

Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA)

Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) Proprietary & Cosmetology School 2023-24 QUICK REFERENCE

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. **NEW STUDENTS** – Once it has been confirmed on the AWARD SYSTEM that a student has been awarded TOPS the student's FIRST CLASS DAY must be reported to LOSFA via email at SGAR@LA.GOV.
- B. **TOPS TERMS** - For TOPS purposes, the Academic Year is defined as follows and should be referred to when submitting payment requests and grade reports:
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1P2024 ... Sep. 1 – Nov. 30, 2023 | 3P2024 ... Mar. 1 – May 31, 2024 |
| 2P2024 ... Dec. 1, 2023 – Feb. 29, 2024 | 4P2024* ... June 1 – Aug. 31, 2024 |

CENSUS DATE (Day of Record) = First day of TOPS Term

* Summer (4P2024) payment is contingent upon **Legislative** appropriation and attendance is optional. However, **if paid by TOPS, it counts as one of the six allowed.**

NOTE: In order for a student to be eligible for payment, they **must be in class on the CENSUS DATE OF the applicable term** indicated, **unless the following occurs:**

- The student was absent that day, but remained enrolled (no break of enrollment); or
- That day falls on a weekend, holiday or a day NO classes are held at the school. In such case, the next class day will be the day of 'required attendance'

C. TOPS AWARD and STIPEND AMOUNTS:

	1P2024	2P2024	3P2024	4P2024 *
TOPS AWARD	\$793.33	\$793.33	\$793. 34	\$793.33
Performance Stipend	\$133.33	\$133.33	\$133. 34	\$133.33
Honors Stipend	\$266.66	\$266.66	\$266. 68	\$266.66

- D. **MAXIMUM AWARD** (as long as continuous enrollment and renewal criteria are met) –
1. **TOPS Tech Level *** – Students may receive two (2) years of award, equivalent to six (6) terms of payment.
 2. **TOPS Opportunity, Performance and Honors Levels** – Students may receive four (4) years of award, equivalent to up to twelve (12) terms of payment.

II. PAYMENT REQUESTS & GRADE SUBMISSIONS

- A. **ELIGIBILITY – BEFORE submitting a payment request**, confirm student's eligibility AND Award Level (refer to item #I.B.) by accessing 'TOPS STUDENT ELIGIBILITY' under the 'STUDENTS' tab on the Portal. This screen will not only reflect eligibility status (Disposition), it will also reflect the last grade report processed ('Last Grade Term'), 'No. of Years Paid', 'Last Term Paid', and 'Eligible Payment Terms Not Paid'.
- B. **AWARDING TOPS PAYMENT**
1. **Transfer Students** – For those students previously enrolled elsewhere, **contact LOSFA** for special instructions in handling students transferring their TOPS award to your campus.
 2. **No Prior Enrollment, Confirm date of high school graduation** –
 - a. **Grad Date - December 2021 through August 2022** –
 - i. If student is/was in class full time for the FIRST TIME **after Sep. 1, 2023, but before Dec. 1, 2023, contact LOSFA** for special instructions at SGAR@LA.GOV.
 - ii. If the student begins class **on or after** Dec. 2, 2023, they are ineligible for TOPS.
 - b. **Grad Date – Dec. 2022 through Aug. 2023** –
 - i. **1st class day is ON or BEFORE Sep. 1, 2023:** If student was in class by the Sep. 1, 2023, **do not** code them 'FT' (first time, full time) 1P2024. But **do submit** a 1P2024 payment request with a '00' (Continuous Enrollment) Academic Standing, via 'TOPS PAYMENT REQUESTS' under the 'PAYMENTS' Tab on the Portal.

- ii. **1st class day was AFTER Sep. 1, 2023:** Submit a TOPS payment request reflecting \$0.00, and a 'FT' (**first time, full time anywhere**) Academic Standing for the applicable TOPS TERM (defined in I.B.), via 'TOPS PAYMENT REQUESTS' under the 'PAYMENTS' Tab on the Portal. **The actual payment request should be submitted one day following** the 'FT' submission, and it should reflect a '00' (Continuous Enrollment) Academic Standing.

NOTE: Do not code 'FT' if a student has prior full-time enrollment elsewhere, which must be confirmed since it affects continuing eligibility.

- C. **POSTING PAYMENT REQUESTS** – Submit requests following the CENSUS DATE of the applicable TOPS TERM (defined in I.B.).
1. All payment requests and Special Coding (e.g. FT) can be entered by accessing 'TOPS PAYMENT REQUESTS' under the 'PAYMENTS' Tab on the Portal.
 2. Special Coding is processed nightly.
 3. Payment requests are processed only on Thursday nights. Results should be viewed Friday by going to 'REPORTS' tab on the Portal and accessing 'TOPS PAYMENT ROSTER' and 'PAYMENT ERROR ROSTER'.
- D. **GRADE REPORTS (reporting academic progress)** – Submit grades no earlier than ONE WEEK prior to the CENSUS DATE of the following TOPS TERM. Access 'TOPS GRADE SUBMIT' under the 'ACADEMICS' Tab on the Portal. One of the following Academic Standing codes should be reported:
- 10** – Officially Resigned (*Student resigned/withdrew before the end of the TOPS TERM, defined in I.B.*)
 - NS** – Non-Satisfactory Progress
 - SP** – Satisfactory Progress

If a student **RESIGNS** and meets one of the qualifying reasons listed on LOSFA's 'Request For Exception Form' (<https://mylosfa.la.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Exception-Request-Form.pdf>), they should complete the form and submit it to LOSFA, along with supporting documentation.

A student may take a **LEAVE OF ABSENCE** (other than a resignation/withdrawal) as long as it occurs **within** the date range of a defined TOPS TERMS (defined in I.B.). The student **MUST** be in class on the **FIRST** and **LAST** day of the defined term (excluding weekends and holidays).

NOTE: Be sure to submit grades timely or TOPS payment requests for subsequent terms may REJECT. HOWEVER, RESIGNATIONS / GRADUATIONS CAN BE POSTED AT ANY TIME.

- E. **COMPLETION OF PROGRAM:** Beginning with the 2012-13 AY, students completing one program and earning a Diploma, Certificate or Associates Degree may start another program and receive TOPS payment as long as class begins no later than September 1st of the fall term immediately following the one-year anniversary of the actual PROGRAM completion date. However, for this to apply, DEGREE TYPE and DEGREE DATE must be reflected in the grade report for the TOPS TERM it was completed.

EXAMPLES of earned Diploma, Certificate, or Associates Degree:

1. **Earned September 2021** – Has until September 1, 2023 to begin new program.
2. **Earned January 2022** – Has until September 1, 2023 to begin new program.
3. **Earned July 2022** – Has until September 1, 2023 to begin new program.

NOTE: If student begins following the Sept. 1, 2023 CENSUS DATE, contact SGAR for special instructions.

III. **REFUNDS:**

- **Mailing address:** LOSFA, P. O. Box 91202, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9202
- **Make the check payable to:** LOSFA
- **Include the following information with the check:**
 - a. Student Name(s)
 - b. LOSFA ID#
 - c. Amount of refund
 - d. Semester(s)
 - e. Type (e.g. Tuition, Stipend, National Guard)
 - f. Reason

- IV. **TOPS inquiries should be sent to:** SGAR@LA.GOV