

TOPS Processing Quick Reference Guide For Submitting Payment Requests

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

- **Online Information:** Use the resources available. Routinely check online for TOPS Payment Rosters and TOPS Error Rosters to prevent delays in correcting errors.
- **Pre-Census Day Billings:** **DO NOT** submit billings 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 accept 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.
 - Correspondence courses do not count towards full-time enrollment.
- **Less than Full-Time Enrollment:** A less-than-full-time payment request **MUST** be submitted for all students Enrolled less than full-time. Submit TOPS Payment Request reflecting \$0.00 and 'LF' Academic Standing.
- **First Time, Full-Time Certification:**
 - Necessary for students delaying full-time enrollment **BEYOND** the FALL semester immediately following the date of High School Graduation; and
 - **BEFORE** a payment can be made, a TOPS Payment Request reflecting \$0.00 and an 'FT' Academic Standing **MUST** be submitted for the applicable semester. The actual request for payment **MUST** be submitted separately; and
 - By submitting 'FT', the school certifies that the student has **NOT** enrolled full-time in a previous semester/term at any other institution.
- **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 be rejected. ****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 School** 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.**
- **Professional Students:** Payment requests must reflect a 'PS' (Professional Student) Academic Standing unless a Bachelor's Degree has been earned (use 'GP').
 - **LAICU Schools – Students with or without a Bachelor's Degree may NOT receive an award payment exceeding the school's approved TOPS Award amount (weighted average).**
- **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 by each school when determining an eligible TOPS award amount:
 - $\text{Hours enrolled} \div 12 \text{ hours (full time)} = \% \text{ (round to the nearest hundredth)}$
 - $\% \times \text{school's approved TOPS amount} = \text{Eligible TOPS payment (round to the nearest hundredth)}$

- 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 TOPS payment.

● **Proportional Billing Due to Reduced Enrollment:** Students approved for Reduced Enrollment may be eligible for a proportional TOPS award provided they are classified as ELIGIBLE PART TIME (i.e. Program Full Time) or are granted an exception by LOSFA due to PERMANENT DISABILITY.

- The following formula must be used in determining the eligible TOPS award amount:
 - Hours enrolled ÷ 12 hours (full time) = % (round to the nearest hundredth)
 - % x school’s approved TOPS amount = Eligible TOPS payment (round to the nearest hundredth)

● **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

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● **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:** Payment requests should reflect an ‘NG’ Academic Standing. The award amount is \$300.00. Additionally, those awarded Performance or Honors levels should have their stipend doubled.

Performance ---- \$400.00	Honors ---- \$800.00
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● **Program Type:** The program type reported should be **based on a student’s program of study** and **NOT** the student’s TOPS award level.

A - ACADEMIC program	T - TECHNICAL (Non-Academic) program
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- Determined by student’s program of study on the 15th class day (Census Day), **OR** at the point the student becomes full time following the 14th day.
- Must report the SAME code when submitting grades at the end of the semester, even if the student changes Major or Program of Study later in the semester.

● **ACADEMIC STANDING Codes for TOPS Payment Requests:**

00	Continuous Enrollment
11	Accelerated – <i>Must be approved by LOSFA</i>
DB	Dual Billed Student – Maximum payable amount will be based on the school with the highest approved TOPS award amount.
EP*	Eligible Part Time (program full time) – Eligibility determined by school.
FT*	First Time Full Time (anywhere) – Confirmed and coded by school.
GP	Post-Graduate – <u>Submit with award amount</u>
LF*	Less than Full Time
NG	Eligible for National Guard Stipend – <u>Submit with award amount</u>
OA*	Over-Awarded – Determined and coded by school.
O1*	Partial Over-Award – Determined and coded by school
PS	Professional Student – <u>Submit with award amount</u>
ST	Transfer from Semester Organization (<i>to Term Organization</i>)
TS	Transfer to Semester Organization (<i>from Term Organization</i>)
* Contact SGAR@LA.GOV to remove.	