

NCLC Advocates Applaud Department of Education Implementation of Its New Matching Program for Disabled Student Loan Borrowers, April 12, 2016

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(BOSTON) Advocates at the National Consumer Law Center (NCLC) applauded the U.S. Department of Education's implementation of a new matching program to help identify and provide outreach to borrowers who receive federal disability benefits and qualify for loan cancellation based upon a total and permanent disability.

As part of the March 2015 Presidential Student Aid Bill of Rights Memorandum, President Obama required the Secretary of Education and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social Security, to develop a plan to identify federal student loan borrowers who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and determine which beneficiaries qualify for a total and permanent disability discharge of their student loans. Today, the Department of Education announced that it will begin contacting borrowers identified by this match to inform them of the loan cancellation process.

"This matching program is critical to help student loan borrowers get the relief they are entitled to" said the National Consumer Law Center's Student Loan Borrower Assistance Project Director Persis Yu. "Many Social Security Disability recipients qualify for loan cancellation, yet most do not know about the discharge program."

Of the people the Department identified, over 100,000 of those borrowers have been certified for the Treasury Offset Program, meaning that they are at risk of losing federal tax refunds, and of having a portion of their Social Security benefits taken. While the new matching program is intended to help SSDI recipients apply for this relief, it will not automatically stop those offsets from occurring. "Borrowers receiving SSDI need these payments to survive," says Yu. "The creation of the matching program is a great first step, but the Administration needs to go further to ensure that no borrower who has a right to student loan relief has their benefits taken."

Related Resources

NCLC: [New Matching Program for Disabled Student Loan Borrowers \(Dec. 2015\)](#).

Information for borrowers:

NCLC: [Disability and Death Discharges](#)

U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid: www.disabilitydischarge.com