# COD Processing Update

August 1, 2014
**NEWS/UPDATES**

- **Second 2013-2014 Pell Grant Deobligation Due To Verification Status "W" (7/30/14)**

On July 29, 2014, Federal Student Aid deobligated 2013-2014 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 July 15, 2014, 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 142 schools.

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

- Receive a PGTX (PGTX14OP 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 (CRND14OP 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

*Note:* This deobligation process will not affect a school that did not have students with a verification status of "W" just prior to July 29, 2014.

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 2013-2014 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 "Application and Verification Guide" of the <u>2013-2014 Federal Student Aid Handbook</u>.

- 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.

### *Verification Deadline*

Some of the 2013-2014 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 as specified in the "Notice; 2013-2014 Deadline Dates for Reports and Other Records" published in the Federal Register on July 8, 2013. The July 8, 2013 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, 2014.  After September 30, 2014, the COD System will no longer accept "W" as a valid verification status code for 2013-2014 Pell Grant awards.

If you have any questions regarding the 2013-2014 Pell Grant deobligation of disbursements due to verification status "W," contact the COD School Relations Center.

- **EDExpress and Prior-Year CRSU Files (7/3/14)**

  Federal Student Aid will send Subsidized Usage Limit Applies (SULA) Calculation acknowledgement (CRSU) files for the 2014-2015 Award Year as well as prior award years.  CRSU15OP files for the 2014-2015 Award Year can be imported into EDExpress for Windows for 2014-2015.  For CRSU files received for the 2013-2014 Award Year and prior, schools using EDExpress can work with the files manually using user-defined fields. For example, for the CRSU14OP files, a school should:

  1) Create user-defined fields in EDExpress for Windows for 2013-2014
  2) Open the CRSU14 in a text editor or an XML editor and review the values for the SULA fields contained within, and
  3) Manually enter those values into the user-defined fields in EDExpress

  For additional assistance with EDExpress and working with prior-year CRSU files, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 800/330-5947 (TDD/TTY 800/511-5806) or by e-mail at CPSSAIG@ed.gov.

- **COD System Warning Edit 211 (5/20/14)**

  Since the April 2014 COD System implementation, many schools may have received COD Warning Edit 211 (Failure of Full Schema Enforcement).  As a reminder, this warning edit is intended to help schools and

software providers identify and fix invalid XML, but still allow the data to be processed by the COD System. Eventually, Federal Student Aid will reject batches sent with invalid XML and the data will not be processed by the COD System.

Since the cause of invalid XML can vary widely, Federal Student Aid cannot provide specific XML error(s) in the response when returning Warning Edit 211.  However, some examples of common errors are:

- Submitting tags out of order
- Submitting a string longer than the posted maximum length value specified by the COD XML Schema
- Submitting an integer or decimal outside of the posted value range specified by the COD XML Schema
- Neglecting to submit a required tag within a complex element (for example, <City> in the <PermanentAddress> block)
- Submitting tag names that do match the COD XML Schema (tag names are case-sensitive)

In addition, Federal Student Aid has posted guidance about using an XML validator tool to help schools identify XML errors.  This guidance is posted on the IFAP Web site in a document titled "COD XML Schema Validation Instructions."

When using an XML validator tool, schools should keep a few things in mind:

- Use of an XML validator tool is optional and a school will need to find the right XML validator tool based on its individual circumstances.  Some schools may need to work directly with their technical staff or software provider to select an XML validator tool.

- In some cases, a school can download an XML validator tool to a computer.  In other cases, a school can upload files to a Web-based XML validator tool.  If a school opts to use a Web-based XML validator tool and it has to upload files to run the validation, for security purposes, the school should use test data for the file upload.

- Federal Student Aid has validated the published COD XML Schema with some of the independent XML validator tools available, including XMLSpy, www.xmlvalidation.com, and XML Notepad 2007.

Finally, schools using a software vendor should consult with that vendor for additional assistance.  In many cases, a school may need to ensure it is using the latest version of the chosen product.
Additional information about the COD XML Schema can be found on the IFAP Web site at https://ifap.ed.gov/ifap/codXMLSchema.jsp.  For additional questions about COD System processing or the COD XML Schema, contact the COD School Relations Center.

## CURRENT ISSUES

### DIRECT LOANS

There are no Direct Loan-related issues at this time.

### GRANTS

There are no Grant-related issues at this time.

**Keep School Contact Information Current in the COD System (8/1/14)**

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.](#)