November 9, 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

Impact on COD Processing November 11-12, 2007 (11/02/07)
Federal Student Aid is planning to execute a COD System maintenance activity on November 11, 2007. This activity will result in outages of certain COD System functionality for a period of time. Federal Student Aid appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes this important activity. In addition, funding requests will not be processed on November 12, 2007, the Veterans Day Federal holiday.

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

COD System Maintenance

On *Sunday, November 11, 2007*, we will perform system maintenance on the COD System. The impact to COD users is as follows—

For Grant and Direct Loan Participants—

- Users will not be able to submit or retrieve data via the COD Web site between 1:30 A.M. and 9:00 A.M. (ET).

Veterans Day Federal Holiday

Monday, November 12, 2007 is the Veterans Day Federal holiday.

For Grant and Direct Loan Participants—

- The COD School Relations Center will be open.

- The COD System will accept and process data from schools and send back responses/acknowledgments on Monday, November 12, 2007, but schools will not be able to receive any Federal funds on that day. Requests for changes in funding levels and for funds will not be processed until Tuesday, November 13, 2007.

Complete information regarding processing and customer service hours for COD and other Federal Student Aid/Department of Education call centers on the holiday is posted in the

"Veterans Day Federal Holiday Processing and Customer Service Hours" Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP Web site).

G5 Phase 1 Implementation Planned for December 17, 2007 with Impact on Funds Availability [9/25/07 (Updated 11/8/2007)]
In June 2007, 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.

G5 Phase I Implementation Date and Online Training

As previously explained, 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 planned for December 17, 2007.*** This date for Phase I implementation supersedes all preliminary implementation information provided by the Department at earlier points in time.

The Department has posted the December 17, 2007 implementation date as well as an updated "G5 Phase 1 Implementation Overview" presentation on the GAPS e-Payments Web site. In addition, ***G5 online training is now available at the following URL:***

http://www.g5.gov/

G5 Phase I Implementation Impact on Funds Availability

The service outage associated with the December 17, 2007 G5 Phase 1 implementation will impact how the COD System will process financial data and when schools can obtain funds for the Federal student aid programs as follows:

- ***Wednesday, December 12, 2007 through Sunday, December 16, 2007 –*** The COD System will accept ACG, National SMART Grant, Pell Grant, and Direct Loan disbursements, but Current Funding Level (CFL) changes and funding will not be processed by G5 until Monday, December 17, 2007.

  All actual disbursements with a disbursement date from December 12, 2007 through December 17, 2007 must be received and accepted by the COD System ***no later than 10:00 P.M. (ET) on Tuesday, December 11, 2007,*** in order for them to be included in the drawdown prior to the shutdown. Disbursements submitted after this time and disbursements with a disbursement date after December 17, 2007 will be funded after G5 is implemented on December 17, 2007.

- ***7:00 P.M. (ET) on Wednesday, December 12, 2007 through 6:00 A.M. (ET) on Monday, December 17, 2007 –*** Neither the GAPS e-Payments Web site nor the new G5 Web site will be available. Schools will not be able to draw down Campus-Based, ACG, National SMART Grant, Pell Grant, or Direct Loan funds during this period.

Note: The new G5 Web site will be available after 6:00 A.M. (ET) on Monday, December 17, 2007. The Department expects financial processing to be caught up by Thursday, December 20, 2007.

Please share this 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 November 7, 2007 Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.

If you have any questions about the December 17, 2007 G5 Phase I implementation and/or the online training, contact the GAPS hotline at 888/336-8930 or e-mail G5admin@ed.gov.

COD Holiday Schedule For November 21-23, 2007 (11/09/07)
The COD School Relations Center will close at 3:00 P.M. (ET) on Wednesday, November 21, 2007 and reopen at 8:00 A.M. (ET) on Friday, November 23, 2007.

The COD System will accept and process data from schools and send back responses/acknowledgements on Thursday, November 22, 2007, but schools will not be able to receive any Federal funds on that day. Requests for changes in funding levels and for funds will not be processed until Friday, November 23, 2007.

Further information regarding Thanksgiving Day processing, funding impact, and customer service hours for COD and other Federal Student Aid/ED call centers will be available in an Electronic Announcement on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.

Second 2006-2007 Pell Grant Deobligation Due To Verification Status "W" (11/06/07)
Effective November 5, 2007, Federal Student Aid has deobligated 2006-2007 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 October 18, 2007, 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 80 schools.

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

- Receive a PGTX (PGTX07OP 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 (CRND07OP 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 November 5, 2007.

A school affected by the deobligation should carefully review the following information:

Verification Completed or Not Required

If verification has been completed as required or is not required and a school believes a student's 2006-2007 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 (DRI = true) for the correct amount to the COD System for processing.

Notes:

- As a reminder, Federal Student Aid recently posted updated operational guidance on how to accurately report verification status codes to the COD System. Refer to the September 28, 2007 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site for the conditions under which each verification status code should be used.

- A school does not need to submit a verification status code and should leave the field blank (nil = "true") 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.

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

Verification Status Continues to be "W"

If the verification status for a student's award continues to be "W", a school should not resubmit the disbursement to the COD System. If the disbursement is resubmitted, the COD System will reject it.

If you have any questions regarding the 2006-2007 Pell Grant deobligation of disbursements due to verification status "W," contact the COD School Relations Center.

NEW!

Updating School Contact Information in the COD System (11/09/07)
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 (11/09/07)
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, the 2007-2008 COD Technical Reference, and posted the 2008-2009 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, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 COD technical references for complete information about the ACG and National SMART Grant programs.

More specifically, the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 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, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 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.

Grant Reports And Data Requests

NOTICES

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.

- 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 Monthly Pell Grant Verification Status Reports—

On November 7, 2007, Federal Student Aid reported the resolution of a delay in sending these reports to schools' Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailboxes. The delayed reports were sent to schools' (SAIG) mailboxes between 2:30 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. (ET) on November 6, 2007. Federal Student Aid has discovered that during the November 6th timeframe some of the reports were sent twice to schools' SAIG mailboxes. Federal Student Aid apologizes for this inconvenience. [11/06/07 (Updated 11/08/07)]