0:21

good morning everybody we'll get started here in a couple of minutes we get started right at 11:

1:40

looks like our numbers are still climbing a bit so I think we'll get started at 1102 thank

1:49

you

2:33

all right um I'm sure we'll still have some folks trickle in but for now our numbers are starting

2:39

to slow down so we'll get started um so hello everyone thank you so much for joining us today

2:46

my name is Katie casades I use they them pronouns and I serve as the policy and performance analyst

2:52

for the office financial management State Human Resources I'm going to do my best to speak slower

3:00

this time it's going to be great I'm joined by my co-presenter Jessica Jessica would you like

3:06

to introduce yourself of course um hi everyone my name is Jessica man Freddy my pronouns are she

3:14

her um I am the student loan Advocate within the office of student loan Advocate thank you so much

3:22

for being here today and I am excited to present to you a little bit more about pslf awesome thanks

3:31

Jessica so as she said we are here to speak with you all about the Public service loan forgiveness

3:37

or pslf program our goal today is hopefully to demystify the application process to help you get

3:44

your federal student loans forgiven uh we will be recording this um webinar and it'll be posted on

3:52

the website the slides are also available on the wsac website um I'll go ahead and drop Link in

4:00

the chat now um so uh folks can look at that all right um actually Jessica if you could drop that

4:13

link that would be great all right so first off uh we have some housekeeping items and if you could

4:23

go to the next slide when you get a chance also I'm asking you to do two things at once um so this

4:30

presentation is being recorded as I said uh we have ASL interpreters here today and cart services

4:36

for live closed captions the chat is disabled for participants and will only be used by panelists to

4:43

share links and resources uh participants are on mute so please enter your questions using the Q

4:51

and a function and vote on questions you would like to have answered live as I said we will

4:59

provide our slides for your reference following the presentation as well as this recording so you can have access to the links and we will have time for questions at the end of the presentation

5:10

we're hoping to leave at least 30 minutes um also if folks could use the Q&A feature and either ask

5:20

their own questions or use up voting to say which questions um they want to make sure are answered

5:29

that would be helpful thank you next slide so today we'll give you an overview of student

5:38

loan debt crisis by providing some key data points for Washington State borrowers we'll also

5:44

cover Washington State's response to this crisis we'll then shift gears to talk about how you can

5:49

qualify and apply for the pslf program we will also discuss the specifics of the federal rule

5:56

changes that went into effect on July 1 as well as some limited time opportunities especially before

6:03

the end of the year to earn more pslf qualifying payments lastly we'll provide some resources

6:09

and information about how to get individual support to help you in pursuing student loan

6:15

forgiveness so the pslf or Public service loan forgiveness program is a federal program That

6:24

Forgives the remaining balance on your Direct Loans after you've made 120 qualifying monthly

6:31

payments or approximately 10 years under a qualifying repayment plan while working

6:38

full-time for an eligible public employer and as a reminder it looks like um someone has their hand

6:47

raised uh we will be taking questions at the end of the presentation but if it's an access

6:56

issue we want to make sure to address that um so please either use the Q&A or send us a message

7:05

thanks all right so I'm as I'm sure many of you are aware the country faces the student

7:15

loan debt crisis nationally Americans owe $ 1.73 trillion in student loans student loan

7:23

debt is also now the second largest household debt after mortgages that's

7:28

as of March 31st of this year it's also surpassed credit cards and auto loans as

7:34

well as home equity revolving debt student debt now makes up 9% of total household debt and has

7:42

increased by 566 per over the past 20 years which is almost three times greater than the

7:49

increase in Mortgage Debt in the last quarter alone national student debt increased by $9

7:56

billion student loan debt is also a multi-generational issue that affects

8:02

borrowers of all ages and jeopardizes millions of families long-term Financial Security while student loan balances have risen for all age groups older borrowers

8:13

have seen the largest increase student loan defaults rise with the borrowers age

8:18

and parents and grandparents take on debt to help younger Generations pay for their education this has been there's also been a 37% increase in senior citizens with federal

8:31

student loan debt since March of 2017 this is the highest increase in federal student

8:37

loan debt of any other age group with the second highest being borrowers aged 50 to 61 so to give you all a snapshot of what student loan debt looks like in

8:49

Washington state as of June 30th of 2023 we have over 84,4 federal

8:58

student um um loan borrowers our outstanding federal student debt

9:03

balance is $29.1 billion and our average student loan debt per person is $ 36,18637

9:29

um and working through those emotions so we really want to drive the point home that student debt is

9:35

normal and millions of people have it so there's absolutely nothing to be ashamed about another exciting thing I want to highlight is the uh pslf acceptance rates have drastically

9:49

improved in recent years so unfortunately when it was first launched and people first became

9:57

eligible the eligibility criteria to qualify for the pslf program was complex leading to low

10:04

approval rates for individuals who would otherwise qualify the pslf program was implemented in 2007

10:13

so the first folks became eligible in 2017 between fall of 2017 and October 31st of 2020

10:22

31% of pslf forms were denied however in recent years Federal level updates have made made the

10:29

program easier to access which has significantly increased the overall percentage of acceptance

10:36

of accepted forms between November of 2020 and June of 2023 only 7% of pslf forms have been

10:44

denied I also want to highlight that people in Washington state are benefiting from the

10:51

pslf program and more folks are having their student loans forgiven daily this debt is all

10:57

from the Department of education's web site as you can see in March of 2022 I know that

11:05

it's a little bit small but we'll be sharing the slides so you can zoom in after um or zoom

11:10

in on your screen um in March of 2022 there were about 3,000 folks with processed pslf

11:17

discharges and then as of June of this year that number increased to over 14,890 borrowers in our

11:25

state who have now received forgiveness under pslf this translates to 9721 million of debt

11:34

that's been forgiven through the pslf program for borrowers in our state I wanted to share

11:40

this data with you just to demonstrate that this is working I understand that it's confusing and

11:46

really challenging to get all the paperwork and to deal with loan services but it really can pay

11:51

off so you may be asking yourself if we're talking about federal student student loan

11:59

debt and the pslf programs a federal program why are state employees here speaking with you today

12:05

well Jessica and I will be the first to tell you that we are all very fortunate to live in a state that in many ways is leading the charge in state level work to address the student loan debt

12:15

crisis we have a law in our state in the state of Washington called the student loan Bill of Rights

12:24

which was passed in 2018 this law created the office of student of the student loan Advocate

12:31

um which is who Jessica is with it also allows our state to enforce State consumer protection

12:36

laws against student loan services and requires services to notify borrowers annually about

12:43

the student loan Advocates office and have information on how to contact them on their

12:48

website most importantly it allows borrowers like you to submit questions and complaints

12:56

to the office of the student loan advocate and to get individual assistance and resources with your student loans I'll share information with you at

13:05

the end of the presentation on how to contact the student loan Advocate as well so in March of 2022 Washington State legislation was passed called engross substitute

13:20

Senate bill 5847 this is the bill that created my position and required ofm to partner with

13:27

the student loan ad to increase awareness about the pslf program as a result of this bill we've

13:33

been working with state agencies to implement a pslf employment certification program we've also

13:39

been directing agencies to send their awareness materials the student loan Advocate developed to

13:44

help educate people on how to access the pslf program which is why we're here with you today

13:52

and now I will pass it over to Jessica thank you Katie so now that you know what the pslf

14:01

program is you may be asking yourself how do I actually qualify for this program to get my loans

14:07

forgiven in a very straightforward way you need four things you need one the right type

14:17

of employment two the right type of loan three the right type of repayment plan and four the

14:26

right number of payments okay so let's first talk about what counts as qualifying employment for

14:34

the pslf program employment for pslf needs to be an average of 30 hours a week or more this

14:44

also means that you can have multiple part-time public service jobs that add to an average of

14:49

30 hours a week or more if they are qualifying public employers you must be directly employed

14:55

by the qualifying public employer this means that most contractors will not qualify however

15:03

an exception exists if you work in a state that has laws that prevent an orderwise qualifying

15:09

employer from hiring employees directly to fill positions or provide services an example of a

15:16

group of people that qualify under this exception in Washington state are public defenders who must

15:22

be hired as contractors due to State Law Public employer means any level of government so that

15:29

can be tribal local federal state or a nonprofit organization the role or position that you hold

15:38

does not matter it just matters if your employer is a qualifying Public Service employer you also

15:45

need to be employed at the time that you apply for forgiveness it is important to note that

15:51

labor unions or partisan political organizations are not eligible for pslf this does not mean that

15:58

you can cannot be represented by a labor union you just cannot be directly employed by the

16:04

union next let's cover which federal student loan programs federal student loans are eligible for

16:14

forgiveness through the pslf program elegible loans for the pslf include Direct Loans whether

16:23

that is a subsidized or an unsubsidized loan and it also includes GR plus Parent PLUS and

16:30

Consolidated Direct Loans all the other loans that are not circled in the green square on this slide

16:37

including Perkins loans and ffel Loans are only eligible once you consolidate them into a direct

16:44

consolidation loan please note that Perkins and fou loans are not considered Direct Loans they

16:52

have also been both discontinued at this time so you can no longer get them so to reiterate

17:00

both burkins and federal family education or ffel loans are not eligible for forgiveness

17:07

under pslf unless you consolidate them into a direct consolidation loan Parent Plus Loans

17:14

are kind of on their own category because even though they are considered Direct Loans you may

17:20

need to consolidate them if you'd like to gain access to an income driven repayment plan if you

17:26

have Parent Plus loans and you are pursuing Public service loan forgiveness I recommend

17:31

reading a section on our website called pslf and direct Parent Plus Loans to better understand

17:37

your options for repayment I'll have Katie post a link to our pslf website on the chat

17:42

now so at this point you may be wondering how to check which type of feder student loans you

17:51

have you can log in into student.gov to locate your fed student loan information

17:59

including your loan type your loan balance and your loan serer to log in you will go to

18:06

the right corner of the page and it will ask you for your fatos and Aid ID or also known

18:13

as FSA ID it is your username and password if you do not have one you can click to create an

18:21

account next to the login button once you log in it will bring you to a dashboard this is a

18:29

dashboard that will show you key information about your federal student loans if you want

18:35

a comprehensive breakdown of all of your loans you will want to click on view details on the

18:41

right side to my Aid and it will bring you to a page listing all the aid that you have

18:47

received including both grants and Loans the breakdown of your loans will include

18:53

what type of loan you have the balances and interest rates for each individual loan

19:00

on the right side of the page you will be able to view your loan serer information under my

19:05

loan serer if you click on the link under my loan serer where it says view more you will

19:12

be brought to a page with your servicers website phone number and other contact information like

19:20

mailing address it is a good idea to view your loan serer details because because while it is

19:26

in common you may actually have more than one serer okay so once you have confirmed that you

19:34

have the right type of employment the right type of loans the next thing that you want to do is make sure that you're on the right type of repayment plan any of the income driven repayment

19:46

plans also known as IDR are eligible for pslf these IDR plans include income base repayment

19:57

or ibr pay as you earn or pay saving on a valuable education save formerly known as repay and income

20:09

contingent repayment icr and also the 10year standard repayment plan which is the plan that you

20:16

usually get placed under automatically when you graduate if you don't do anything you typically

20:22

do not want to repay your loan under this 10year standard repayment plan because you will likely

20:28

pay off the entire loan balance before you become eligible for forgiveness some periods on it are

20:34

okay as long as you also have periods under an IDR or an elgible forbearance in deferment

20:41

period repayment plans that are not elegible for pslf include the 30-year standard repayment plan

20:49

available for consolidated loans as well as any graduated and extended repayment plans you can

20:57

get help picking an legible pslf repayment plan using the loan Simulator the loan simulator will

21:04

ask you to log in with your FSA ID username and password it will pull your actual Student Loan

21:10

Data balances Etc and ask your questions about your household income household size tax filing

21:17

status and other information based on that information it will then calculate your for

21:24

you an estimated monthly payment under different repayment plan so it's really a useful tool to

21:31

help you choose the best repayment plan for you so if you're not sure which repayment plans are

21:36

elegible for pslf you can use this SL along with the loan simulator to help you pick a plan that is

21:43

elgible for pslf as a good rule of tumb usually the lowest monthly payment available for you

21:52

under an income driven repayment plan is going to maximize the Forgiveness that you get at the end

22:00

with pslf unless your lowest IDR monthly payment is higher than the t 10e standard repayment plan

22:07

in that case a 10e standard repayment plan may be a better option for you please note

22:13

that our office does not have the capability to estimate monthly payments for borrowers please use

22:19

this loan simulator if you need assistance with picking out a repayment plan that best Feats your needs Okay so so you have the right type of employment the right type of loan the right

22:31

type of repayment plan the last piece that you need to make is 120 qualifying payments

22:39

all of these payments must be while under a qualifying repayment plan and for the full

22:46

amount due as shown on your bill this includes Z payments for those who qualify for it under

22:53

an income driven repayment plan the only time these two rules rules don't apply is

22:59

if you are under one of the accepted types of deferment or forbearances at any time during

23:04

that month they also those payments need to be made after October 1st 2027 2007 because

23:14

that is when the pslf program started the payments do not need to be made consecutively

23:20

meaning one after the other or with the same student loan serer or while you work at the

23:27

same employee you can actually work for 10 different Employers in 10 years if they're

23:32

all qualifying Public Service employers that's okay one tip to make sure that

23:37

you're making on time and complete payments is to sign up for automatic deit with your loan

23:43

servicer it is important to keep in mind that there are times where you are actually

23:51

not allowed to make or you can't make qualifying payments you can only make

23:56

qualifying monthly payments during periods you have a payment due this means that you

24:02

can't make a qualifying payment while you are in an in school status or on your grace period

24:09

which is usually six months after you either graduate or stop attending school at least half

24:14

time and also in certain types of deferments or forbearances you can in some cases decline

24:21

your in school deferment for previous loans in some circumstances if you return to school for

24:28

example to get a master's degree you can decline the in school deferment for your undergraduate

24:34

loans to continue making qualifying payments on those loans however you would not be able

24:40

to decline the in school deferment for the new loans that you receive for your graduate

24:45

education these are the deferment and forbearances that can count as qualifying payments if you were

24:54

employed an average of 30 hours a week at a qualif qualifying employer during that period

25:00

most of them are pretty self-explanatory like cancer treatment economic hardship or military

25:07

def military service others are L are a little less loan like the administer forbearance due

25:13

to local or National Emergency like the coid 19 forbearance or the administrative forbearance

25:19

for collecting supporting document intial from a borrower for example when you apply for an income driven repayment plan all of these types of the perit and forbearances count as qualifying

25:30

payments even though you're technically not make not paying anything during these periods another

25:38

type of qualifying forbearance is the coid 19 administered forbearance this was also known

25:45

as the payment pause which the US Department of Education automatically applied to direct

25:51

and other department of education held loans due to the co 19 emergency between March 19 2020 and

25:59

August 31st 2023 these periods under the payment pause will count as pslf qualifying payments

26:07

even if you did not submit payments if you were working full-time for a qualifying pslf public

26:13

employer and even though we have been talking about most of the rule changes

26:20

throughout you know one through four I also wanted to separately highlight these changes that happened to pslf this year the Department of Education started

26:31

implementing pslf regulations that went into effect as of July 1st 2023 that relaxes some

26:39

of the previous rules making the program a little bit easier to access for borrowers

26:45

for example there is now A single standard of full-time employment as an average of 30

26:50

hours per week before employment for pslf was primarily defined by the employer's definition

26:57

of full-time which is typically 40 plus hours a week the new rules also require employers

27:04

to give adjunct part-time faculty credit of at least 3.35 of work for every credit hour

27:13

taught for pslf while we had made this change in Washington state through essb 5847 the bill

27:22

that Katie talked about earlier this rule is now Nationwide and can help part-time facult Across

27:28

the Nation the new regulation also allows public employers to certify employment for non-direct

27:35

employees like contractors if that individual provides services that by state law cannot be

27:43

performed by a direct employee so there's a little bit of an exemption for people that are contractors in this very specific situation now we're also able to permanently count certain

27:56

periods of deferment and for bearance towards pslf the ones that I highlighted in the slide

28:01

earlier borrowers may now receive pslf credit on payments that are made late installments or in

28:12

the lumpsum before only ontime payments counted borrowers will receive a weighted average of

28:20

existing qualifying payments toward cslf when they consolidate their Direct Loans starting January

28:26

1st 2024 previously when you Consolidated your loans you could actually lose all of your pslf

28:34

qualifying payments and the progress that you had made towards forgiveness the rule is different for

28:41

those consolidating before the end of 2023 and I will talk about that a little bit more in a

28:47

future slide federal student aid has also made available a buyback option for certain periods

28:55

of forbearance and deferment that are in eligible for pslf the details for this buyback are already

29:02

available on the federal student aid website I'll have Katie shared the link uh for that in the chat

29:09

the Department of Education is asking that people actually wait to utilize this buyback option um

29:16

until the IDR Account Adjustment is applied to their account and we're going to be explaining to a little bit what that is in a later slide and waiting until this ad adjustment is complete

29:28

before considering buying back any periods I do want to highlight though that this buyback

29:34

option will not be available for periods of in school deferment or for Grace periods finally

29:42

federal student aid has also formalized the reconsideration process for pslf for example

29:49

if after all your pslf payments are counted you disagree with the number of payments moila apply

29:54

to your account you have a formal way to ask for federos student aid to review your account

30:00

again and now go ahead and pass it back to

30:06

Katie thank you

30:11

Jessica all right so now that you know what the pslf program is you may be asking yourself how

30:22

do I apply for the pslf program to get my loans forgiven if you're ready to apply for pslf you can

30:31

use the pslf help tool which I'll drop in the chat um to generate and digitally sign what is called

30:40

the pslf form this is basically the form that is used to certify your employment and to apply for

30:47

the pslf program there's a new docy sign feature within the pslf help tool that allows both you as

30:54

a borrower and your employer to dig Ally sign the pslf form the tool then automatically submits the

31:02

digitally signed form to moila who is the current pslf serer who will review your form a paper

31:10

form is also available but generally we want to discourage folks from using it unless they need to

31:17

because the pslf help tool prevent helps prevent the most common errors that people make on the

31:23

form you also either need to fax or mail the paper form so it's more difficult to track both for you

31:32

as the borrower your employer and moila submitting the form via the PSL of help tool allows you to

31:40

track the form while it processes on the federal student aid website it is best practice to submit

31:47

the pslf form every year and whenever you switch employment I see there's a few questions in the

31:54

chat about that but um um you don't need to wait 10 years before you apply for pslf again

32:02

we encourage you to submit a pslf form every year to your employer to count that time this helps you

32:11

evaluate your eligibility on a yearly basis and adds to your number of qualifying payments so

32:16

you can track your progress the main reason that you don't want to wait until year 10 to submit

32:23

all your forms is because it can be difficult to track down in employers to certify your employment

32:30

also if there's something wrong like maybe you're in an incorrect repayment plan you may

32:35

find out that information too late so submit your form every year and whenever you switch

32:41

employers and another thing I would like to add is that you need to be currently

32:53

employed by a public service by a qualifying employer at the time you apply for pslf um you

33:01

can certify past employment but you need to be currently employed so one situation

33:07

we've run into is um folks retire and then apply for pslf and unfortunately

33:13

they're no longer eligible so make sure you're certifying your employment as you go all right um next I will drop a link in the chat to the pslf help tool where you

33:29

can generate that form so there's the link key pieces of information you will need are

33:37

your employer's federal identification number your dates of employment and your employer's

33:42

pslf contact email address if you have worked for other Washington State agencies or public

33:50

institutions of higher education you can use the pslf directory to find the email address

33:55

of the pslf contact and that agency's employer identification number I am also

34:03

currently working on a directory for educational service districts and school districts to compile

34:10

the same information so if you're here from the school district a directory for you all is on the

34:17

way so once you submit your pslf form um let's see yes okay once you submit your pslf form you're

34:31

determined to be eligible then your loans will get transferred to moila if they're not already

34:39

servicing your loans this loan transfer can take up to 90 days please note that you may

34:46

receive multiple letters or notices regarding your pslf qualifying payments the initial letters you

34:52

receive may not include all the pslf qualifying payments that you may ultimately be eligible for

35:00

this is why it's a good idea to keep your own record of the pslf forms that you've submitted

35:07

if you apply for pslf you can check the status of your application on the moila website I will

35:14

post a link in the chat oh thank you Jessica you're on it uh so Jessica just posted the

35:21

link in the chat to the website where you can check your pslf form status once you submit it

35:29

so now I want to briefly mention a special opportunity that's going on right now that may allow you to get extra pslf qualifying payments and

35:39

potentially reach forgiveness faster the income driven repayment one-time Account

35:45

Adjustment so the Department of Education created the IDR Account Adjustment to try and correct for

35:57

those borrowers who are unnecessarily steered into forbearances and deferments in the past

36:03

when they could have qualified for an income driven repayment plan and made progress towards forgiveness the payment adjustment is a limited time opportunity available right now for borrowers

36:15

to get closer to forgiveness and it will be applied to all Department of Education held loans

36:21

between now and 2024 this adjustment will allow certain periods of forbearance Andor deferment

36:29

to convert into IDR payments for borrowers with 12 or more consecutive months of for forbearance

36:38

36 or more total months of forbearance months in economic hardship or military

36:45

deferments after 2013 and periods of deferment before 2013 excluding in school deferment

37:01

any time spent in repayment will also convert into IDR payments including any payments made

37:07

before a consolidation if applicable but it does not exclude periods of bankruptcy or default any

37:15

borrowers with loans that have accumulated eligible time and repayment of 20 to 25 years

37:22

will see automatic forgiveness even if they're not currently on an IDR plan or plan on applying for

37:28

pslf any additional IDR payments a borrower may get will count towards pslf if they were

37:41

employed in a qualifying public sector employer during that period loans that hit forgiveness

37:47

thresholds whether that is the 240 to 300 qualifying payments for IDR forgiveness or

37:56

the 120 qualifying payments for pslf forgiveness will start to get forgiveness as early as this

38:03

year um and Jessica it looks like someone asked for the link to the IDR Account Adjustment video

38:13

um that is on our pslf wasac uh web page which is in the chat um it was the maybe

38:22

the third link that I posted um I'll just it again it's okay awesome thank you so much all

38:32

right so it's important to know that final IDR and pslf credits may not be applied for

38:39

some people until 2024 While most people will get the payment adjustment applied to their account

38:47

automatically I also really want to highlight that some people depending on their circumstances may

38:53

need to act before the end of 2023 to really take advantage of this opportunity for example

39:00

you may need to consolidate your loans if you have commercially held Perkins or ffel

39:06

loans and because I just mentioned consolidation you may be asking yourself who are those who may

39:15

want to consider consolidating before the end of 2023 to take advantage of the IDR

39:21

Account Adjustment there are three key groups of people who should strongly

39:26

consider consolidating before December 31st of 2023 this includes if you have

39:34

commercially held ffel or Perkins loans if you have US Department of Education held

39:41

ffel or Perkins loans but want to qualify for pslf or if you have loans with different pslf

39:49

or IDR qualifying payments for example if someone who submitted their pslf form

39:56

and found out that their undergraduate loans have 80 pslf qualifying payments while their

40:03

graduate loans only have 60 qualifying payments you'd want to consolidate before the end of the

40:08

year so if you apply to consolidate your loans between now and December 31st of 2023 you will

40:23

not lose your pslf or IDR credit due to the IDR Account Adjustment this is important to

40:30

know because in the past if you Consolidated your loans you could lose your progress towards forgiveness right now if you consolidate your loans any type of loans including Perkins ffel

40:42

or Direct Loans your new direct consolidation loan as a general rule of thumb will be credited with

40:49

at least the same number of qualifying payments as your oldest loan for example if you have an

40:58

older subsidized loan from your undergraduate degree with 80 qualifying payments and a newer

41:04

subsidized loan from your graduate degree with 60 qualifying payments your new consolidated

41:10

loan again if you consolidate by the end of this year would have at least 80 qualifying

41:16

payments if you do consolidate your loans between and the end of 2023 it's also important to know

41:29

that your pslf payments count well sorry your pslf payment count will temporarily reset to zero this

41:38

means that you may get a letter from moila after you consolidate saying that you have made zero

41:45

or a very small number of qualifying payments but don't panic once the Account Adjustment is applied

41:52

to your account which could take until sometime in 2024 you should get your pslf qualifying

41:58

payments back and receive an updated letter from moila about the missing pslf qualifying

42:04

payments on the other hand if you were to wait to apply to consolidate your loans on or after

42:13

January 1st of 2024 the new consolidated loans will not be credited as generously it will only

42:22

be credited with a weighted average of those qualifying payments made to direct loans that

42:27

are included in the consolidation the weighted average will not include payments made to ffel

42:34

or Perkins loans and will not give you 100% of your pslf credit in short this means that

42:43

if you're considering consolidating your loans it's best to do so before the end of 2023 and now I will pass it back to Jessica thank you Katie all right so I know that we

42:59

have been talking for a while now and that this is information overload but I promise you that we're almost at the end here okay but other than all of this pslf stuff that we've been thinking about

43:10

what are some other things related to student loans that you should be aware of so there's a lot

43:17

of things happening in the world of student loans right now and I'm going to highlight some of these

43:22

important changes for you so un fortunately as a lot of you may have already heard through the news

43:30

the Supreme Court issued a decision a few months ago to officially block the one-time debt relief

43:38

which was commonly known as the Biden debt relief this program would have forgiven 10 to 20,000 of

43:47

federal student debt for millions of borrowers who met specific income qualifications under the

43:54

Court's rule the department of Education cannot implement this onetime Deb relief program but the

44:00

Department of Education is currently considering alternative ways to provide thatb relief to

44:06

borrowers there are no details about this Deb relief very little is known at this point in

44:12

time about who may qualify for this new path of forgiveness that the Department of Education is

44:17

exploring but keep an eye out for more information in coming about that soon there is also a program

44:26

going on right now that's called The Fresh Start program which can remove folks that are in default

44:32

right and make them elegible for title 4 Aid that is currently in effect through August of

44:38

2024 it's usually a much longer process for people to get out of default so the Fresh Start program

44:45

if you are in Def in default or you know somebody that's in default on their federal student loans make sure that they look into this because it it's much easier it typically just takes a quick phone

44:56

call or going into a website so highly recommend that people look into this if they might be in

45:01

default right now there is also a new income driven repayment plan that you may also have

45:07

heard about in the news called the save plan or the saving on a valuable education plan which

45:15

is the newest most generous repayment plan the Department of Education has release to date it

45:21

increases the discretionary income exemption from 15 50 to 225% of the poverty line which means that

45:31

more of your income can be protected under this plan allowing for lower overall payments for most

45:37

borrowers it is important to know that moila is also changing website platforms um and it's the

45:46

process is starting right now of that change if moila is currently your servicer or may be your

45:51

serer in the future right if you're applying for pslf in the coming weeks and months you

45:57

will receive a notice of transition from moila that they are about to transition your federal

46:02

student loans to this new platform you will also be notified by moila when the transition is

46:08

complete and when your loan information has been loaded to the new system you should watch closely

46:15

for each notice that you receive from moila for more details on this transition especially look

46:22

out for any instructions you may need to follow once the account transition is complete finally

46:29

there are a few major uh servicers transfers that have happened recently if you are impacted by a

46:38

loan by a loan transfer I recommend reviewing federal student AIDS blog post on this topic to

46:45

know what's next after student loan transfer and the link for that is on the slide and Katie will

46:52

also be sharing it in the chat with you finally with rep return to repayment already being here

47:01

I want to highlight a few things interest began to ACR on September 1st 2023 with bills or statements

47:09

arriving uh for most people between late September October 2023 you should have received your billing

47:16

statement or other notice um that that you have to repay hopefully at least 21 days before your

47:22

payment is due though we have heard that for some borrowers it did a lot shorter than that your

47:29

first due date um is what you know was sometime in the month of October for most people uh and

47:37

it should have been clearly stated in your bill and because so many people are enter repayment

47:43

at the same time and if you have tried calling your serer or if you tried calling your serer

47:48

right now um you are likely to experience long call holds and uh wait times for assistance so

47:56

what I'm recommending people do is that if you can do something electronically by self-servicing on

48:02

servicing on the student.gov website things like applying for income driven repayment applying for

48:08

pslf ETC please do so instead of calling your serer if you are able to do so I also want to

48:17

highlight a few resources that could be helpful to you as you navigate your student loans and

48:23

apply for the pslf program first we have a steps to apply for pslf document which has

48:32

step-by-step instructions on how to apply for psla app this is a great document especially

48:38

for people who are just starting out from scratch when it comes to pslf but also for those who are

48:44

already in the program and want to make sure that they don't miss anything also we have a

48:50

pslf frequently asked questions document as well as other helpful links in resources that are all

48:58

available on our website wack. wa.gov pslf so check it out I'll have Katie once again post

49:07

that link in the chat just in case anybody has missed it if you have specific questions about

49:13

your case or maybe you would like to submit a complaint against your student loan serer

49:18

you can actually use our complaints in question forms available at student complaints. .gv again

49:27

that is student complaints. wa.gov if you utilize this form make sure that you select student loan

49:35

questions in complaints form from the dropdown menu please note that it is currently taking us

49:42

about four to six weeks to get back to borrowers this means that if you do submit a question to us

49:48

today it is possible that I will not be able to get back to you until the end of the year right

49:54

which we talked about some important deadlines especially when it comes to consolidation so I

50:00

just want to be fully transparent with you and let you know that uh most likely people that to make complaints to us today and forward may not hear back from us until um late December

50:12

January um but this is not to discourage you from seeking help from us it's just to make sure that you are aware that due to the limited capacity I'm the only person that is currently

50:21

answering those questions right now uh it might we might not be able to get back back to you before

50:27

the deadline for the IDR Account Adjustment to consolidate specifically which is uh December 31st

50:34

2023 thank you so much for the opportunity to present to you today uh now we are going to

50:43

take a few questions from the Q&A please note we may not be able to get to every

50:48

single question so if you can use the up voting feature uh for a question that you

50:54

really want answered I recommend that you do so I would also like if you can fill out a

50:59

survey um to help let us know how we're doing and to help us continue providing

51:07

resources like this one for Washton student borrowers I'll have go ahead and have Katie

51:13

post the link to the survey on the chat and then we'll go ahead and start taking some

51:20

questions awesome thank you so much Jessica um so again use those upboat features we currently

51:31

have 45 questions and about 40 minutes left in our webinar so we're going to do our best but I

51:39

don't think we'll be able to get to everyone um so definitely up vote take a look at the

51:44

list and uh let us know which ones you want us to answer so it looks like the first question

51:53

is is there any benefit to applying for pslf if you haven't yet reached your 10 years with

51:59

an eligible employer yet I've heard both yes and no on this I would love to understand if there's

52:04

any benefit to applying early and I could take this one yes as we um mentioned earlier in the

52:12

presentation um federal student aid and Jessica and I recommend that you apply every year um you

52:22

submit a pslf form every year this helps you track your qualifying payments it helps you troubleshoot

52:29

issues as you go and also depending on which agency you work for um it makes the process

52:38

easier um as you know some agencies don't have the resources or like maybe you work for a nonprofit

52:46

and the nonprofit closes um so best practice certify every year and just add Katie also when

52:56

you switch employers right that is also another time that it may be beneficial just so that you

53:02

don't have to C keep hunting down people later on absolutely thank you for that Jessica and also as

53:09

we mentioned you have to be currently employed by a public service provider or employer when

53:16

you apply for pslf so don't wait till you retire don't wait till you're not working apply while

53:24

you're working all right next question is from Crystal what if you have past student loan debt

53:32

due now um due to a bachelor's in science now are pursuing an MBA after 10 years payments on

53:41

the initial debt will the total debt be forgiven for The Bachelor of Science and the new loan debt

53:47

for the MBA Jessica do you want to take this one sure so Crystal the answer is depends right

53:57

if you're done with your MBA right now right you're already finished with your classes um

54:03

and you already got that degree you can actually consolidate your Bachelor of Science loans with

54:11

your MBA loans in order to place them on the same 10-year timeline for forgiveness but this is only

54:18

this this the ability to do that is only going to be for loans that you consolidate by the end

54:24

of this year right before December 31st 2023 so if you're still going to school for your

54:32

MBA of fortunately you're going to have to wait until you're done um with the with your degree

54:38

in order to be able to do that consolidation if the consolidation happens after December 31st

54:45

2023 then unfortunately you won't be able to keep all of your credit your 10 years of pslf credit

54:53

you're actually if you consolidate those loans together you will get a weighted average of those

55:00

payments now whether or not it makes sense for you to consolidate at that point um depends on

55:07

a few factors um for example if you are really close to forgiveness on those Bachelor of the

55:15

science um um loans then you might just want to maybe get that forgiven so that you can get rid

55:22

of that payment right um first um or maybe it's not that different right like maybe you've only

55:30

only been paying your Bachelor of Science for maybe a couple of years so then in that case consolidating it together might make sense because then it will give a little bit of credit um on the

55:40

consolidation loan but the answer is it depends on when you're consolidate and whether you're

55:45

able to consolidate right now if you're going to school right now for your MBA you're going to have to wait until you uh finish school to consolidate and at that point in time the

55:55

weighted average rule is what's going to count not the ibr Account Adjustment Rule and if I'm still

56:01

if if this is still confusing to you feel free to submit um a question to us just knowing that you

56:07

know like I was mentioning earlier we probably won't get back to you before the end of the year thank you Jessica all right next question is I've applied to pslf early but none of my

56:21

payments that I've made over the last six years while working for an eligible employer have been logged who should I talk to Jess do you want to take this yeah can you can you ask that

56:33

question one more time sorry oh absolutely yeah um so this person asks I have applied to pslf

56:40

early meaning before the 10 years but none of my payments that I have made over the last six years

56:46

while working for an eligible employer have been logged who should I talk to so I guess

56:53

it depends right um because if you're already with moila and the form is already showing as

57:00

an approved form right on your account then it is possible that something about those payments

57:08

made it so that they weren't elegible right typically because you were in an incorrect repayment plan you may have to wait until the income driven Account Adjustment is applied to

57:19

your account so that those payments that may have been potentially made in an incorrect repayment plan convert into pslf qualifying payments but if you know that you were in a correct repayment

57:32

plan right so you maybe you were either in the standard 10year standard repayment plan or in

57:37

you were in an income driven repayment plan and it's still not showing correctly then I would recommend that you submit a complaint to us and we can look into what's going on um for

57:47

you thank you for that Jessica all right next question do the 120 months of qualify employment

58:01

have to be consecutive no they do not um so that's that's a simple answer thank you for that

58:11

question no they do not need to be consecutive um another thing I want to highlight is that what's

58:18

considered full-time generally speaking is 30 hours uh per week in average 30 hours per week and

58:27

that can be uh combined with multiple uh part-time Public Service employers so say you work 15

58:35

hours at a nonprofit and 15 hours at a different nonprofit you can combine those and be considered

58:42

uh full-time for pslf um the other thing I want to highlight is that you will need to submit

58:49

a separate pslf form for each of your previous employers and each of your previous periods of

58:56

employment all right next question I think this is a Jessica question my pslf application was

59:10

approved by moila and I recently enrolled in the save IDR plan I have a mix of undergraduate and

59:17

graduate loans if I consolidate them into one direct loan will the new direct loan default

59:23

as an undergraduate or a graduate loan I'm asking because I think there's a difference in what percentage your monthly income you have to pay towards undergraduate versus graduate loans

59:35

5% versus 10% great question so when it comes to that difference in five to 10% of what you pay in

59:45

graduate and undergraduate loans that is teic it's not in in effect right now right it's not actually

59:51

going to be into effect until July 1st 2024 so this is just important for you to know that

59:59

the amount that you're paying right now um that the amount that was determined under your safe plan right now um does not take that into account because that part that benefit is not going to be

1:00:09

in place until July 1st of 2024 so I just wanted to make sure that you knew that now the other

1:00:15

part to this question is if I consolidate them what's going to happen so whether you consolidate

1:00:22

them or you don't consolidate them your um the average that I mean the the amount that you're

1:00:30

going to pay um you know whether it's 5% or 10% of your of your discretionary income is going to be

1:00:38

determined on an weighted average right um of your loans both undergraduate and graduate loans so

1:00:45

it's going to be a number between five and 10% and it's going to be individual to your loans right

1:00:51

because it is a weighted average that's going to be calculated but once again you whether you consolidate or not consolidate it you're not going to see that change until ju July 1st 2024 but you

1:01:02

can consolidate them if you want it's basically what I'm saying if that's the one thing that that you're worried about you're still going to be able to get that weighted average um once you

1:01:11

consolidate thank you for that great question and answer Jessica next question is can you

1:01:23

provide more information on consolidating and Manda asked this at 11:51 so um yeah Jessica do

1:01:32

you have any more information or links we can share yeah of course um if you are considering

1:01:39

consolidating the consolidation process is not a difficult one nowadays it is done um

1:01:46

we prefer that you do it online because it's a lot easier than doing the paper version most people can get through the process in 20 to 30 minutes um and again it's not complicated

1:01:58

um I'm happy to share the link on or where you apply to consolidate um once I'm done answering

1:02:05

this question um and hopefully Katie can pick another one that she can answer next so that so

1:02:10

that I just have enough time uh to to go look for that link um but anyhow the consolidation

1:02:16

process is not complicated is what I'm trying to to convey to you and if you're interested in consolidating you can do so on the federal Cen a website um you know very easily so not a

1:02:31

complicated process and um you know you should be able to do it without too much difficulty on your

1:02:39

own awesome thanks Jessica um I did just drop a link in the chat to the page on the federal

1:02:51

student aid website about consolidating student loans um if there's a different link you want

1:02:57

to share Jessica go ahead um but there is that resource available yes that's that's great thank

1:03:06

you awesome yes absolutely all right and um just remember to use the up vote folks uh to make sure

1:03:16

we're answering the questions that most people want to hear next question is I was automatically

1:03:23

placed in forbear by moila will the time that I am in forbearance count towards qualifying payments

1:03:31

so what I'll say about that is it depends on the type of forbearance um so I did share the slide

1:03:38

deck uh with folks we have a slide I believe it was slide 30 that lists out the different

1:03:47

kinds of um qualifying uh forbearance that count towards psls but um Jessica did you have anything

1:03:57

you wanted to add to that no other than that um a lot of people have been placed in administrative

1:04:04

forbearance because um they applied for Save and their application hasn't been processed yet also

1:04:12

moila did uh process some save applications incorrectly um in and as a result uh they're

1:04:19

trying to correct those issues right now you might also have been placed into an administr for Bears because of that so most types of administra for verance if that's what you're under will qualify

1:04:29

for pslf and again if you recently applied for income driven repayment or recertified

1:04:35

most likely that's what's happening and it should count towards pslf but if you're not sure then I

1:04:41

recommend reaching out um to your servicer to ask what kind of forbearance you're actually under awesome thank you for that Jessica um I see that Patricia um has their hand

1:05:00

raised and if folks could use the Q&A feature please that would be that would be great um

1:05:09

I'm GNA make one exception for Patricia uh Patricia if you want to go ahead and

1:05:15

raise your hand again just because I have been in contact with Patricia and I think the Patria is going to ask about qualifying contractors so I will take your question um

1:05:26

and allow you to talk uh but again this is an exception generally folks use the the Q&A thank

1:05:32

you I thank you can you hear me okay yes I can thanks yeah well thank you first of all thank you

1:05:43

so much for all this guidance and um clarification uh I spent a good 30 hours on the student aid

1:05:50

website and just found uh you know there were just some pieces ofation information I didn't quite

1:05:55

understand um one of the pieces as you shared earlier was that contracted um uh employees could

1:06:03

qualify if a state has a law that prohibits the law from directly hiring that employee um what I'm

1:06:10

exploring is I've been a um IP individual provider uh for uh individual adult with disabilities and

1:06:21

um trying to you know just better determine if there's actually a law that states the government

1:06:28

or that Washington is prohibited from hiring IPS the closest I can find is something that says uh

1:06:35

the legislation um requires that IPS are hired by a CME um so by deduction I'm guessing that

1:06:43

Washington can't directly hire and and there are so many other benefits other than pslf that might

1:06:49

be an outcome of that um if pslf is a benefit for individual providers in the light of the shortage

1:06:57

of caregivers we have in the state this could be a benefit that we could advertise and recruit uh

1:07:04

more qualified and even just um people may out of college um uh and kind of address the shortage

1:07:11

of Ip so I'm I'm I'm asking not only just for myself but as a means for us to recruit um IPS

1:07:19

for people with disabilities elderly and so forth so um then my second question I'm so sorry is for

1:07:25

the IDR count adjustment do does slide 30 and 31 that shows all those different uh types of

1:07:32

qualifying forbearance and affirment account or uh uh is that are those ones that are counted towards

1:07:38

the IDR count adjustment or is it expanded for the IDR count adjustment and how do we find out what

1:07:45

type of forbearance or um deferment we're in when we've Consolidated and our new service uh provider

1:07:51

doesn't have that information thank you so much and please let me know if there's anything I need to uh clarify yes absolutely thank you so much for sharing Patricia and definitely appreciate your

1:08:03

work doing research on um the contractor exception for individual providers um I can speak about that

1:08:11

after Jessica I do um want to invite Jessica to answer your second question first and then we

1:08:19

can Circle back to the contractors so the first thing that I would say is that even though you

1:08:25

Consolidated your loans your serer should still have your entire loan history they have access to

1:08:32

that information and if they told you otherwise that is incorrect information okay um so if you

1:08:40

want an account of all of your forbearances and deferments and all of that stuff and what they

1:08:46

were um and your servicer is Den is basically saying that they can't provide that to you feel

1:08:52

free to submit um a question um um to us again I most likely will not be able to get that get that

1:09:00

information to you before the end of the year but it's information that you can have available um

1:09:06

you know later on in case you want to check uh if the IDR Account Adjustment was correctly applied

1:09:11

to your account so that's that's part of the the question right the other question about the types

1:09:17

of forbearance and deferment under um PSL app so that is an expansion right to the IDR rules the

1:09:26

IDR rules are very specific right the IDR Account Adjustment rules are very specific um I will go

1:09:32

back to that um slide just so that we we can take a look here together so give me one second here so

1:09:43

these are the types of forbearance and deferments it has nothing to do with so much the type it has

1:09:51

to do with the amount right so so 12 or more consecutive months of forbearance 36 or more

1:09:59

total months of forbearance months and economic hardship or military deferment after 2013 in

1:10:06

periods of deferment before 2013 again excluding in school deferment so the ion adjustment has

1:10:13

more to do with the quantity like how long you were in forbearance not necessarily the types of

1:10:19

forbearance that you have the only types uh the only type of forbearance that I'm aware that is

1:10:24

excluded is periods of bankruptcy right that can be labeled sometimes as a bankruptcy for barents

1:10:30

which can be confusing to people and periods of default and those are just called default they're not a forbearance they're just periods of default so the other slide that talks about

1:10:41

um an expansion right of the forbearances and Def ferments that's that's a separate Rule and it has

1:10:47

to do specific with these types of deferment and forbearance right so it is possible for example

1:10:55

if you only had and then I'm just throwing out there six months of cancer treatment deferment

1:11:02

for example that may not count under the other rules that we were talking about but it will

1:11:07

count because of this new uh regulation that is specific to pslf right so um ibr has more

1:11:16

to do with the amount of time that you've been in forbearance certain types of deferment but this

1:11:22

is separate this a separate rule hopefully that answers your question thank you for that Jessica

1:11:30

and now just circling back to the contractor question um thank you again for bringing that

1:11:36

forward Patricia we are currently determining how to approach this as Jessica mentioned previously

1:11:43

we've identified and confirmed that um contracted public defenders with the Office of Public Defense

1:11:51

do qualify uh there actually having similar Recruitment and Retention issues uh to what you

1:11:57

mentioned Patricia um and you know generally these contractors don't qualify for a lot of benefit of

1:12:06

um State service and so it's hard to get people to fill those positions so we are looking at what

1:12:14

we can do to help with Recruitment and Retention for those qualifying contractors um our guidance

1:12:22

has been omm's guidance has been um to contact the pslf contact at your agency and ask them and

1:12:32

then the pslf contact will um reach out to their program AAG to try to find the relevant laws um

1:12:42

what I will say is if you think you might be a qualifying contractor under this exception and Patricia I know that you've already reached out to me um please email me at pslf at ofm.wa.gov and I

1:12:56

can help you discuss this with the pslf contact at the agency what we're finding is that um I

1:13:02

think this needs to be a little bit more of a guided conversation that happens and you know

1:13:07

since there is this issue of um Recruitment and Retention um especially in health care I think

1:13:14

it's a great opportunity to leverage this as a benefit and help more folks access the program

1:13:20

so Patricia I'll be in touch with you thank you again for bringing this forward um all right next

1:13:29

question um and just as a reminder if folks could use the upvote features uh we have 53

1:13:36

open questions right now we are not going to get through that in the next 17 minutes um so make sure you're voting on the ones you most want us to answer so next question is if I submitted my

1:13:48

application to consolidate my loans on 10:15 of 23 is this considered being Consolidated before 12:31

1:13:57

of 23 for the IDR benefit yes y that's a great question you just have to submit your application

1:14:06

by the deadline right by December 31st 2023 now I don't recommend that anyone submit their

1:14:12

consolidation application on December 31st one because you should be out hopefully celebrating

1:14:19

but two um because you know websites have been known to C cash issues can happen right so if

1:14:26

you know you have to consolidate right if you are under one of those three people that we talked about those three situations that we talked about earlier I would recommend doing sooner

1:14:34

rather than later but you just have to submit the application by December 31st 2023 you don't have

1:14:40

to have the actual consolidation be completed by that date great question thank you for that

1:14:47

Jessica appreciate it all right next question is I'm curious to know more information this is

1:14:56

from William I'm curious to know more information about the qualifying 120 months worth of payments

1:15:02

it seems like this stipulation is more geared towards folks with exorbitant loan amounts um

1:15:09

what I'll share in my experience is first of all you'll want to make sure that you're on an income

1:15:15

driven repayment plan the standard repayment plan that you get placed on is a 10-year loan

1:15:21

repayment down the whole time there's no point in applying for pslf because you'll already have

1:15:28

paid your loan off uh after the 10 years um so um I'll share for me specifically I don't know

1:15:37

that I would say that my loans are exorbitant like um like a medical doctor or something but

1:15:43

I have $64,000 in student loans and uh you know the pslf program is going to help me get at least

1:15:53

$40,000 of those loans forgiven um by the end of uh when I finally qualify so it doesn't have to

1:16:01

be necessarily exorbitant I mean that will mean different things to different people but um it's

1:16:09

definitely worth pursuing especially if you work in um work for well I mean anyone in the public

1:16:16

service sector generally is going to make less than um the private sector right so generally

1:16:23

something that benefits all of us in the public sector regardless of your student loan amount um

1:16:28

Jessica did you have anything you wanted to add to that yes so here's the the the thing that I have

1:16:34

to tell people about 120 qualifying months that was stipulated by Congress back in 2007 so if you

1:16:41

don't like that rule contact your representatives okay because Congress was the one that passed this

1:16:47

role and the and the idea behind it is that they want you to stay in in public service for 10 years

1:16:56

right so like it it's it's basically an incentive to get you to stay in the public sector so that's

1:17:03

the reasoning behind the 120 qualifying payments and just to to add to what Katie said about 120

1:17:12

qualifying payments it it is also supposed to be a program that benefits mostly people that

1:17:18

will have an income driven repayment plan that is less than what they would pay in the standard repayment plan right so people that would not be paying off that loan in 10 years because

1:17:28

they can't afford to do so um so that's another thing to just keep in mind um that the program

1:17:35

was designed for people that would typically qualify for a lower repayment plan on an income

1:17:40

different repayment plan versus a 10year standard repayment plan which tends to be unaffordable for

1:17:45

most people thank you for that Jessica um we'll Circle back to the most upvoted one but I want

1:17:54

to take uh Teresa's question about Parent Plus Loans next because I know that we've had a lot

1:18:00

of questions Jessica especially about Parent Plus Loans so Teresa asks I have Parent Plus Loans my

1:18:07

loans are with Ed Financial are they eligible for the pslf program and Jessica do you want

1:18:15

to take this of course so yes your loans can be elgible for the PS slf program now there's some

1:18:25

specific circumstances about Parent Plus Loans that make it a little bit more tricky for you

1:18:31

to qualify for forgiveness um I am not going to go into detail on that um today because I could

1:18:39

I literally could spend another 30 minutes just talking about that topic alone my recommendation for you is to go to our website um and um I think Katie already shared it multiple times

1:18:51

on the on on the actual um chat but we we can share it one more time go to our website and

1:18:58

then there's a section there that specifically addresses that question in more detail explaining

1:19:04

your repayment Options under pslf which is what tends to be tricky under Parent Plus

1:19:10

Loans so my recommendation is go there read the information and then if you have any questions

1:19:17

submit um a question or complaint to me um about your specific circumstance so that that's that's

1:19:23

where I'm going to stop thank you Jessica um awesome next question is I have approved income

1:19:35

driven repayment plan but the adjusted payment did not apply for the last month's payment I

1:19:42

was told by moila that I should do a forbearance application for last month and start paying from

1:19:48

this month do I get a penalty for this how do I do the forbearance after application for only one

1:19:55

payment and Jessica do you want to take this um can you please submit a complaint to me because

1:20:05

it seems weird that they would inform you to apply for forbearance um yeah just submit a

1:20:11

complaint to me I feel like your situation is a little U more specific and that that

1:20:16

just seems like weird advice from moila um so yeah just submit a a question or complain to

1:20:21

me and I'll I'll talk to you um address your issue 101 thank you for that Jessica and I did

1:20:31

send them the um link to the complaint portal all right next question is how does the time

1:20:39

in qualifying forbearance count towards the 120 payments does each month in forbearance

1:20:46

count as a payment and subtracted from the 120 um for the qualifying forbearance as

1:20:52

long as you're working for a qualifying Public Service employer during that time it does count um towards the 120 payments so you can certify your employment during

1:21:04

that time um Jess do you have anything to add to that no not really awesome thank

1:21:14

you all right and next question um Lisa I see your hands up uh I do I I made one exception but um if

1:21:33

you could please submit your question in the Q&A that would be that would be great and then folks

1:21:39

can upvote um we have a lot of ties for uh with two upvotes so again folks take a look at that and

1:21:48

see what questions you want us to answer in the next nine minutes all right next question is on

1:21:55

slide 40 okay well let's take this one first because it just got three up votes how can I

1:22:02

speak with the student loan advocate so Jessica's student loan Advocate and what you want to do is

1:22:08

uh you will need to submit a complaint using the student complaint portal um and that's how you get

1:22:15

in touch with Jessica even if you email Jessica directly what she'll tell you is to submit a

1:22:21

complaint using the student complaint portal um Jessica gets a ton of questions right now she's

1:22:27

the only one in the state doing this work um but she is a wonderful resource we want people to know

1:22:34

about her and her office um she will be getting another team member soon so our capacity will be

1:22:42

expanding um but I'll type the answer just submit a complaint using the student complaint portal yes

1:22:52

please if you can if you if you're not if you can avoid don't call or email because I'm still going

1:22:58

to have to have you complete the form it's still it's it's unfortunately still something that we have to have you do so if you can just go just skip all of those steps um and just go straight

1:23:09

to the Complaint Form that that will get you the fastest response thanks Jessica all right next

1:23:18

question is on slide 42 the example is for two subs loans if I consolidate a mix of subsidized

1:23:25

and unsubsidized loans will I still receive the benefit of all the payments from my oldest loan

1:23:33

um my understanding is that if you consolidate before the end of the year you will you will

1:23:38

give that Jessica do you want to add yeah so the reason we the reason why we put subsidized loan

1:23:45

as an example specific we don't like getting into too much into the weeds in the presentation and

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this is definitely a weedy question so there are some people when whenever you consolidate

1:23:56

your loans right your subsidized in unsubsidized loans never truly mix together and the reason for

1:24:04

that is because for interest purposes subsidized and unsubsidized loans have different benefits

1:24:10

I'm not going to go into that right now because the question is about the adjustment but what you need to know is that when you consolidate the unsubsidized loans are Consolidated together and

1:24:19

the subsidized loans are Consolidated together in some cas es and this is not very common people may

1:24:27

have taken one subsidized loan that is much older or one unsubsidized loan that's much older than

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all the other loans and maybe at that period of time they didn't take any any of the other type of

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loan right uh uh uh an unsubsidized loan in that case it is possible that only one set of loans of

1:24:50

those subsidized versus unsubsidized will get a higher number of qualifying payments which is the

1:24:55

reason why we made that distinction there because it has nothing to do with whether it's subsidized or unsubsidized it has to do with the history of the loan and because those never fully combine

1:25:06

right um the history only goes back to the type of loan that specific type of loan whether it's

1:25:12

subsidized or unsubsidized um so for most people they they have taken subsidized and un subsidized

1:25:19

loans the entire time that they've gone to school but some people may have been in C certain circumstances where maybe for their undergraduate degree they only took subsidized loans out um and

1:25:29

then that could that could unfortunately lead to the subsidized portion of the consolidation having

1:25:35

higher qualifying payments hopefully that answers the question yes thank you for that Jessica all

1:25:45

right and um Jessica if you want to take a minute to well actually we're going to jump to John's

1:25:51

question um when reaching the threshold then what do I continue making payments and then await

1:25:59

reimbursement John that's a really great question thank you for asking that um Jessica do you w to

1:26:08

answer that sure if you know for if you're 100% sure that you've reached that 120 qualifying

1:26:14

payment and you submitted your uh Lo your pslf form to moila already right you could contact them

1:26:22

to be placed in what's called an administrative forbearance right until your form is processed

1:26:28

that way you wouldn't have to make more payments the thing is they will only typically Grant you

1:26:34

their administrative forbearance if you're really close to that 120 qualifying payments and they can already tell on their end in some cases if you're waiting for example for the IDR Account

1:26:44

Adjustment to be applied to your account like you know that you're only going to get 120 qualifying

1:26:49

payments because of the adjustment if they're not able to see on their side before the adjustment is applied they you're close to that then they might deny you that an administer forbearance but

1:26:58

you can typically request an administ forbearance actually when you fill out the form if you already have filled out the form then you can contact them and ask to be placed into the administ

1:27:07

forbearance so that hopefully you don't have to make payments until you get the forgiveness if

1:27:13

you do make over payments over 120 qualifying payments on um on you know on your loans then

1:27:22

you should be able to get that refunded and that's but it's important to know that it's only the the

1:27:29

the the refund rules can be a little bit tricky right as far as like what will C what will get a refund and what will not get a refund so just just know that you know most likely you will get

1:27:40

a refund as long as you're not doing any more consolidation on the loans when you consolidate loans um only payments that are done after that last direct consolidation is what would account

1:27:52

as an overpayment so that you can get a little tricky in there but generally you would get a refund thank you for that Jessica and let's see

1:28:04

we're almost at time we have time for maybe one or two more questions all right so one question we got

1:28:15

is let's see the the most upvoted one is how do they determine economic hardship

1:28:24

my guess is that this is going to be a bit in the weeds but um what do you think

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Jessica so there is a there is a calculation that's taken into consideration to determine

1:28:39

economic hardship my general um um guidance when it comes to economic hardship is if you

1:28:48

qualify for an economic hardship you likely are going to qualify for a very lwi income

1:28:53

driven repayment right so um if you're if you are considering applying for economic

1:29:00

hardship deferment it might be better instead to apply for an income driven repayment plan um

1:29:07

but unfortunately we don't have enough time to go into the weeds of economic hardship right now but there's a there's a formula that's used that's based on your household

1:29:15

income and how many people you have in your household thank you for that Jessica all

1:29:23

right I'm just looking through the

1:29:30

questions all right last question if I consolidate my Parent Plus Loans into my

1:29:38

personally consolidated loans that are seven years of the 10 years into the process will

1:29:44

that reset my timeline of PFO it will not reset your timeline if you consolid valid date before

1:29:53

December 31st 2023 however this is very important for people that have Parent Plus Loans um whenever

1:30:02

you consolidate parent loans it can impact your eligibility for different income driven

1:30:08

repayment plans okay so um you want to read the information that I have on my website about that

1:30:17

um so so that's my recommendation to you yes you could potentially get your Parent Plus Loans to

1:30:24

have the seven years of qualifying payments once the consolidation is done and once the IDR Account

1:30:30

Adjustment is applied to your account as long as you consolidate by December 31st but you could potentially limit your your the income J repayment plans they you'll have available to you um so you

1:30:42

you have to do a little bit of putting it in the in the scale there um because especially if you're

1:30:49

going to consolidate before the end of the year um um it's you're likely only going to be able to to

1:30:55

do one consolidation which means that you would have to pay the only repayment plan that would be elgible that you would be eligible for as an IDR after the consolidation would be the income

1:31:06

contingent repayment plan right and that is the least generous of all the repayment plans so that

1:31:13

means that for the next three years that you would be repaying this loan you might be looking at a much higher monthly payment than what you might be paying right now on your loans so something

1:31:23

just to think about and again I recommend reading the information that we have on our website about this thank you so much for that Jessica I know we're a little bit over time the last thing I want

1:31:36

to mention is um I've seen several questions in the chat about certifying employment for

1:31:42

previous employers if you're currently employed by a qualify employer um so I shared a link in

1:31:50

the chat to the PS F directory and um you can use this to find the employer identification number

1:31:59

as well as pslf contact for state agencies and highered institutions so that's in the chat as well but thank you all so much for coming with your questions um it was a great discussion

1:32:10

today really appreciate um all of you showing up thank you and thank you Jessica thank you so

1:32:19

much everyone thank you to our interpreters and Katie I hope you all have a good rest of your day