

Can't afford your student loans? Worried about your credit score?

If you're struggling with student loan debt, it's important to explore your federal student loan repayment options.

You may find that you have **surprisingly affordable options** to lower your monthly payment, avoid default, and preserve your credit score.

Your repayment options depend upon your loan type and repayment status.

There are also very limited circumstances in which your debt can be cancelled.

Managing student loan debt isn't easy. But you should never pay companies for student loan help.

To get free help with your student loans, please call the Attorney General's Student Loan Hotline at 1-888-830-6277 or file a student loan assistance request at: WWW.MASS.GOV/AGO/STUDENTLOANS

**Student Loan Hotline:
1-888-830-6277**



Maura Healey Attorney General

If you're struggling with student loan debt, you may have options. Call the Attorney General's Student Loan Hotline for free help and information:

1-888-830-6277

Boston

100 Cambridge Street, 11th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Worcester

10 Mechanic Street, Suite 301
Worcester, MA 01608

Springfield

1350 Main Street, 4th Floor
Springfield, MA 01103

New Bedford

105 William Street, 1st Floor
New Bedford, MA 02740

WWW.MASS.GOV/AGO/STUDENTLOANS

Maura Healey Attorney General



Student Loan Repayment Guide

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1-888-830-6277

or

File a student loan assistance request at:

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Don't pay fees for student loan help that's free.



STEP 1: DETERMINE YOUR LOAN TYPE AND STATUS.

Broadly speaking, there are two types of student loans—federal loans and private loans. Federal loans typically offer more **flexible and affordable repayment options**, including plans based on income.

CHECK YOUR
CREDIT REPORT
TO FIND YOUR
PRIVATE LOANS

To find out if you have a federal loan, sign in to the Department of Education's **National Student Loan Database (NSLDS)** at: <https://www.nsls.ed.gov> or call the Department at 1-800-433-3243.

In NSLDS, if you see ⚠️ next to your loan, it means the loan is in default. Defaulted federal loans can be collected through wage garnishment and tax refund interception. To get out of default, you can consolidate or rehabilitate your federal loan and **enroll** in an **income-driven repayment** plan to help lower your monthly payments.

To learn how to get back on track with a **defaulted federal loan**, visit the Department of Education's website at: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/default>

STEP 2: EXPLORE YOUR FEDERAL LOAN REPAYMENT OPTIONS.

Under income-driven repayment plans, **monthly payments can be as low as \$0 per month.**

Payments are based on family size, loan amount, and income.

Income-driven plans also offer the **possibility of loan forgiveness** at the end of 20 or 25 years.

Borrowers who work for the government or certain types of nonprofits are eligible for forgiveness in just 10 years under **public service loan forgiveness**.

Income-driven repayment plans are not for everyone. Depending on how your income and family size change, these plans can increase the overall cost of your loan. Nevertheless, it is better to enroll in an income-driven plan than to default on a federal student loan. In most circumstances, income-driven plans are also a better option than forbearance.

FIND THE RIGHT REPAYMENT
PLAN FOR YOU USING THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S
REPAYMENT ESTIMATOR.
[HTTPS://STUDENTAID.ED.GOV
/SA/REPAY-LOANS](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans)

LEARN MORE ABOUT PUBLIC
SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS:
[HTTPS://STUDENTAID.ED.GOV
/SA/REPAY-
LOANS/FORGIVENESS-
CANCELLATION/PUBLIC-
SERVICE](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service)

If you enroll in an income-driven plan, you will need to **recertify each year**. Failure to recertify for the plan will undo many of the benefits of enrolling.

To **learn more about your federal loan repayment options**, including income-driven repayment plans, visit the Department of Education's website at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans> You can also find out what circumstances qualify your federal loan for **forgiveness, cancellation, or discharge** on this website.

STEP 3: CONTACT YOUR SERVICER. After you've explored repayment plans on the Department of Education's website, call your loan servicer to discuss your options. If your loan is in default, call the company collecting the debt. Even with a defaulted loan, you have options to stop or avoid wage garnishment and tax refund interception.

FIND YOUR FEDERAL
SERVICER'S CONTACT
INFORMATION:
[HTTPS://STUDENTAID.ED.GOV
/REPAY-LOANS/
UNDERSTAND/SERVICERS/](https://studentaid.ed.gov/repay-loans/understand/servicers/)

AVOID STUDENT LOAN "RELIEF" SCAMS.

Don't pay fees for help with your student loans. The Attorney General's Office, the Department of Education, and your federal loan servicer can help you try to find student loan solutions for free.

NEED HELP? CALL THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE. If you need help understanding your options or feel that your servicer did not present all your options to you, **call the Attorney General's Student Loan Hotline** at 1-888-830-6277 or file a student loan assistance request at: www.mass.gov/ago/studentloans