



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOIA Service Center

January 29, 2020

Mr. Alexander S. Elson
Senior Counsel
National Student Legal Defense Network
1015 15th Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

RE: FOIA Request No. 20-00411-F

Dear Alexander S. Elson:

This letter is a final response to your request for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, dated November 21, 2019 and received in this office on November 22, 2019. Your request was forwarded to Federal Student Aid (FSA) to search for documents that may be responsive to your request.

You requested the following: Student Defense hereby requests that the Department produce the following within twenty business days:

1. For borrowers who have been identified as eligible through the SSA Process to date (i.e. borrowers who have “matched”), documents sufficient to show: (i) the total number of borrowers who have matched; (ii) of those matches, the total number of borrowers that have received TPD discharges to date; and (iii) the total dollar value of their discharged federal student loan debt.
2. Documents sufficient to show: (i) the total number of borrowers who have taken out parent PLUS loans on behalf of borrowers who have matched through the SSA Process to date; and (ii) the total dollar amount of those parent PLUS loans. (Put differently, the number of parent PLUS borrowers associated with children who have matched through the SSA Process to date, and the total dollar amount of those parent PLUS loans.)
3. For borrowers who have been identified as eligible through the VA Process to date (i.e. borrowers who have “matched”), documents sufficient to show: (i) the total number of borrowers who have matched; (ii) of those matches, the total number of borrowers that have received TPD discharges to date; and (iii) the total dollar value of their discharged federal student loan debt.
4. Documents sufficient to show: (i) the total number of borrowers who have taken out parent PLUS loans on behalf of borrowers who have matched through the VA Process to date; and (ii) the total dollar amount of those parent PLUS loans. (Put differently, the number of parent PLUS borrowers associated with children who have matched through the VA Process to date, and the total dollar amount of those parent PLUS loans.)

Attached to this e-mail are 9 pages of fully releasable documents that are responsive to your request. The documents provided are:

- VA Records

FSA also provided the following information: Elements #2 and #4 have no responsive documents. DRT provided excel spreadsheet reports for Element #1 and Element #3 with the responsive information:

- FSA Processing Statistics Total & Permanent Disability SSA Pre Qualified - Element #1
 - For Element #1a – Please see column ‘C’ – Intents Created (1st Letter). Column ‘C’ represents the total cumulative number of borrowers who were first identified as potentially eligible for an SSA TPD through the match process. Borrowers who were already engaged in the TPD process (prior to being identified in a match) are excluded.
 - For Element #1b – Please see column ‘M’— FSA Approved Applications. Column M represents the unique count of borrowers who were approved for SSA TPD discharges as a result of an SSA Match.
 - For Element #1c – Please see column ‘S’— Total \$ Amount Discharged Column ‘S’ represents the dollar value of upfront SSA TPD discharges associated with borrowers approved for SSA TPD discharges as a result of an SSA Match.

- FSA Processing Statistics Total and Permanent Disability VA – Element #3
 - For Element #3a – Please see column ‘C’ – Intents Created (1st Letter). Column ‘C’ represents the total number of borrowers who were identified as potentially eligible for an VA TPD through the match process. Please note that August 2019 borrowers represent borrowers who were previously contacted but were re-contacted due to the new automatic discharge process. To get the total number of unduplicated borrowers, activity from August 2019 should be removed.
 - For Element #3b – Please see column ‘O’— Total # Borrowers Discharged. Column O represents the unique number of borrowers who were approved for VA TPD discharges as a result of a VA Match.
 - For Element #3c – Please see column ‘Q’— Total \$ Amount Discharged. Column Q represents the dollar value of approved VA TPD discharges as a result of an SSA Match.

Provisions of the FOIA allow us to recover the costs pertaining to your request. The Department has concluded that you fall within the category of “all other use requester.” However, the Department has granted your request for a fee waiver, therefore, the Department has provided you with this information at no charge.

You have the right to seek assistance and/or dispute resolution services from the Department’s FOIA Public Liaison or the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). The FOIA Public Liaison is responsible, among other duties, for assisting in the resolution of FOIA disputes. OGIS, which is outside the Department of Education, offers mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to appeals or litigation.

They can be contacted by:

Mail	FOIA Public Liaison Office of the Executive Secretariat U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Ave., SW, LBJ 7C132 Washington, DC 20202-4500	Office of Government Information Services National Archives and Records Administration 8601 Adelphi Road Room 2510 College Park, MD 20740-6001
E-mail	robert.wehausen@ed.gov	OGIS@nara.gov
Phone	202-205-0733	301-837-1996; toll free at 1-877-684-6448
Fax	202-401-0920	301-837-0348

You have the right to appeal this decision by writing to the address below, 90 calendar days from the date of this letter. Using the services described above does not affect your right or the deadline to file an appeal. Your appeal must be in writing and must include detailed statement of all legal and factual bases for the appeal; it should be accompanied by this letter, a copy of your initial letter of request, and any documentation that serves as evidence or supports the argument you wish the Department to consider in making an administrative determination on your appeal.

Appeals may be submitted using the on-line form available at
www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/foia/foia-appeal-form.pdf.

E-mail: EDFOIAappeals@ed.gov
Fax: 202-401-0920
Mail: Appeals Office
Office of the Executive Secretariat
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, LBJ 7W106A
Washington, DC 20202-4536

Sincerely,

Sandra Lewandowski

Sandra Lewandowski
Government Information Specialist
Office of the Executive Secretariat

Enclosure