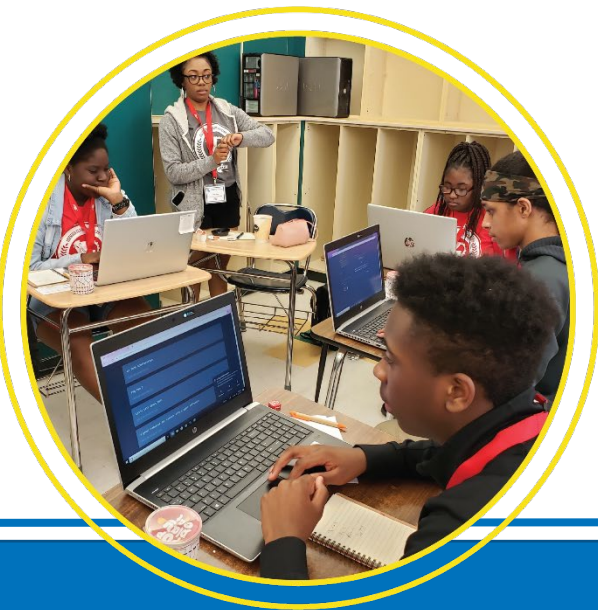




Louisiana Office Of Student Financial Assistance
A Program of the Board of Regents

Programs



SUBMITTING TOPS PAYMENT REQUESTS

Paula Smith

Student Financial Aid Administrator



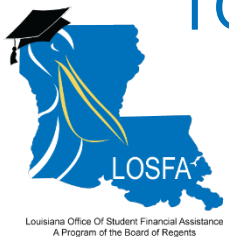
BOARD of REGENTS
STATE OF LOUISIANA

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Eligibility Verification

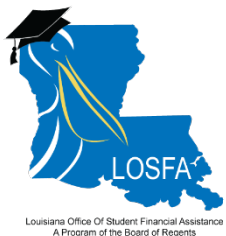
- **Full-Time Verification:** Must be full time following 14th class date.
- Students are permitted to add additional hours during the semester, as permitted, making themselves full time and eligible for payment.
- Correspondence courses are not counted towards full-time enrollment.
- **TOPS Disposition (Status) and Term of Eligibility:** Verify that the student's 'Disposition' (aka Status) reflects eligibility and the term payment 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.



Special Populations

- **First-Time, Full-Time Certification:** Delayed enrollment beyond first Fall semester immediately after high school graduation.
- For example, May 2021 graduate enrolls for the first time as a full-time student Spring 2022.
- By submitting 'FT', the school certifies that the student has NOT enrolled full time in a previous semester/term at any other institution.
- BEFORE a payment can be made, a TOPS Payment Request reflecting \$0.00 and '**FT**' Academic Standing MUST be submitted for the applicable semester.
- The actual request for payment MUST be submitted separately.



Special Populations

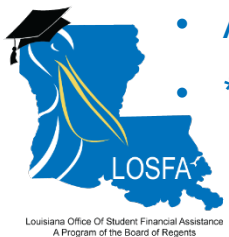
- **Proportional Billing Due to Reduced Enrollment** – Students approved for a proportional TOPS award provided they are classified as ELIGIBLE PART TIME (i.e., Program Full Time) or granted an exception by LOSFA due to PERMANENT DISABILITY.
- The following formula must be used in determining the eligible TOPS award amount:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Hours enrolled} \div 12 \text{ hours (full time)} = \% \\ &\% \times \text{approved TOPS amount}^* = \text{Eligible TOPS payment} \end{aligned}$$

- For example, student enrolled in 9 hours.

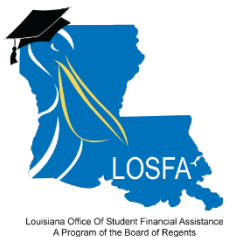
$$\begin{aligned} &9 \text{ (hours enrolled)} \div 12 \text{ (TOPS full time hours)} = .75 \\ &.75 \times \text{approved TOPS amount}^* = \text{amount to bill} \end{aligned}$$

- All payment requests must reflect 'EP' (Eligible Part Time) Academic Standing.
- Always bill for the full stipend for Performance or Honors students.
- *Approved amount can be found on our website.



Special Populations

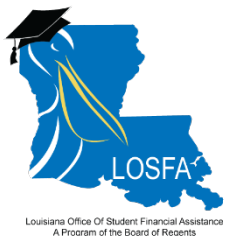
- **Less than Full Time** – Students enrolled less than 12 hours and do not meet program full-time (EP) requirements.
 - You must submit a payment request with **LF** Academic Standing and \$0.00 tuition amount.
 - **Students enrolled less than full time are not eligible for payment.**
-
- **National Guard** – Students who are eligible for National Guard tuition waiver. These students receive an institutional tuition waiver and are not eligible for the full TOPS award.
 - Students are eligible for \$300/semester or \$200/term TOPS tuition.
 - The stipend for these students is doubled; \$400 Performance and \$800 Honors.
 - Please submit payment request with **NG** Academic Standing.



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Special Populations

- **Partial Overawards** – Students receiving other aid along with a TOPS Award causes a partial overaward. See Bulletin T2021-1.
- Colleges must obtain a signed acknowledgement form from the student.
- All payment requests **MUST** reflect **O1** (Partial Overaward) Academic Standing.
- The amount billed should be the amount that would not cause the student to be in overaward status.
- **Full Overawards** – Students receiving other aid along with a TOPS Award causes a full overaward.
- All payments requests **MUST** reflect **OA** (Overaward) Academic Standing.



Special Populations

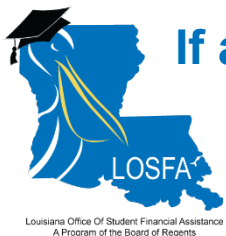
- **Dual Billing** – Students enrolled at two schools for 12 or more combined hours.
- The maximum award TOPS will pay is based on the highest approved amount between the institutions. Therefore, the combined payments cannot exceed that amount.
- Each school will need to coordinate with the other institution to confirm hours of enrollment. The following formula must be used by each school when determining an eligible TOPS award amount:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Hours enrolled} \div 12 \text{ hours (full time)} = \% \\ & \% \times \text{approved TOPS amount}^* = \text{Eligible TOPS payment} \end{aligned}$$

- Each school **MUST** code their billing with a '**DB**' (dual payment) Academic Standing.
- Only one school may bill for the Performance or Honors stipend.

If a student is enrolled full time at one school, only that school can receive TOPS payment.

*Approved amount can be found on our website.

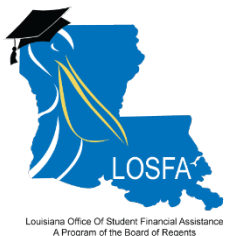


Special Populations

- **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.

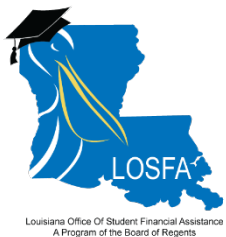
If Degree Received -	Deadline to Return Full Time -
1S2019, 2S2019, 3S2019	Fall 2020 = 1S2021
1S2020, 2S2020, 3S2020	Fall 2021 = 1S2022
1S2021, 2S2021, 3S2021	Fall 2022 = 1S2023

- All payment requests **MUST** reflect '**GP**' (Graduate Professional) Academic Standing.
****NOTE: The student's account will not reflect an 'Eligible Payment Term Not Paid' until AFTER a 'GP' payment posts.**



Special Populations

- **Professional Students** – Undergraduates who are admitted to a Professional School (medical, dental, veterinary medicine and pharmacy) prior to receiving a baccalaureate degree.
- All payment requests **MUST** reflect '**PS**' (Professional Student) Academic Standing.
- TOPS Award payment is limited to the full tuition charged by the school for enrollment in the respective graduate program **OR** the maximum TOPS Award amount listed; whichever is less.
- **LAICU Schools** may not bill for an amount greater than its approved semester amount (weighted average) for all program types.



Computing Remaining Stipend

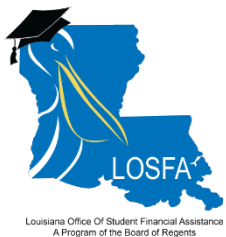
- If a student enrolls in a semester school and then a quarter school or vice versa, you must determine the eligible stipend amount.
- There is a maximum stipend amount per academic year as well as a lifetime maximum stipend amount.
 - Performance academic year - \$400 and lifetime - \$1,600
 - Honors academic year - \$800 and lifetime - \$3,200
- Review total paid on the Approved Payment/Refund screen on the Award System. Once you get that total, subtract from either academic year or lifetime maximum to arrive at remaining eligible stipend amount.



TOPS Payment Request

- Academic Standing Codes:

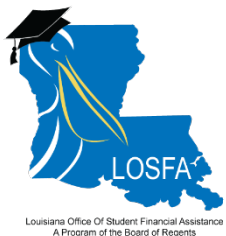
ACADEMIC CODE	CODE DESCRIPTION
00	Continuous Enrollment
11	Accelerated – Must be approved by LOSFA
DB	Dual Billed Student
EP	Eligible Part Time (program full time) Eligibility determined by school.
FT	First Time Full Time (anywhere) Confirmed and coded by school.
GP	Graduate Professional. Submit with award amount.
LF	Less than full time
NG	Eligible for National Guard Stipend. Submit with award amount.
OA	Over Awarded. Determined and coded by school.
O1	Partial Awarded.
PS	Professional Student. Submit with award amount.
ST	Transfer from Semester Organization to Term Organization
TS	Transfer to Semester Organization from Term Organization



Payment Reject Errors (FT & TS/ST)

This is not a complete list of payment reject errors, but many of the common ones we receive.

- **FT - CANNOT PROCESS FOR FIRST FALL AFTER GRAD**
--Issue: FT is only needed if student does not enroll the first fall after graduation.
--Resolution: Contact sgar@la.gov to reverse.
- **STUDENT PAID <= TERM FOR ACADSTAND CODE – FT**
--Issue: Student paid for prior semester.
--Resolution: Submit normal payment request after 14th or 10th class date.
- **OTE ADVANCED [2-FT]**
--Issue: A FT payment request submitted, and student's record updated.
--Resolution: None
- **INVALID TERM – TS/ST**
--Issue: TS or ST submitted for fall semester or term
--Resolution: None. TS or ST should only be entered for spring and beyond.



Payment Reject Errors (Eligibility & Stipend)

- **PREVIOUS ELIGIBLE TERM NOT PAID.**

--Issue: Prior term has not been paid.

--Resolution: Check student payment record to determine missing term. If at your school, submit missing payment request. If not at your school, contact sgar@la.gov to contact other school.

- **TERM NOT ELIGIBLE FOR PAYMENT [3]**

--Issue: Eligibility has not updated for term of payment request or student has not met continuing eligibility requirements.

--Resolution: Contact sgar@la.gov.

- **AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS > ALLOWED TUITION [0]**

--Issue: Incorrect tuition amount entered, or payment already posted on student record.

--Resolution: Correct the amount or check student's payment record on the Award System.

- **AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS > ALLOWED STIPEND[B]**

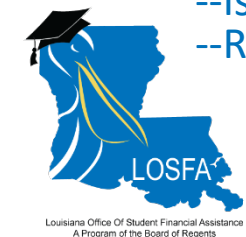
--Issue: Stipend listed on payment request is more than eligible.

--Resolution: (a) Check Student Award Screen on the Award System. This will show if student lost stipend and effective date; or (b) Check student's payment request for amount previously paid. Subtract the amount from the academic year maximum. Resubmit payment request with this amount. (See slide #10.)

- **TTL OF STIPENDS > LIFETIME MAX[H]**

--Issue: Requested stipend puts over lifetime maximum amount. (\$1,600 Performance or \$3,200 Honors).

--Resolution: Resubmit payment request with stipend amount. (See slide #10.)



Payment Reject Errors (National Guard)

- **TUITION REQUEST WHEN TERM MARKED AS NATL GUARD ELIG**

--Issue: Full TOPS tuition requested for student LOSFA has been notified as National Guard eligible.

--Resolution: Verify if National Guard. If not NG contact sgar@la.gov to update student's file and resubmit payment request. If NG, submit payment request accordingly.

- **NATGRD AMOUNT NOT ALLOWED [1]**

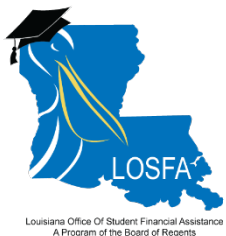
--Issue: An amount was entered in the National Guard Amount field, but Academic Standing is 00 (continuous enrollment)

--Resolution: Resubmit payment request as Academic Standing NG.

- **NATGRD AMOUNT = 0 FOR ACADSTAND CODE – NG**

--Issue: Payment request submitted as Academic Standing NG, but no amount was entered in the National Guard field.

--Resolution: Resubmit payment request with \$300 in the National Guard field.



Payment Reject Errors (Disp 041 & Prog Type)

- **DISPOSITION 41 W/O GP/GE/CD/RA/OA/TP/LF ACADEMIC STANDING**

--Issue: Student has received bachelor's degree. Payment submitted as Academic Standing 00.

--Resolution: Resubmit payment request as Academic Standing GP.

- **DISPOSITION MUST BE 41 FOR ACADSTAND CODE – GP**

--Issue: Payment coded as Academic Standing GP, but student has not earned a bachelor's degree.

--Resolution: If student is a professional student, resubmit the payment request as Academic Standing PS.

- **PRGTYPE MISMATCH ON GRADE**

--Payment submitted as one Program Type and the grade record is submitted as a different Program Type

--Resolution: Verify program of study, academic or technical. If grade record incorrect, resubmit grade record with correct program type. If grade record is correct, please contact Sgar@la.gov to make correction to payment request.



Submitting TOPS Payment Request

Please contact Sgar@la.gov for additional assistance.

