



PRESS RELEASE

From the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance
A Program of The Board of Regents

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Important Information for START Saving Program Year-End Depositors

In order for START Saving Account deposits that are sent by mail (or through an independent delivery service) to be eligible for exclusion from income reported on your 2017 Louisiana state tax return, the deposit must be postmarked by December 31, 2017 and received by January 3, 2018. Deposits not postmarked by December 31st and received after January 3, may not be deducted until your tax return for 2018 is filed. You **do not** have until April 15 to deposit to your account and still deduct it from your 2017 state income taxes.

Deposits should be payable to the START Saving Program and may be delivered one of the following ways:

1. Regular mail addressed to START Saving Program, Post Office Box 91271, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9271. **Please allow extra mail time since deposits must be received and not simply postmarked.**
2. Overnight delivery addressed to 602 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802 for receipt by 3 p.m. on December 29, 2017.
3. In-person START deposits can be made in the Mobile/Manchac Room on the first floor of the Galvez Building (602 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802) from 8:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. **Wednesday, December 27th through Friday, December 29th.** Parking is available in the Galvez Parking Garage on North Street and parking can be validated by the START representative assisting with your deposit.
4. Online payment for START account deposits is now available on the START Saving Web site, www.startsaving.la.gov. Account owners are now able to log into their START account, select the "Deposit Forms" option from the menu and then select "Electronic Online Deposit". From here account owners can select the account(s) into which they want to make a deposit and indicate the amount they wish to deposit. One deposit can be distributed among a maximum of five accounts. If an account owner has more than five accounts, he or she will have to log back into his or her START account and select the additional accounts in a second transaction. When online payment is selected, the account owner will be transferred to a secure Web site operated by First Data Corporation, PayPoint. This organization was contracted by the state to support online payments.

On the PayPoint site, the account owner will see the LOSFA logo, the START title, a listing of a maximum of 5 accounts with the amount selected for deposit, and two payment options. The account owner can select to pay by electronic check or by credit card. The credit cards accepted include Mastercard and Discover.

The account owner will enter his or her financial data on the PayPoint secure Web site to complete the deposit transaction. LOSFA will not receive any credit card or checking account financial information from First Data. A convenience fee will be charged to use the online payment process to cover the transaction costs and thus keep the START Savings Program free of administrative fees. The fee will be in addition to the amount of the deposit(s). The fee will be displayed prior to the account holder's final authorization of the payment.

NOTE: If credit card payment is selected, the account owner will be charged 1.583% of the total amount deposited, while E-check (electronic check) account debits are charged only .23 cents per transaction. To pay by E-check, log on to your account at www.startsaving.la.gov, go to "Forms", and use the Electronic Online Deposit link and enter your bank account number and routing number.

On or before the third week of January, START account owners will be mailed a notification of total deposits made in 2017 to be used for state income tax return filing purposes. Should you have any questions or need assistance, please call us (800-259-5626). As always, we do appreciate your continued support of the START Saving Program.

START, Louisiana's 529 College Saving program, is administered by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA), a program of the Board of Regents. START investors can exempt up to \$2,400 in deposits per account per year from income reported on their state tax returns. For married couples filing jointly, the exemption from income can be up to \$4,800 in deposits. If account owners are unable to make \$2,400 (or \$4,800) in deposits in one year, they can carry forward unused portions to subsequent years.

In addition to a \$2,400 or \$4,800 annual tax exemption, START benefits include a state-paid match on deposits ranging from 2 percent to 14 percent, depending on the account's classification and owner's adjusted gross income. Other benefits include a choice of investment options in fixed, variable and mixed portfolios; the flexibility to use funds at any accredited college or university for tuition, room and board, books, fees and more; and a tax exemption on earnings when used to pay these expenses.

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