time, the amount of time that it would take the student to complete the program if the student remained at that level of enrollment throughout the program.

(f) *Deadline for submitting an appeal.* (1) Within 30 days after you receive the notice of your loss of eligibility, you must send us your management's written assertion, as described in the Cohort Default Rate Guide.

(2) Within 60 days after you receive the notice of your loss of eligibility, you must send us the independent auditor's opinion described in paragraph (g) of this section.

(g) *Independent auditor's opinion.* (1) The independent auditor's opinion must state whether your management's written assertion, as you provided it to the auditor and to us, meets the requirements for an economically disadvantaged appeal and is fairly stated in all material respects.

(2) The engagement that forms the basis of the independent auditor's opinion must be an examination-level compliance attestation engagement performed in accordance with—

(i) The American Institute of Certified Public Accountant's (AICPA) Statement on Standards for Attestation Engagements, Compliance Attestation (AICPA, Professional Standards, vol. 1, AT sec. 500), as amended (these standards may be obtained by calling the AICPA's order department, at 1-888-777-7077); and

(ii) Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

(h) *Determination.* You do not lose eligibility under § 668.187 if—

(1) Your independent auditor's opinion agrees that you meet the requirements for an economically disadvantaged appeal; and

(2) We determine that the independent auditor's opinion and your management's written assertion—

(i) Meet the requirements for an economically disadvantaged appeal; and

(ii) Are not contradicted or otherwise proven to be incorrect by information we maintain, to an extent that would

render the independent auditor's opinion unacceptable.

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(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1085, 1094, 1099c)

§ 668.195 Participation rate index appeals.

(a) *Eligibility.* (1) You may appeal a notice of a loss of eligibility under § 668.187(a)(1), based on one cohort default rate over 40 percent, if your participation rate index for that cohort's fiscal year is equal to or less than 0.06015.

(2) You may appeal a notice of a loss of eligibility under § 668.187(a)(2), based on three cohort default rates of 25 percent or greater, if your participation rate index is equal to or less than 0.0375 for any of those three cohorts' fiscal years.

(b) *Calculating your participation rate index.* (1) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, your participation rate index for a fiscal year is determined by multiplying your cohort default rate for that fiscal year by the percentage that is derived by dividing—

(i) The number of students who received an FFELP or a Direct Loan Program loan to attend your institution during a period of enrollment, as defined in 34 CFR 682.200 or 685.102, that overlaps any part of a 12-month period that ended during the 6 months immediately preceding the cohort's fiscal year, by

(ii) The number of regular students who were enrolled at your institution on at least a half-time basis during any part of the same 12-month period.

(2) If your cohort default rate for a fiscal year is calculated as an average rate under § 668.183(d)(2), you may calculate your participation rate index for that fiscal year using either that average rate or the cohort default rate that would be calculated for the fiscal year alone using the method described in § 668.183(d)(1).

(c) *Deadline for submitting an appeal.* You must send us your appeal under this section, including all supporting documentation, within 30 days after you receive the notice of your loss of eligibility.

(d) *Determination.* (1) You do not lose eligibility under § 668.187 if we determine that you meet the requirements for a participation rate index appeal.

(2) If we determine that your participation rate index for a fiscal year is equal to or less than 0.0375, under paragraph (d)(1) of this section, we also excuse you from any subsequent loss of eligibility under § 668.187(a)(2) that would be based on the official cohort default rate for that fiscal year.

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(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1085, 1094, 1099c)

§ 668.196 Average rates appeals.

(a) *Eligibility.* (1) You may appeal a notice of a loss of eligibility under § 668.187(a)(1), based on one cohort default rate over 40 percent, if that cohort default rate is calculated as an average rate under § 668.183(d)(2).

(2) You may appeal a notice of a loss of eligibility under § 668.187(a)(2), based on three cohort default rates of 25 percent or greater, if at least two of those cohort default rates—

(i) Are calculated as average rates under § 668.183(d)(2); and

(ii) Would be less than 25 percent if calculated for the fiscal year alone using the method described in § 668.183(d)(1).

(b) *Deadline for submitting an appeal.* (1) Before notifying you of your official cohort default rate, we make an initial determination about whether you qualify for an average rates appeal. If we determine that you qualify, we notify you of that determination at the same time that we notify you of your official cohort default rate.

(2) If you disagree with our initial determination, you must send us your average rates appeal, including all supporting documentation, within 30 days after you receive the notice of your loss of eligibility.

(c) *Determination.* You do not lose eligibility under § 668.187 if we determine that you meet the requirements for an average rates appeal.

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(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1082, 1085, 1094, 1099c)