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COD Processing Update

April 29th, 2016
NEWS/UPDATES

- **Impact on COD Processing May 1, 2016 (4/28/16)**

Federal Student Aid is planning several system maintenance activities on May 1, 2016. In addition, the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) will be unavailable from 3:00 A.M. until 11:00 A.M. (ET) due to its regular Sunday morning maintenance. These activities will result in outages of certain COD System functionality for a period of time.

An explanation of how these activities will impact COD System availability and processing follows below. Please review this information to determine if processing at your school will be affected.

Extended COD System Maintenance

From 12:00 A.M. (ET) until 12:00 P.M. (ET) on Sunday, May 1, 2016—

- Users will not be able to submit or retrieve data via the COD Web site.
- Users will not be able to access the COD Reports area of the COD Web site.
- An individual will not be able to complete any actions or view loan correspondence via the StudentLoans.gov Web site.
- An individual will not be able to complete any actions via the TEACH Grant Web site.
- Batches submitted by schools via the SAIG will be held or schools will receive an error message informing them that the SAIG is unavailable and that the data must be transmitted at a later time.

Contact Information

Federal Student Aid appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes this important activity. If you have any questions about the COD System or the StudentLoans.gov Web site, contact the COD School Relations Center. If you have any questions about the SAIG, contact the CPS/SAIG Technical Support and the TFA Support Center at 800/330-5947 or by e-mail at CPSSAIG@ed.gov.

- **2015-2016 Pell Grant Deobligation Due To Verification Status "W" (4/28/16)**

On April 27, 2016, Federal Student Aid deobligated 2015-2016 Award Year Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) disbursements that did not have a verification status updated from "W" to a valid status of "V" or "S". As noted in the warning message that Federal Student Aid sent to affected schools on April 12, 2016, these disbursements were considered overawards and reduced to a zero dollar amount ($0.00), even though the disbursements were previously accepted in the COD System. This deobligation affected Pell Grant disbursements at approximately 233 schools.

A school affected by the deobligation will receive or see the following information:

- Receive a PGTX (PGTX16OP message class) file in the school's Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailbox indicating the number of students and total amount of the decrease

- Receive a system-generated negative disbursement file (CRND16OP message class/ND document type)

- Receive a new Electronic Statement of Account (ESOA) that reflects the decrease unless there are other offsetting increase adjustments

- See a change in the school's Current Funding Level (CFL) that reflects the reduced disbursements

Notes:

1.) In addition to receiving the above information, schools incorrectly received a Pell Reconciliation Report (PGRC16OP message class) file. This report should be ignored. Federal Student Aid will correct this issue going forward and apologizes for any inconvenience the issue has caused.

2.) This deobligation process will not affect a school that did not have students with a verification status of "W" just prior to April 27, 2016.

A school affected by the deobligation should carefully review the information below.

Verification Completed or Not Required

If verification has been completed as required or is not required and a school believes a student's 2015-2016 disbursement should not have been reduced to zero, the school must complete the following steps in this order:

1) The school must send an update to the verification status of the award, and the COD System must accept the update.

2) Once the verification status is updated to "V" or "S", the school may submit the actual disbursement (Disbursement Release Indicator or DRI equals "True") for the correct amount to the COD System for processing.

Notes:

- For the conditions under which each verification status code should be used, refer to [the September 28, 2007 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site](#).

- In the following two cases, it is acceptable for the verification status code field to be blank:

  o If the student was not selected for verification or if a selected transaction was received by the school after the student was no longer enrolled and the school has reported the verification status code as "W", the school should change the "W" to blank (nil = "True").

  o If the student was not selected for verification or if a selected transaction was received by the school after the student was no longer enrolled and the school has reported no verification status code to date, the school does not need to submit a verification status code and should leave the field blank (nil = "True").

- The school can perform steps 1 and 2 above in the same submission to the COD System if reported in the same student record.

Contact Information: If you have questions, contact the COD School Relations Center at 800/474-7268 for Grants or 800/848-0978 for Direct Loans. You may also e-mail CODSupport@ed.gov .

Verification Deadline

Some of the 2015-2016 disbursements that were reduced to zero ($0.00) may have been for students who are still within the allowable timeframe for submitting verification documentation/completing the verification process by the deadlines specified in the "Deadline Dates for Reports and Other Records for the 2015-2016 Award Year" published in the Federal Register on March 11, 2015. The March 11, 2015 notice is also posted on the IFAP Web site.

If a school needs additional time to complete verification for an individual student in accordance with the allowable timeframe in the Federal Register notice, the school may resubmit a disbursement record with a value greater than zero ($0.00) until September 30, 2016. After September 30, 2016, the COD System will no longer accept "W" as a valid verification status code for 2015-2016 Pell Grant awards.

If you have any questions regarding the 2015-2016 Pell Grant deobligation of disbursements due to verification status "W," contact the COD School Relations Center.

- **COD System Release – Post-Implementation Issues and Updates (4/27/16)**

    During the period March 9-14, 2016, Federal Student Aid implemented additional Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System functionality to support the processing for the 2016-2017 Award Year. After major system releases such as this one, Federal Student Aid routinely informs the higher education community if post-implementation issues arise.

    Federal Student Aid has resolved or is working to resolve a number of post-implementation issues. These issues are summarized below along with the current status for each. As issues are resolved, or as additional issues arise, they will be reported here. For ease of reporting, the newest items will appear at the end of the list.

Post-Implementation Issue Summary

1. **[RESOLVED] School Note Message Tag Missing in Responses:** The School Note Message field was not populated in all complex elements (Person, Award, and Disbursement) within Response Documents. This issue was *resolved* on March 15, 2016 and all of the respective elements will be included in the response files going forward. If a school needs assistance with an incorrect response, it should contact the COD School Relations Center.

2. **[RESOLVED] First Name and Middle Initial Tags Missing in Counseling Responses (message class: CREC):** The First Name and Middle Initial tags were not returned in the counseling system-generated response. This issue was *resolved* on March 16, 2016 and the tags will be returned in the counseling response files going forward. If a school needs assistance with an incorrect response, it should contact the COD School Relations Center.

3. **[RESOLVED] Truncating of Cents in Payment to Servicer Responses (message class: CRPS):** If the dollar amount paid is a whole number, the decimal and any amount after the decimal is being truncated. In other words, if the payment was $100.00, the (.00) is being removed in the response

file. This issue was *resolved* over the March 19-20, 2016 weekend. If a school needs assistance with an incorrect response, it should contact the COD School Relations Center.

4. **Pell Grant Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU) Report Issues (message class: PGLE):** There are two parts to this issue.

   a. **[RESOLUTION SCHEDULED]** In the Transaction Number field, leading zeros are being truncated, and the field is showing only a one-digit number. So, Transaction Number 01 is showing as 1. Federal Student Aid has identified the cause of the issue and expects to fix it in *late May 2016*. In the meantime, schools can manually update the field to enable it to be imported.

   b. **[CLOSED]** In the LEU Amount field, if the LEU percentage amount is a whole number, the decimal and any amount after the decimal is being truncated. In other words, if the LEU is 456.000, the (.000) is being removed in the report. Federal Student Aid has determined that this is working as designed and that the report has returned whole numbers without decimals prior to the most recent COD System release. This issue is considered *closed*.

5. **[CLOSED] CRAA17OP Response Files Not Being Returned:** Some schools reported not receiving CRAA17OP response files when sending CRAA17IN files. Federal Student Aid has confirmed that CRAA17OP files are being returned to schools, and considers the issue *closed*.

6. **[RESOLVED] School Selection Issues on StudentLoans.gov:** Some borrowers were receiving an error message when attempting to select certain schools during the school selection process within the different processing flows on StudentLoans.gov. Federal Student Aid *resolved* this issue on March 16, 2016.

7. **[RESOLVED] Pell Grant Report Issues:** Federal Student Aid identified several issues impacting some Pell Grant Reports, including the Pell Grant Multiple Reporting Record and the Pell Grant Reconciliation File. These issues were preventing schools from importing the reports. Federal Student Aid *resolved* this issue on April 14, 2016.

8. **[RESOLVED] System-Generated Responses for StudentLoans.gov Activity on March 9, 2016 Not Returned to Schools:** Federal Student Aid has determined that system-generated responses for *any* activity (counseling, MPNs, Direct PLUS Loan Requests, etc.) completed on StudentLoans.gov on March 9, 2016 were not sent to schools prior to the system outage. On March 21, 2016, Federal Student Aid sent all outstanding responses for March 9, 2016. System-generated responses for activity completed on StudentLoans.gov since March 14, 2016 are being sent.

9. **[RESOLVED] School Participation Date Ranges for Direct PLUS Loan Requests Not Updated or Saved Correctly:** Some schools' Participation Date Ranges for Direct PLUS Loan Requests were not updated correctly and some school users are not able to update or save changes to the dates even if they are authorized to do so (School User Levels 3-5). The incorrect participation dates may be

preventing borrowers from completing Direct PLUS Loan Requests on StudentLoans.gov. In some cases, schools received 2016-2017 information before they intended it to be available to borrowers. These issues were *resolved* over the March 19-20, 2016 weekend. *Note:* Schools that need assistance with activity that was attempted March 14-18, 2016 should contact the COD School Relations Center.

10. **[RESOLVED]** **MPN Status Code Tag Missing in Responses (message class: CRDL):** Some schools were not receiving the MPN Status Code tag in some responses. Generally, the tag was missing from only "standard" responses; it was being returned in "full" responses. Federal Student Aid *resolved* the issue the week of April 3, 2016, and the MPN Status Code is being returned in responses.

11. **[RESOLVED]** **Action Queue Search Results of More Than 100 Records Not Exporting in CSV Format Correctly:** With this issue, if a school used the Action Queue Search function and the search results return more than 100 records, the results were not exporting in CSV format correctly and some results are missing. Federal Student Aid *resolved* the issue on April 24, 2016, and all search results are exporting correctly.

12. **[RESOLUTION SCHEDULED]** **SAS Disbursement Detail On-Demand:** Some schools may be unable to import the file in comma-delimited format. Federal Student Aid has determined the cause of the issue and expects to fix it in on *April 28, 2016*.

Federal Student Aid appreciates your patience as it identifies and corrects post-implementation issues.

For further assistance with COD System processing or with any of the issues listed above, schools should contact the COD School Relations Center.

CURRENT ISSUES

DIRECT LOANS

DL School Account Statement Issues [(4/8/16) Updated 4/20/16]

In addition to the post-implementation issues being tracked separately, Federal Student Aid is aware of two issues related to the March Direct Loan School Account Statement (SAS).

1. **[RESOLUTION SCHEDULED]** **Duplicate SAS Report with Only Cash Activity:** For the March

Direct Loan SAS sent to schools on Monday, April 4, 2016, some schools received a complete SAS report, and then also received an additional SAS report containing only the cash activity detail transactions. In these cases, the partial report can be ignored. Federal Student Aid has identified the cause of the issue and expects to fix it on *April 28, 2016*.

2. **[RESOLUTION SCHEDULED]** **Invalid Record Length Preventing SAS Report Import:** Some schools are unable to import the Direct Loan SAS Report (message classes: DSLF and DSDF) because of invalid record length errors. Federal

Student Aid has determined this is due to extra characters being added to rows when the borrower has a hyphenated last name, and the number of characters is longer than the set record length for all name fields. Federal Student Aid has identified the cause of the issue and expects to fix it on *April 28, 2016*.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience these issues have caused. If you have questions, contact the COD School Relations Center.

For a list of other current issues, refer to the "COD System Release - Post-Implementation Issues and Updates" item above.

GRANTS

TEACH GRANT School Account Statement Issue (Updated 4/22/16)

In addition to the post-implementation issues being tracked separately, Federal Student Aid is aware of an issue related to the TEACH Grant School Account Statement (SAS).

[RESOLUTION SCHEDULED] Unable to View TEACH Grant SAS Disbursement Detail On Demand Report: Some schools are unable to import the TEACH Grant SAS Disbursement Detail on Demand Report (message classes: TSOMxxOP, TSOYxxOP, and TSORxxOP). Federal Student Aid has determined this is due to the mismatched batch numbers in the header and trailer record. Federal Student Aid has identified the cause of the issue and expects to fix it on April 28, 2016. In the meantime, a school can contact the COD School Relations Center to receive a corrected report.

For a list of other current issues, refer to the "COD System Release - Post-Implementation Issues and Updates" item above.

Keep School Contact Information Current in the COD System (4/29/16)

We remind schools and third party servicers that contact information in the COD System must be kept current. Contact information is extremely important for us to be able to reach the right people at the school, particularly about program-specific issues. The e-mail addresses for the President, Financial Aid Administrator, Pell Grant Financial Aid Officer, and Direct Loan Financial Aid Officer are used to deliver time-sensitive materials and critical COD processing information to the school.

Having current contact information for the Pell Grant Financial Aid Officer and Direct Loan Financial Aid Officer is most critical for a school that is an additional location to a main campus. The information allows us to contact those officers directly at the additional location rather than needing to contact the main campus.

For more information on updating School Contact Information, please refer to the December 20, 2012 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.