



Getting Ready for Student Loan Payments to Restart

Federal student loan payments will resume in October. Here's how you should prepare.

1. Log into your Federal Student Aid (FSA) account and update your contact information.

After signing in, you can check how much you owe and who your student loan servicer is. Nearly half of borrowers had their servicer changed during the pandemic — and they may not even know it. Your loan servicer should provide you with a billing statement or notice at least 21 days before your first payment is due

2. Choose a repayment plan that you can afford. Use the Department of Education's [Loan Simulator](#) to find the plan that's right for you. An [income-driven repayment \(IDR\) plan](#) will lower monthly costs for many borrowers, and the new [SAVE plan](#) is the most affordable IDR plan yet - cutting payments in half for most borrowers and forgiving debt faster.

If you think your payment amount seems wrong, contact your servicer. It's possible they made a mistake. If you still think the payment amount is wrong, you can [file a complaint](#) with the Federal Student Aid Ombudsman.

3. Consider consolidating FFEL and Perkins Loans. If you are interested in pursuing loan relief through income-driven repayment (IDR) or [Public Service Loan Forgiveness \(PSLF\)](#), consider consolidating FFEL or Perkins loans into a new Direct Consolidation Loan by the end of 2023 to take advantage of the Department of Education's [one-time account adjustment](#) to get more credit toward IDR and PSLF loan cancellation.

4. Get a Fresh Start on loans in default. If you have loans in default, take advantage of the time-limited Fresh Start program to remove your loans from default. [Requesting a Fresh Start](#) is fast and easy, and will make you eligible for IDR plans and other relief options.

5. Understand what happens if you don't repay your loan. Delinquent payments can have a negative impact on your finances, and as a last resort borrowers can request a [temporary deferment or forbearance](#).

The Biden administration has instituted a one-year "on-ramp" through October 2024; borrowers who miss payments during this time will not be considered delinquent, have their loans placed in default, or be referred to debt collection agencies. However, interest will continue to accrue, so you'll find yourself in more debt by the end of the 12-month period. Also, this is only a temporary solution, and after a year, you'll have to make payments again or risk default. If you can reasonably find a way to pay, it's a good idea to do so.

6. Need more help? Visit www.cancelmystudentdebt.org to get on the path to debt cancellation, or www.studentloanborrowerassistance.org for additional borrower resources.