

Summary of Changes to Proposed Regulatory Text – Day 4

§ 685.102

Amend paragraph (b) :

~~Professional student: A student enrolled in a program of study that awards a professional degree upon completion of the program;~~

~~(1) A professional degree is a degree that signifies both completion of the academic requirements for beginning practice in a given profession and a level of professional skill beyond that normally required for a bachelor's degree, where professional licensure is also generally required. These programs are designated as professional degrees: Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.), Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.), Law (L.L.B. or J.D.), Medicine (M.D.), Optometry (O.D.), Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.), Podiatry (D.P.M., D.P., or Pod.D.), and Theology (M.Div., or M.H.L.).~~

~~Professional student: A student enrolled in a program of study that awards a professional degree upon completion of the program;~~

~~(1) A professional degree is a degree that:~~

~~(i) Signifies both completion of the academic requirements for beginning practice in a given profession, and a level of professional skill beyond that normally required for a bachelor's degree;~~

~~(ii) Is generally at the doctoral level, and that requires at least six academic years of postsecondary education coursework for completion, including at least two years of post-baccalaureate level coursework;~~

~~(iii) Generally requires professional licensure to begin practice; and~~

~~(iv) Includes a four-digit program CIP code, as assigned by the institution or determined by the~~

Secretary, in the same intermediate group as the fields listed in paragraph (2) (i) of this definition.

(2) A professional degree may be awarded in the following fields:

(i) Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.), Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.), Law (L.L.B. or J.D.), Medicine (M.D.), Optometry (O.D.), Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.), Podiatry (D.P.M., D.P., or Pod.D.), Theology (M.Div., or M.H.L.), and Clinical Psychology (Psy.D. or Ph.D.).

(3) A professional student under this definition:

(i) May not receive title IV aid as an undergraduate student for the same period of enrollment; and
(ii) Must be enrolled in a program leading to a professional degree under paragraph (2) of this definition.

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§ 685.203

Amend the header of paragraph (f) (2):

(f) * * *

(2) Direct PLUS Annual Limits for Parents of Dependents Undergraduates On or After July 1, 2026

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Add paragraph (f) (3):

(f) * * *

(3) Direct PLUS Annual Limits for Graduate Students and Professional Students On or After July 1, 2026. The Direct PLUS annual limits for graduate students and professional students for periods of enrollment beginning on or after July 1, 2026 can be found at § 685.200(b) (2) and (3).

Amend paragraph (m) (1):

(m) * * *

(1) Less Than Full-Time Enrollment. Notwithstanding any provision of 34 CFR parts 682 or 685, in any case in which a student is enrolled in an eligible program (except for a non-term program) at an institution on a less than a full-time basis during any academic year, the amount of any Direct Loan that student may borrow for an academic year or its equivalent shall be reduced in direct proportion to the degree to which that student is not so enrolled on a full-time basis, as of the date the institution determined the student's eligibility for the disbursement in accordance with 34 CFR 668.164(b) (3), rounded to the nearest whole percentage point, as follows:

Add paragraph (m) (2) (v):

(v) For purposes of this paragraph (m) (2), program of study means eligible program.

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§ 685.209

Amend paragraph (e) (2) (i) and (e) (2) (iii):

(e) * * *

(2) * * *

(i) For the REPAYE, IBR, ~~and~~ PAYE plans ~~and the Repayment Assistance Plan~~, the spouse's eligible loan debt is included for the purposes of adjusting the borrower's monthly payment amount as described in paragraph (g) of this section if the spouse's income is included in the calculation of the borrower's monthly payment amount in accordance with paragraph (e) (1) of this section.

* * *

~~(iii) For the Repayment Assistance Plan, only the borrower's loan debt that is eligible to be repaid under the plan is included for the purposes of calculating the borrower's monthly payment amount as described in paragraph (f) (5) of this section.~~

Add paragraph (g) (3):

(g) * * *

~~(3) Monthly payment amounts calculated under paragraph (f) (5) of this section will be adjusted in cases when the borrower's spouse's loan debt is included in accordance with paragraph (e) (2) (i) of this section:~~

~~(i) The borrower's payment is adjusted by—~~

~~(A) Dividing the outstanding principal and interest balance of the borrower's eligible loans by the couple's combined outstanding principal and interest balance on eligible loans; and~~

~~(B) Multiplying the borrower's payment amount as calculated in accordance with paragraph (f) (5) of~~

this section by the percentage determined under paragraph (g) (3) (i) of this section.

(ii) If a borrower's adjusted monthly payment, as calculated under paragraph (g) (3) (i), is less than \$10, the monthly payment is \$10.

Add paragraph (o) (3) *(formerly designated as [TK])*:

3) For purposes of the Repayment Assistance Plan under this section, a borrower's monthly payment under (f) (5) of this section is considered on-time if the payment is received on or before the due date for the current month, but after the due date for the previous month. When the borrower elects to make a payment in excess of the amount due, the Secretary allows the borrower to opt-out of advancing the due date which is provided for in 34 CFR 685.211. In the case where the borrower makes an electronic payment, the Secretary allows the borrower to select when submitting the payment whether the excess payment will advance the due date (and eliminate the possibility of a RAP subsidy until the next month in which a payment becomes due), or to not advance the due date. No matter the method of payment, the borrower may contact their servicer by phone to elect not to advance the due date. The Secretary shall disclose to the borrower the potential consequences of electing to advance the due date or not.

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§ 685.219

Amend paragraph (c) (2):

(c) * * *

(2) * * *

(iii) For a borrower on an income-driven repayment plan under § 685.209 (a) (1) through (4), paying a lump sum or monthly payment amount that is equal to or greater than the full scheduled amount in advance of the borrower's scheduled payment due date for a period of months not to exceed the period from the Secretary's receipt of the payment until the borrower's next annual repayment plan recertification date under the qualifying repayment plan in which the borrower is enrolled;

(iv) For a borrower on the 10-year standard repayment plan under § 685.208(b) (1) or the consolidation loan standard repayment plan with a 10-year repayment term under § 685.208 (e) (b) (2), paying a lump sum or monthly payment amount that is equal to or greater than the full scheduled amount in advance of the borrower's scheduled payment due date for a period of months not to exceed the period from the Secretary's receipt of the payment until the lesser of 12 months from that date or the date upon which the Secretary receives the borrower's next submission under subsection (e).

(v) Except during periods a borrower is enrolled in the Repayment Assistance Plan under § 685.209,
Rreceiving one of the following deferments or forbearances for the month: