August 10, 2007

This edition of the COD Processing Update will remain on the COD Web site until a new edition is posted. We will notify schools via a COD Web Message when a new edition has been posted.

ACG, National SMART Grant, and Pell Grant Programs

COD News

COD System Maintenance Planned For Sunday, August 12, 2007 (08/08/07)
The COD System will undergo routine maintenance on Sunday, August 12, 2007 from 1:30 A.M. until 8:00 A.M. (ET). 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. The impact of these overlapping outages is as follows:

- Users will not be able to submit or retrieve data via the COD Web site between 1:30 A.M. and 8:00 A.M. (ET).

- Batches submitted by schools via the SAIG between 1:30 A.M. and 3:00 A.M. (ET) will be held and not acknowledged back to schools until after the SAIG comes back up at 11:00 A.M. (ET).

- Schools attempting to transmit batches via the SAIG between 3:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. (ET) will receive an error message informing them that the SAIG is unavailable and that the data must be transmitted at a later time.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience these outages may cause. If you have any questions about the COD System, contact the COD School Relations Center. If you have any questions about the SAIG, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 800/330-5947 or by e-mail at CPSSAIG@ed.gov.

Publication of ACG and National SMART Grant NPRM (08/09/07)
On August 7, 2007, the Department of Education (the Department) posted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register (72 FR 44050). This NPRM proposes changes to the regulations governing the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) programs.

The NPRM is available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. As stated in the NPRM, the Department must receive comments on the NPRM on or before September 6, 2007. Comment submission information is provided on page 44050 of the NPRM.

Publication of Student Assistance General Provisions NPRM (08/09/07)
On August 8, 2007, the Department of Education (the Department) posted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register (72 FR 44620). This NPRM proposes changes to the regulations on Student Assistance General Provisions and the Title IV programs.

The NPRM is available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. As stated in the NPRM, the Department must receive comments on the NPRM on or before September 7, 2007. Comment submission information is provided on page 44620 of the NPRM.

2007 Federal Student Aid Conferences (08/03/07)
The 2007 Federal Student Aid Conferences will be held October 30, 2007 through November 2, 2007 in New Orleans, LA, and November 26, 2007 through November 29, 2007 in San Diego, CA. These events were formerly known as the Electronic Access Conferences (EACs).

The fall Federal Student Aid Conferences are premiere training and networking opportunities for financial aid professionals. The conference program and session content at each event are essentially the same, and registration for both conferences is now open.

For further information regarding the upcoming 2007 Federal Student Aid Conferences, refer to Federal Student Aid's Conferences Web site.

COD System Customer Satisfaction Survey (07/12/07)
As explained in a July 12, 2007 Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, it is time for the annual COD System Customer Satisfaction Survey. Discovery Research Group, an independent contractor, is conducting the telephone survey. A random sample of schools will be contacted and asked to complete the survey. If your school is contacted, the survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete.

Federal Student Aid realizes that this is a busy time of year at your school, but feedback from customers is important for improving the quality of COD System products and services. Federal Student Aid appreciates the assistance of all schools that complete the survey and thanks you in advance for taking the time to help.

If you have any questions about the survey, contact the COD School Relations Center.

G5 Implementation Coming Soon (06/29/07)
Recently, the Department of Education (the Department) announced the development of *G5—a state-of-the-art electronic system for grants management and payments.* G5 will replace the current Grant Administration and Payments System (GAPS), including the e-Payments functionality used by schools to draw down Campus-Based, Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) funds. G5 will provide a number of performance, processing, and customer enhancements.

The Department will implement G5 in three phases over several years. Phase I of G5 will address e-Payments and provide improved drawdown functionality. Full implementation of Phase I is currently targeted for the last quarter of calendar year 2007—most likely over the Veterans Day holiday weekend (November 8-12, 2007).

Over the next several months, the Department will provide additional information about Phase I of G5. This information will usually be posted first on the GAPS e-Payments Web site and then will be followed by an Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, an update to this item in the COD Processing Update, and a message on the COD Web site. Please monitor these communications and share the information, as appropriate, with others at your school/organization.

The most current G5 information is posted on the GAPS e-Payments Web site and in a June 28, 2007 Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web site.

If you have any questions about the status and/or implementation of G5, you may e-mail G5_Admin@ed.gov (G5_Admin@ed.gov).

Updating School Contact Information in the COD System (06/26/07)
Federal Student Aid wants to remind all schools and third party servicers that contact information in the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System must be kept current. Contact information is extremely important for the COD School Relations Center. Of utmost importance are e-mail addresses and mailing addresses.

- The e-mail address for the Financial Aid Administrator is used to deliver time-sensitive materials and critical COD processing information to the school.

- For a Direct Loan school, correct mailing address information ensures that Direct Loan closeout letters are delivered timely and to the correct place.

Please ensure that all contact information is updated as needed.

Submitting Updates to School Contact Information

Depending on the type of information to be updated, a school must submit updates in one of the following two ways:

1. In accordance with 34 CFR 600.21, most changes must be reported using the Electronic Application for Approval to Participate in Federal Student Financial Aid Programs (E-App). This includes changes to the following information:

   - School name

   - School address (including any branches and locations)

   - Names of the President (or equivalent title), Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent title), and Financial Aid Administrator (or equivalent title)

   - Telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for the above officials

   Once the E-App is processed, the COD Web site is updated within 24 hours. It may take longer if there is additional information required by the School Participation Team (formerly known as the Case Management and Oversight Division).

2. Two specific changes can *only* be made via the COD Web site. These are changes to the Direct Loan Officer contact information/mailing address and the Pell Grant Officer contact information/mailing address. To view and/or update the current contact information for these officers, complete the following steps:

- Log in to the COD Web site.

- From the School tab, select the "Financial Aid Contact" link (located under the School Information menu). The School Financial Aid Contact Information screen displays the current information for the school.

- Update or add new contact information by clicking on the "Update" or "Add New" button in the heading for the officer to be updated.

- Complete the new information and submit the changes.

This information will be processed and updated immediately on the COD Web site.

An Electronic Announcement with this same information is posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. If you have any questions about updating your school's contact information, contact the COD School Relations Center.

NEW!

ACG and National SMART Grant Resources (08/10/07)
As a reminder, the Department of Education (the Department) has posted a number of Dear Colleague Letters and Electronic Announcements that communicate regulatory, policy, and operational information related to the implementation of the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) programs. In addition, Federal Student Aid has updated the 2006-2007 COD Technical Reference and the 2007-2008 COD Technical Reference. A school should refer to the communications posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site and to the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 COD technical references for complete information about the ACG and National SMART Grant programs.

More specifically, the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 COD technical references cover all aspects of the operational implementation of the ACG and National SMART Grant programs. This includes information on the following key aspects of ACG and National SMART Grant processing:

o Financial Award ID and Financial Award Number (Award Sequence Number)
Volume II, Section 1 "Implementation Guide"

o Citizenship and Student Level Code
Volume II, Section 1 "Implementation Guide"

o Message Classes
Volume II, Section 2 "Message Classes"

o Common Record Layout
Volume II, Section 3 "Common Record Layout"

o   Reports Generated by COD System
    Volume VI, Section 8 "COD Reports"

o   Eligibility/Payment Reason and Rigorous High School Program Code for ACG
    Volume VI, Section 9 "Rigorous Secondary School Programs of Study, and Eligible Majors"

o   Major/Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code for National SMART Grant
    Volume VI, Section 9 "Rigorous Secondary School Programs of Study, and Eligible Majors"

If your school needs help locating information related to the operational implementation of the
ACG and National SMART Grant programs, contact the COD School Relations Center.

Note for EDExpress Users: Volume III of the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 COD technical
references provides additional guidance for schools that use EDExpress in combination with
another system. If your school needs help locating information related to EDExpress, contact
CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 880/330-5947 or by e-mail at CPSSAIG@ed.gov.