

# Loan forgiveness starts here

## Step 1. Explore your options

Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) allows qualifying federal student loans to be forgiven after 10 years (120 months) of qualifying, on-time payments. Teachers and school personnel may qualify for other benefits, too.

**What is a qualifying loan?** Only federal Direct Loans qualify for loan forgiveness. You may consolidate most federal loans into a new Direct Loan to qualify.

**What is a qualifying payment plan?** Plans based on your income let you pay less now and have more forgiven later. For recent grads, Pay As You Earn (PAYE) is the best plan. Income-Based Repayment (IBR) is best for older loans.

### Get started

- **It matters who you work for, not what you do.** Any full-time employee of a public school district may qualify, not just classroom teachers.
- **Extended repayment plans don't count toward PSLF.** Avoid plans that let you repay your loan over a longer period (e.g. 20 or 25 years).
- **You may qualify for other benefits,** including up to \$17,500 for teachers in certain low-income schools. Generally, you can't benefit from two federal programs for the same service, but taking steps toward both will give you time to weigh your options.
- **Cancel all or part of your Perkins Loans.** Perkins loans allow some teachers in certain public schools to cancel your loan based on how long you teach. If you consolidate, be careful, since you will lose this benefit.

## Step 2. Enroll and certify

Once you have a qualifying loan, you need to enroll in a qualifying payment plan and certify that you work in public service.

### Next steps

- Enroll in a qualifying payment plan.** Get started at [studentloans.gov](https://studentloans.gov).
- Certify that you work for a public service organization.** Your HR office may keep this form on hand. You can also find it at [consumerfinance.gov/pledge](https://consumerfinance.gov/pledge).

## Step 3. Follow-up with your servicer

Once you certify, your servicer knows you are interested and can track your progress. The company that services your loan may change. Pay close attention to any information you receive about your student loan, even if it's from an unfamiliar company.

### Things to consider

- **Enroll and certify each year.** This is the best way to keep your payment low and check to make sure you stay on track for loan forgiveness.
- **Ask for help.** You can contact a loan forgiveness specialist at FedLoan Servicing at (855) 265-4038.