You might be eligible for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program

Dear Colleague:

As you may know, working at **ABERDEEN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5** means you can join a federal program that could forgive your federal student loans. That's because the U.S. Department of Education (ED) considers us a qualifying employer for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. Through this program, ED can forgive your student loan debt after 10 years of making payments on your federal student loans while working for a state agency or other qualifying public sector employer.

If you haven't signed up for PSLF yet, you still can. One important step is working with our agency's PSLF contact each year to submit a PSLF form. Although the path to loan forgiveness can seem complicated, you could save thousands on your student loans.

To qualify for PSLF, you must:

Have Federal Direct loans. This includes Direct Subsidized, Direct Unsubsidized, Direct Consolidation, and Direct Grad PLUS loans. If you have Perkins or FFEL loans, you must consolidate them into a Direct Consolidation loan. If you have Direct Parent PLUS loans, you may also need to consolidate.

- **Time-sensitive tip:** Certain periods you spent in forbearance, deferment or non-qualifying repayment plans may count towards PSLF due to the IDR Account Adjustment. **Action MAY be needed before June 30, 2024, for you to benefit.** Visit the payment adjustment page to learn more.

Work full time for one or more public employers. ED defines "full time" as working an average of 30 hours per week. This includes multiple part-time public jobs where your combined work averages 30 hours per week. If you are part-time faculty at an institution of higher education, HR will multiply your in-class teaching hours by 3.35 to calculate your hours worked.

Enroll in an Income-Driven Repayment (IDR) Plan. These include Income-Based Repayment (IBR), Pay As You Earn (PAYE), Saving on A Valuable Education (SAVE, previously REPAYE) and Income-Contingent Repayment (ICR). Payments made on the 10-year Standard Repayment plan are also eligible for the PSLF program.

Make 120 qualifying payments. Your payments do not need to be consecutive. However, you must be employed full time for a public employer at the time you apply for PSLF, and during the month you make a payment for that payment to qualify. **After you make 120 qualifying payments and apply for PSLF, ED will forgive your remaining loan balance. Student loan amounts forgiven under PSLF are not considered income for tax purposes.**

Check out these resources on the Student Loan Advocate's PSLF page to help you get started:

- Quick PSLF Fact Sheet
- Steps to Apply for PSLF
- PSLF Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Have questions or need help? Submit a question to the Washington Student Loan Advocate at https://www.studentcomplaints.wa.gov

Certify your employment for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program

To complete a Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) form and submit an employment certification request to our agency's PSLF contact, please use the PSLF Help Tool. Once we have digitally signed your form through the PSLF Help Tool (via DocuSign), it will be submitted directly to ED's Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) for processing.

FSA manages the PSLF program and will soon offer automated PSLF form processing, with loan servicers performing manual work and customer service. All PSLF information, including payment counts, will soon be available on StudentAid.gov. Log into your account to learn more.

For your convenience, our agency's information is listed below:

Employer Identification Number (EIN): **91-6001546**
PSLF contact email: **LWILLIAMSON@ASD5.ORG**

If you have worked for multiple qualifying employers, you need to submit a separate PSLF form for each employer. If you have worked for one qualifying employer but had a break in service, you will need to submit a separate PSLF form for each period of employment. You may use the PSLF Washington state agency directory to identify the correct EIN and email address for other qualifying Washington state agencies, including public higher education institutions.

Remember to apply for PSLF before you leave public service, or you will lose eligibility. To ensure you're on the right track, you should certify your employment annually and when you change employers. That way, you can keep track of your progress and be sure your payments count.