

TOPS Summary for Requesting Payments

Revised 07/09/08

Regular Reminders when submitting payment requests:

- Pre-Payment Special Student Codes. Certain Special Student codes should be designated by the school the week PRIOR to billing.
They are:
 - a. FT - First Time Full Time
 - b. EX - Exchange Student this Semester (XE would be used for reporting grades)
 - c. NG - National Guard eligible for tuition waiver
 - d. DB - Dual Billed Student, submitted by the degree granting institution
 - e. EP – Eligible Part TimeOnce these are submitted, the Academic Standing Field (ASF) should be coded “00” with the actual payment request.
- Pre-Census Day Billings. Do not submit your initial payment requests prior to the 15th class day. Early payment requests will be deleted.
- Non-TOPS Concurrent Enrollment Programs. High schools students participating in special programs that allow them to attend and earn college credits are not to be billed through the portal with TOPS billing requests. Follow Billing Instructions for the program that funds their enrollment.
- Full-Time Verification. Verify that students are enrolled full time at close of 14th Class Day (Census Date) before requesting payment.
- Delayed Full Time Enrollment. If students are not full time at the close of the 14th class day, but are able to enroll in enough additional classes to become full time, these become full time for TOPS purposes and Payment Requests should be submitted on their behalf.
- Program Type. This field should contain an “**A**” if the student is enrolled in an Academic Program of Study at a 2 or 4-year public or LAICU institution, or a “**T**” if the student is enrolled in a Technical (Non-Academic) Major or Program of Study. Program Type is determined by student’s program at close of 14th class day (Census Day) or when Full Time. Any change in Major or Program of Study after the 14th class does not affect TOPS Program Type. The Program Type for Grade (TOPS Academic Information Report) must match the Billed Program Type or the grade record will reject. (**TOPS Bulletin T2004-2**)
- TOPS Status Code and Only Term Eligible. Verify that the record’s Status Code (ST CD) is eligible for payment and that Only Term Eligible (OTE) is the current semester/term before submitting payment requests to avoid submissions being rejected.
- TOPS Tuition Amount. Verify that the correct TOPS Tuition amount for the Academic Year is in place prior to submission.
- Stipend Payment Requests. Bill for both tuition and stipend at the same time. Billing for stipend separately may cause the payment request to reject.
- National Guard Tuition Waiver. National Guard students eligible for the National Guard tuition waiver should be coded as NG one week prior to sending payment request for the allowed TOPS NG subsidy of \$150.00. At that time, also request stipend for Performance or Honors award level (if applicable).
- Dual Billing. Dual Billed (DB) students’ programs require dual enrollment where a concurrent enrollment agreement exists between post-secondary institutions and the student is considered

full-time by the total hours enrolled at both schools. The Degree Granting Institution must submit the DB code in advance in order for both institutions to submit payment requests and the second not to be rejected. If the non-degree granting institution submits the DB code, the TOPS Tuition Amount for that institution will determine the amount to be divided between the schools.

- Initial Graduate Term. For students who have graduated with terms of award remaining and who enroll in a graduate or professional school/program (SC 41), only submit a request for payment if the student has enrolled in the term immediately following attaining his baccalaureate. If initial Graduate Enrollment is a later semester, submit a TOPS Manual Payment Request for the initial semester or term.
- Timely Refunds. Process all Refunds promptly. Some are for students enrolled at another institution and refunds must be received prior to the correct payment. Refunds received after the close of the Fiscal Year are lost to TOPS.
- Online Information. Use the resources available. Check for Payment Rosters and Error Reports (on-line) to prevent delays in billing corrections that are required.
- Submission of Duplicate Payment Requests. Institutional Payment Requests received by 3:00 PM on Wednesday are processed on Thursday evening and Payment Rosters and Error Rosters are available Friday online. Please check the Online Roster before requesting payment again. It may be a week after processing before checks are available to be mailed. Checks are requested on Friday; the Treasury processes checks (normally) on Tuesday and Thursday. Duplicate billings wind up in the Error Roster. Awards and Renewal staff work the Error Roster on a regular basis; submission of duplicate Payment Requests slows down this service to you.
- Electronic Funds Transfer. Institutions seeking faster and more secure transmittal of funds should consider EFT. Funds are available about a week earlier and there are no checks to transfer and secure. Contact LOSFA for directions for initiating this service.
- TOPS Portal Batch Files. Payment Requests submitted via FTP and TOPS Manual Portal Record Entry are not viewable by Awards and Renewal until Thursday afternoon. If there are problems with the file, it is impossible to re-submit the Payment Request the same week. Payment Requests submitted via TOPS Portal Batch Files, however, are viewable upon receipt. This allows review, and if necessary, submission of corrected files the same processing cycle. Let us know if we can assist in submitting TOPS Portal Batch Files in lieu of FTP or Individual Portal Records.
- Academic Standing Field (ASF). All Special Student Codes should have been submitted prior to billing as required; then ASF should be "00" with payment request. (See **BulletinT2004-2** for complete listing of SP codes)
- Initial Eligibility Deadlines. Changes in Initial Eligibility Deadlines have been implemented. Students whose applications are received after July 1 of the year of the student's high school graduation, but no later than July 1 following the first anniversary of the student's high school graduation will be entitled to a full award (4 years) **commencing the next academic year**. The 120-day penalty period provided in the TOPS statute will only apply to the final deadline, now defined as July 1 following the first anniversary of the student's high school graduation. The following is applied to High School Graduates of 2008. The following applies to 2008 High School Graduates:
 - a. Application Date: 1/1/08 – 7/1/08: Eligible for payment Fall 08, no penalty for application date.
 - b. Application Date 7/2/2008 - 7/01/09: Conditionally eligible for Fall 2009, no penalty for application date. If enrolled full time during 2008-09 Academic Year, must meet all TOPS Continuation Requirements.
 - c. Application Date 7/2/2009 – 08/30/2009: Conditionally Eligible Fall 2009, award reduced by 1 semester. If enrolled full time during 2008-09 Academic Year, must meet all TOPS Continuation Requirements.

- d. Application Date 8/31/2009 – 10/30/2009: Conditionally Eligible Fall 2009, award reduced by 2 semesters. If enrolled full time during 2008-2009 Academic Year, must meet all TOPS Continuation Requirements.
 - e. **2008 High School Graduate with Application Date after 10-30-2009: Ineligible for TOPS.**
- Conditionally Awarded (ST CD 02) Students. For those high schools graduates whose applications are received after the 7/02/08 application deadline, Status Code (SC) 02 has been developed for use on the Master Roster. TOPS applicants who meet all other initial eligibility requirements but with application receipt dates that qualify for academic year payments beginning one year after high school graduation, (established in the rules that were detailed in TOPS **Bulletin 2006-05**) will be assigned **status code 02 (SC 02)** and the student's award level will be indicated by the new award level code below:
 - CT Conditionally awarded TOPS Tech
 - CO Conditionally awarded TOPS Opportunity
 - CP Conditionally awarded TOPS Performance
 - CH Conditionally awarded TOPS Honors
 - Conditionally Awarded OTE. When initially awarded, SC 02 will appear on the TOPS Master Roster with a blank OTE (Only Term Eligible) field.
 - Conditionally Awarded Payment. Payment requests cannot be processed for students in SC 02. Progression of the record from SC 02 (Conditionally Eligible) to SC 00 (New Eligible) will occur once it is determined that the student has met the TOPS continuation requirements for the college academic year immediately following high school graduation or that the student was not enrolled in an eligible institution during that time.
Please verify that all prior grades have been submitted for these students.

(Refer to **Bulletin T2006-8** for complete instructions on criteria to receive award and submitting data for these students.)