



Common Origination and Disbursement COD Processing Update

ACG, National SMART Grant, and Pell Grant Programs

August 25, 2006

ACG, National SMART Grant, and Pell Grant Programs

COD News

COD System Maintenance Planned For Sunday, August 27, 2006 (08/23/06)

The COD System will undergo routine maintenance on Sunday, August 27, 2006 from 2:00 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 2:00 A.M. and 8:00 A.M. (ET).
- Batches submitted by schools via the SAIG between 2:00 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 the CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 800/330-5947 or e-mail CPSSAIG@ed.gov.

NEW!

COD Holiday Schedule For September 4, 2006 (8/25/06)

The COD School Relations Center will be closed on Monday, September 4, 2006 in observance of Labor Day. The COD System will accept and process data from schools and send back responses/acknowledgements on Monday, September 4, 2006, but schools will not be able to receive any Federal funds on that day. Further information regarding Labor Day processing and customer service hours for COD and other FSA/ED call centers will be posted in an Electronic Announcement on the [IFAP Web site](#).

NEW!

Additional 2006-2007 COD Technical Reference August 2006 Updates Now Available (08/25/06)

Federal Student Aid has updated the 2006-2007 Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) Technical Reference for a second time in August 2006. This posting supplements the first set of August 2006 updates by providing updates to sections 1, 3, and 4 of Volume III, "Pell, ACG, National SMART Grant & Direct Loan Combination System Supplement."



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These sections provide technical guidance for schools with Pell Grant or Direct Loan systems used in combination with EDEXpress. The updates include some final updates related to the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (the HERA), Pub. L. 109-171.

The additional updates are available on the [IFAP Web site](#). For a complete list of all updates made in August 2006, refer to the “0607 COD Technical Reference August 2006 Change Tracking Log.” If you have any questions regarding information contained in this document, please contact the COD School Relations Center.

NEW!

Unlocking And Resetting COD Web Site Passwords (08/25/06)

COD would like to remind COD Web site users that Security Administrators (COD Web site User Level 5) are able to unlock and reset passwords for the users (User Level 1-4) they established at their school or organization. However, if the Security Administrator needs his or her password unlocked or reset, the Security Administrator must contact the COD School Relations Center.

In order to unlock users, a Security Administrator should log in to the COD Web site, www.cod.ed.gov, and complete the following steps:

- Step 1: From the Welcome to Common Origination & Disbursement Web Site screen, click on the User tab on the blue bar at the top of the screen. The User Search screen displays.
- Step 2: Enter the search criteria for the user and click on the submit button at the bottom of the User Search screen. The Search Results screen displays and lists users that match the search criteria.
- Step 3: On the Search Results screen, select the name of the user that needs to be unlocked. The User Information screen displays.
- Step 4: Click on the Modify button at the bottom of the User Information screen. The Update User Profile screen displays.
- Step 5: The Locked Out box on the Update User Profile screen contains a checkmark. Click on the Locked Out box to remove the checkmark.
- Step 6: If a new temporary password is not needed, skip this item and go to Step 7. If a new temporary password is needed, enter the new temporary password in the New Password field. Then re-enter the new password in the Re-enter New Password field to confirm. The user will need to change this password to one of his or her choosing.
- Step 7: Click on the submit button at the bottom of the Update User Profile screen. The Update Your Profile screen displays.
- Step 8: On the Update Your Profile screen, click on the Submit button to confirm the updates made to the user's profile.

This information is also posted on the COD Web site in a document entitled “Unlocking And Resetting COD Web Site Passwords.” To access the document *before* you log in to the Web site, click on the “Click here if you are looking for more information on Common Origination and Disbursement” Link. To access the document *after* you log in to the Web site, click on the “Today's Updates” link at the bottom of the page.



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Schools can refer to the Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web site, <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/0201UpdatedCODWebsiteSchools.html>, for information regarding COD Web site access. Third party servicers can refer to the Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web site at <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/UpdatedCODWebsiteThirdPartyServ.html>.

2006 Federal Student Aid Conferences (08/24/06)

FSA's 2006 Federal Student Aid Conferences will be held October 30, 2006 through November 2, 2006 in Orlando, Florida, and November 28, 2006 through December 1, 2006 in Las Vegas, Nevada. These events were formerly known as the Electronic Access Conferences (EACs). The registration deadline for the Orlando conference is October 17, 2006, and the registration deadline for the Las Vegas conference is November 11, 2006. Detailed information about the Federal Student Aid conferences is available in a [Dear Colleague letter](#) and on [FSA's conference Web site](#).

New Financial Operating Environment— Impact on Funds Availability For Campus-Based, ACG, National SMART Grant, And Pell Grant (EDCAPS/GAPS and COD) (08/24/06)

The Department of Education (the Department) is transitioning to a new financial operating environment in conjunction with the year-end close out of Fiscal Year 2006. As a result, some of the Department's core financial systems, including the Grant Administration and Payment System (GAPS), will be shut down and unavailable while the Department completes the transition. This shutdown will impact how the COD System will process financial data and when schools can obtain funds for their Federal Student Aid programs as follows:

- **Monday, September 18, 2006 through Friday, September 29, 2006**
Financial processing between the COD System and EDCAPS/GAPS will be reduced to only once every evening (instead of the normal twice-a-day, morning/evening processing). As a result, early morning processing will be completed in the evening. Current Funding Level (CFL) changes and funding could be delayed by a day.
- **Saturday, September 30, 2006 through Monday, October 9, 2006**
The COD System will accept Pell Grant disbursements, but CFL changes and funding requests will not be processed by EDCAPS/GAPS until Tuesday, October 10, 2006.

Actual disbursements must be received and accepted by the COD System no later than 10:00 A.M. (ET) on Thursday, September 28, 2006, in order for them to be included in a drawdown prior to the shutdown. Disbursements submitted after this time will be funded after EDCAPS/GAPS resumes processing on October 10, 2006.

Notes:

1. A school is not yet able to submit Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National



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SMART Grant) records to the COD System. However, the school is allowed to draw down and disburse ACG and National SMART Grant funds.

If a school will need additional ACG and/or National SMART Grant funds during the shutdown period, it must request the funding increase by 5:00 P.M. (ET) on Wednesday, September 27, 2006. The school must submit this request per the guidelines we provided in an [Electronic Announcement posted on August 9, 2006](#).

2. A school on Heightened Cash Monitoring 2 (HCM2) or Reimbursement should notify its Payment Analyst as soon as possible of the amount of disbursements that it expects to make during the shutdown period. If, in the view of the Payment Analyst, the requested amount is reasonable, we will provide those funds to the school prior to the shutdown period and in advance of receiving the formal reimbursement requests. *To ensure that funds are available to the school when needed, the school must notify its Payment Analyst no later than Friday, September 8, 2006.*

In addition, prior to the shutdown period, we will advance to a school Federal Student Aid program funds related to pending reimbursement requests.

- **8:00 P.M. (ET) on Saturday, September 30, 2006 through 8:00 A.M. (ET) on Tuesday, October 10, 2006**

The GAPS e-Payments system (the GAPS Web site) will not be available. Schools will not be able to draw down Campus-Based, ACG, National SMART Grant, or Pell Grant funds during this period.

Note: In some cases, a school will be unable to operationally comply with returning cash to the Department within the timeframes specified in the Cash Management regulations at 34 CFR 668.166. We will consider the school to be in compliance with the excess cash requirements provided that the school disburses such funds to eligible students (or parents) by the end of the shutdown period and/or promptly returns such funds to the Department when EDCAPS/GAPS resumes processing on October 10, 2006.

An Electronic Announcement with this same information is posted on the [IFAP Web site](#). Thank you for your patience and understanding as the Department completes this important activity. The Department expects financial processing to be caught up by Tuesday, October 12, 2006.

Second Pell Grant Administrative Cost Allowance Payments for 2005-2006 Award Year (08/21/06)

COD began processing the second Pell Grant Administrative Cost Allowance (ACA) payments for the 2005-2006 Award Year on August 19, 2006. Schools will begin to see these payments deposited directly into their bank accounts over the next few weeks.



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For more information about these ACA payments, refer to the electronic announcement that is available on the [IFAP Web site](#).

HERA Guidance Available On IFAP Web Site (05/08/06)

Communications related to the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (the HERA), Pub. L. 109-171 are posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site (www.ifap.ed.gov). These communications include policy and operational guidance that impacts all student aid programs, systems, and processes. To assist users in easily locating HERA-related communications, they are available under the "Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (HERA) Information" link on the home page of the IFAP Web site. (The link is at the top of the "On-Line References" section.)

Federal Student Aid has posted and will continue to post guidance related to the Central Processing System (CPS), Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System, and EDExpress Suite, as Electronic Announcements. The summary for these Electronic Announcements will begin with "HERA Operational Implementation Guidance (CPS, COD System, EDExpress Suite)" so that they can be distinguished from other types of guidance. As explained above, the Electronic Announcements are available under the "Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (HERA) Information" link on the home page of the IFAP Web site.

Please plan to check the IFAP Web site on a regular basis.

Reports And Data Requests



This section contains important notices regarding reports and/or data requests. While we encourage you to review this section, note that some schools may not be impacted by the information presented below.

- Pell Year-to-Date (YTD) Records— The YTD Record can be used to assist a school with its year-end and ongoing reconciliation processes. Schools also use the YTD Record for the purpose of rebuilding a complete student record or Pell Grant database.
 - For rebuilds for the 2005-2006 Award Year, the school can submit the data request via the COD Web site or batch.
 - For rebuilds for the 2004-2005 and earlier award years, the school must contact the COD School Relations Center by e-mail to CODSupport@acs-inc.com. The school should include "Pell YTD" in the subject line. If a school is unable to e-mail its request, it can contact the COD School Relations Center by phone. [10/03/05]



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(Updated 10/27/05)]