

TOPS Processing Quick Reference Guide
For Submitting Payment Requests

07/26/2019

PLEASE **READ** THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS **PRIOR TO** SUBMITTING
TOPS PAYMENT REQUESTS TO AVOID DELAYS IN PROCESSING.

- **Online Information:** Use the resources available. Routinely check on-line for TOPS Payment Rosters and TOPS Error Rosters to prevent delays in correcting errors.
- **Pre-Payment Special Coding:** Certain Academic Standing codes should be submitted PRIOR to submitting TOPS Payment Requests:
 - FT – First Time Full Time
 - EP – Eligible Part Time

Actual Payment Requests should reflect a '00' (Continuous Enrollment) Academic Standing.

- **Pre-Census Day Billings:** **DO NOT** submit payment requests before the 15th class day. **They will be deleted.**
- **Full-Time Verification:** Students must be Full Time following the 14th class day to receive TOPS payment. Therefore, the earliest LOSFA will except Payment Requests will be the 15th class day.
 - Students considered below Full Time may pick up additional hours later in the semester, as permitted, making themselves Full Time and eligible for TOPS payment.
- **TOPS Disposition (Status) and Term of Eligibility:** Verify that the student's 'Disposition' (aka Status) reflects eligibility and the term payment is being requested is reflected in 'Eligible Payment Terms Not Paid' (aka Only Term Eligible/OTE). If eligibility is not reflected, payment will reject. ****NOTE:** *This information can be found on the student's 'Eligibility' screen or TOPS Master/Student Rosters.*
- **Bachelor's Degree Received (Disposition 041):** Students who have received a Bachelor's degree with terms of payment eligibility remaining will have a Disposition (Status) of 041. Those enrolled Full Time in a Graduate **or** Professional Program by the FALL semester following the one year anniversary of receiving their degree (2nd Fall) are eligible for TOPS payment. Payment requests **MUST reflect a 'GP'** (Post-Graduate) Academic Standing. ****NOTE:** *The student's account will not reflect an 'Eligible Payment Term Not Paid' until **AFTER** a 'GP' payment posts.*
- **Dual Billing:** Students enrolled Part Time at two schools, but are enrolled in a combined total of no less than 12 hours may receive TOPS payment at both schools.
 - The maximum Award TOPS will pay will be based on the highest approved amount between the schools. Therefore, the combined payments cannot exceed that amount.
 - Each school will need to coordinate with the other to confirm hours of enrollment. The following formula must be used to determine the TOPS payment amount to request by each school:
 - Hours enrolled ÷ 12 hours (full time) = %
 - % x school's approved TOPS amount = Eligible TOPS payment
 - Each school **MUST** code their billing with a '**DB**' (dual payment) **Academic Standing**.
 - If a student is enrolled full time at one school, only that school can receive payment.

- **Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):** Institutions seeking faster and more secure transmittal of funds should consider EFT. Funds are available a week earlier than by check. You can also avoid the loss of a TOPS check and the delay involved in reissuing it. Contact SGAR@La.Gov for directions in initiating this service.
- **Refunds:** Refunds must promptly be sent to LOSFA as errors are discovered. Delays may prevent students receiving credit at another school, creating a hardship. Refunds should be sent as follows:
 - **Payable to:** LOSFA
 - **Mailing address:** LOSFA, P. O. Box 91202, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9202
 - **Include the following:** TOPS Program, Student Name, LOSFA ID, Semester, Reason

TOPS Payment Requests

- **TOPS Award (Tuition) Amount:** Verify the correct amount for the Term/Year being requested. (e.g. Full-Time, as opposed to Program full time, aka eligible part time).
- **Stipend Payment Requests:** For Performance and Honors award level, requests for TOPS Award and Stipend must be submitted together. Otherwise, the request may reject.
- **National Guard Tuition Waiver:** National Guard students eligible for the National Guard tuition waiver should be coded as NG **one week prior to** sending payment request for the allowed TOPS NG subsidy of \$150.00. At that time, also request stipend for Performance or Honors award level (if applicable).
- **Program Type:**
 - A – ACADEMIC program of study at a 2 or 4-year public or LAICU institution.
 - T – TECHNICAL (Non-Academic) major or program of study

Program Type is determined by student's program of study on the 15th class day (Census Day), **or** at the point they become Full Time if after the 15th day. Report this Program Type when submitting Payment Requests AND grades at the end of the semester. ****NOTE: Any change in Major or Program of Study following certification of Full-Time status should NOT be reported for the semester which the change occurred.**