

June 2020

RE: Direct Loan Tools for Windows, Release 20.0

Dear DL Tools Users:

Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the availability of William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (DL) Tools for Windows, Release 20.0. DL Tools is a Windows-based application designed to provide the following functionality related to all Direct Loan schools' software:

- Compare the School Account Statement (SAS) to loans and actual disbursements recorded in EDEExpress 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 EDEExpress using an automated process.
- Run the Disbursement Measurement Tool Report to help monitor Direct Loan records in your EDEExpress database.

Release 20.0 was developed to process data for the 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 cycles. Each annual release of DL Tools adds functionality for the new processing cycle and removes the oldest cycle, enabling DL Tools to assist you with Direct Loan tasks for the three most recent cycles.

All Direct Loan schools can use the SAS Compare and Cash Management functions. The Rebuild function can be used by schools to rebuild Direct Loan records in EDEExpress for Windows databases. Non-EDEExpress users can export data from a rebuilt EDEExpress database to recreate non-EDEExpress loans or databases. For information on creating file formats and exporting data from EDEExpress to an external system, see Volume III of the *2020-2021 Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) Technical Reference*.

The Disbursement Measurement Tool Report (available in DL Tools if connected to EDEExpress) and the List–Document Activity report (available in EDEExpress) 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 DL Tools reports to use, when to run them, and what action to take as a result. You can use the reports to review progress as part of a continuous improvement plan.

If you do not use EDEExpress, you can still use DL Tools to assist in reconciling Direct Loans. You can import cash, loan, or disbursement data from your external Direct Loan system into DL Tools and compare your data to the SAS. Fixed-length record layouts for each of these file types are included in Volume IV, Section 3 of the *2020-2021 COD Technical Reference*.

Important DL Tools Comparison Reports Note: DL Tools Loan and Disbursement Comparison Reports are designed to be run using the SAS with year-to-date (YTD) detail, *not* monthly detail. See Volume VI, Section 8 of the *2020-2021 COD Technical Reference* for information about default settings and SAS option selections. You can change your SAS options (YTD detail, for example) by accessing the COD Web site at cod.ed.gov.

About this Cover Letter

This letter includes the following information:

- Release 20.0 installation and login guidance
- A list of additional enhancements available in Release 20.0
- Release 20.0 software and user documentation download instructions
- Microsoft Windows Compatibility and Section 508 Compliance notices
- Contact information for technical support and additional assistance

Release 20.0 Installation

DL Tools Release 20.0 can be installed as an upgrade to DL Tools Release 19.0, which enables you to carry 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 data from your Release 19.0 database forward to Release 20.0. You cannot upgrade to Release 20.0 from a DL Tools version earlier than Release 19.0. If you require DL Tools functionality for award years prior to 2018-2019, use Release 17.0 or earlier DL Tools releases.

To upgrade your DL Tools database from Release 19.0 to Release 20.0, run the Stand Alone Custom installation option (for standalone PCs) or the Workstation installation option (for PC workstations accessing a database stored on a network drive).

If you are installing the DL Tools software for the first time, choose the Stand Alone Full installation option (for standalone PCs) or the Network Server and Workstation installation options (for PC workstations accessing a database stored on a network drive).

For more information on installing DL Tools Release 20.0, see the *DL Tools for Windows Release 20.0 Installation Guide*.

Logging into DL Tools

When you first access the software after installation, the default User ID is SYSADMIN and the default password is **\$y\$tem Adm1n**. Be sure to include the space between **\$y\$tem** and **Adm1n** (the two parts of the default password).

After you enter the default user ID and password, DL Tools requires that you immediately define a new password for the SYSADMIN. New passwords must be a minimum of 12 characters and must include at least one uppercase letter, one lowercase letter, one number, and one keyboard character that is not a letter or number (such as an exclamation mark or other punctuation symbol). You can adjust the minimum password length and other requirements in the Password Setup dialog box (**Tools, Setup, Password Setup**).

In addition, the SYSADMIN user ID only provides access to critical administrative functions in order to limit its use for routine software tasks and improve your ability to trace actions taken in the software to specific users. DL Tools administrators at your school should create unique user IDs in Security Users setup with the necessary access and log into the software under those IDs for most software tasks they perform.

For more information on security setup, see DL Tools Help in the software and the *DL Tools Release 20.0 Installation Guide*.

Release 20.0 Enhancements

The following additional enhancements are available in DL Tools Release 20.0:

General Changes

- **Program Year 2020-2021 Added** – We added DL Tools functionality and message classes applicable to program year 2020-2021. Be sure to select the appropriate Program Year value (2018-2019, 2019-2020, or 2020-2021) in the DL Tools toolbar before running major functions such as import, print, or compare.

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 EExpress 2020-2021.

Direct Loan borrowers can now access Federal Student Aid's 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.

Compatibility and Compliance

Microsoft Windows Information

DL Tools, Release 20.0 is supported currently for the Microsoft Windows 7, Windows 8, and Windows 10 operating systems. For more information on minimal and optimal system recommendations, see the *DL Tools Release 20.0 Installation Guide*, which is available on the IFAP Web site.

Note: Watch for an electronic announcement on the IFAP Web site later in 2020 providing further direction on the use of Microsoft operating systems other than Windows 10 with DL Tools.

Section 508 Compliance

To comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, DL Tools 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, all DL Tools fields that are shaded yellow to indicate they are required also display a “-R” after the software label. The “-R” indicates a required field.

Getting Help

If You Have Technical Support Questions

Contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support if you have questions regarding DL Tools installation or functionality or you require other technical assistance.

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.

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 <https://www2.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsatechsubscribe.html>.

If You Have Questions Regarding the COD System

If you have any questions about the COD System, contact the COD School Relations Center at **800/848-0978**. You may also e-mail CODSupport@ed.gov.