SUPPLEMENTAL DIRECTIVE

NNSA SD 322.1

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Certification Due: 10-07-31

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

National Nuclear Security Administration

NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
Human Resources and Strategic Operations

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT
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OFFICE OF PRIMARY INTEREST (OPI):
Staffing, Classification and Processing Division.

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Change Summary

Directive Identification	Changes	Date	Version
SD 322.1, Student Loan Repayment Program	Administrative Change 1	10-07-26	
	OPI changed from Management and Budget, Office of Employment & Workforce Planning Division to Office of Human Resources and Strategic Operations, Staffing, Classification and Processing Division due to reorganization.	10-07-26	
	Section 5,d., replaced "(NA-MB-50)" with ", Office of Budget and Accounting."	10-07-26	
	Section 7.b., Removed "(i.e., employees serving under Schedule C appointments)"	10-07-26	
	Section 7.h. (2), replaced 2 references to "NA-MB-50" with "Corporate Budget (NA-BA-10)" and "the Associate Administrator for Budget and Accounting Office (NA-BA)" respectively.	10-07-26	
	Section 7.m.(1), replaced "The records must be destroyed 3 years after the end of the service obligation" with " The incentive package records must be destroyed 3 years after date of approval, completion of the service agreement, or termination of the incentive/payment, whichever is later; longer retention is	10-07-26	

	authorized when required for business use."		
	Section 8.b. changed title from "Associate Administrator for Management and Budget" to "Deputy Associate Administrator for Human Resources and Strategic Operations".	10-07-26	
	Section 8.h. changed title from "Director, Employment and Workforce Planning Division." to "Director, Staffing, Classification and Processing Division (SCPD)".	10-07-26	
	Appendix A, section 1.b., replaced "(NA-MB-50)" with "Associate Administrator for Budget and Accounting, Corporate Budget, NA-BA-10"	10-07-26	
	Appendix A, section 1.e., replaced "Director of Employment and Workforce Planning Division" with " The Staffing, Classification and Processing Division."	10-07-26	
	Appendix A, 1.g., added "h. After approval by the NNSA Human Resources Director, the HRC processes the approved SLRP action in Workday. Review the remaining approval-routing language in items f. thru g. for consistency with this current process."	10-07-26	
	Appendix A, section 1.g., replaced "The Deputy Associate Administrator for Management. " with "NNSA Human Resources Director."	10-07-26	
	Appendix A, 1.i. replaced title "NNSA Office for Management and Budget"	10-07-26	

	with “the NNSA Office for Human Resources and Strategic Operations.”		
	Appendix A, section 2.a. & b. , replaced “NA-MB-50” with “Associate Administrator for Budget and Accounting, Corporate Budget, NA-BA-10”.	10-07-26	
	Appendix A, section 2.e. inserted “e. Following the required approval by the NNSA Human Resources Director, the HRC processes the approved SLRP recertification/action in Workday.“	10-07-26	
	Appendix C, 5. Corrected DOE Order citation.	10-07-26	

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STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE. To implement uniform, enterprise-wide policy and procedures for administering the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) in accordance with provisions contained in 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) 5379, 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 537, and Department of Energy (DOE) Order (O) 322.1C, *Pay and Leave Administration and Hours of Duty*. The DOE order may be supplemented by the DOE Desk Reference on Recruitment and Retention incentives.

2. AUTHORITY.

   DOE Order (O) 322.1C, *Pay and Leave Administration and Hours of Duty*, dated 1-19-11.

3. CANCELLATION. NNSA Business Operating Procedure (BOP) 322.3, *NNSA Student Loan Repayment Program*, dated 08-05-10.

4. APPLICABILITY.

   a. Federal. Applies to all federal NNSA employees.

   b. Contractors. Does not apply to contractors.

   c. Equivalencies/Exemptions.

      (1) Equivalency. In accordance with the responsibilities and authorities assigned by Executive Order 12344, codified at 50 U.S.C. sections 2406 and 2511, and to ensure consistency throughout the joint Navy/DOE Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, the Deputy Administrator for Naval Reactors (Director) will implement and oversee requirements and practices pertaining to this Directive for activities under the Director's cognizance, as deemed appropriate.

      (2) Exemption. None.

5. SUMMARY OF CHANGES.

   a. Converts and updates the directive from a BOP to a Supplemental Directive (SD), in accordance with NNSA SD 251.1B, *Directives Management*.

   b. Adds an AUTHORITY section.

   c. Adds language related to using the SLRP for retention purposes as well as for initial federal appointments.

   d. Changes requirement to obtain funds approval from the pay pool

manager to Planning, Programming, Budget, and Evaluation, Office of Budget and Accounting.

e. Changes titles and organizations based on past NNSA reorganizations.

f. Adds requirement for recipients to have a performance rating of Fully Meets Expectations (FME) or higher with zero Specific Performance Objectives (SPOs) rated below the FME level, or an equivalent rating in another performance management system, in order to receive loan repayment benefits; must maintain performance at the FME level on SPOs during the service period to be eligible for continued payments.

g. Adds requirement for payments to be made on a biweekly basis.

h. Adds requirement to begin the annual recertification process 120 days prior to the anniversary date of the service agreement in order to advise employee if funds will be reduced or terminated. Clarifies process and responsibilities.

i. Modifies service period requirements.

j. Updates the Employee Reimbursement Requirements section.

k. Adds language for reconsideration of SLRP benefits earlier terminated due to lack of funding in subsequent years if funding becomes available.

l. Updates RESPONSIBILITIES section.

m. Moves forms to the Staffing and Recruitment page of the NNSA Intranet Portal.

n. Revises and moves ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND PROCESS section to Appendix A.

o. Adds examples of types of loans eligible for repayment under definition of *Qualifying Student Loan*.

p. Moves DEFINITIONS to Appendix B.

q. Moves REFERENCES to Appendix C.

6. BACKGROUND. It is the goal of NNSA to, in a judicious manner, use this flexibility to pay a qualifying student loan (as defined under Appendix B, [Definitions]), in accordance with this SD, current staffing plans, and budgetary constraints. The intent of this flexibility is for use in the recruitment of a candidate or retention of an employee with high or unique qualifications. Judicious use of this repayment authority is expected to have a direct, positive effect on NNSA's ability to recruit and retain a well-qualified workforce.

7. REQUIREMENTS.

a. Eligibility.

An employee or job candidate, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2105, who has high or unique qualifications and is otherwise approved, is eligible to receive a student loan repayment including Senior Executive Service (SES), Senior Level (SL), and Scientific/Professional (ST) employees, unless excluded by law or regulation.

(1) When used as a recruitment incentive, job candidates must be:

(a) Selected for federal employment from outside of the federal service.

(b) An appointment other than a time-limited appointment, (e.g., career or a career-conditional appointment in the competitive service or an appointment without time limitation in the excepted service).

(c) For time-limited appointments in the competitive or excepted service, the job candidate must:

1 Have at least 3 years remaining under the appointment after the beginning of the service period established under a service agreement; or

2 the time-limited appointment leads to conversion to another appointment so employment with the agency is projected to last for at least 3 years after the beginning of the service period established under a service agreement, (e.g., Recent Graduates, Presidential Management Fellows, Veterans Readjustment Appointments, etc.)

(2) When used as a retention incentive, current NNSA employees must be serving under:

(a) Career or career-conditional appointment or on appointment without time limit in the excepted service; or

(b) Term appointment with at least 3 years remaining; or

(c) Appointment with non-competitive conversion to term, career, or career-conditional, (e.g., Recent Graduates, Presidential Management Fellows, Veterans Readjustment Appointments, etc.); and, likely to leave the federal service. It must be essential to retain the employee based on their unique qualifications or for a special need of NNSA.

b. Not Eligible.

Individuals who serve under time-limited appointments of less than 3 years and those employees who occupy or will occupy a position excepted from the competitive service because of its confidential, policy-determining, policymaking, or policy-advocating character are excluded from receiving student loan repayments.

c. Terms, Limitations, and Conditions.

(1) Under 5 U.S.C. 5379(e) and 5 CFR 537.103(d), NNSA must establish criteria for selecting recipients of student loan repayment benefits in compliance with merit systems principles, exercise fairness, and take into consideration the need to maintain a balanced and diverse workforce.

(2) Before benefits are authorized, the following essential criteria must be met:

(a) The candidate is deemed to have high or unique qualifications; and

(b) Without the SLRP, the agency would encounter difficulty in 1) filling a position with an individual with high qualifications or 2) retaining an employee with high qualifications, who is likely to leave the Federal service, when it is essential to retain the employee based on their qualifications or a special need of the agency.

(c) The determination must be made in writing using the SLRP Checklist criteria.

d. Performance Requirement.

(1) Candidates and employees must have a performance rating of at least FME with zero SPOs rated below the FME level or an equivalent rating in another performance management system.

(2) Performance rating or other similar document must be verified with offer documents.

(3) Federal employees without a performance rating or for non-federal candidates, the evidence the selecting official provided to justify the request must be used as a presumption of FME with zero SPOs rated at below the FME level.

(4) Recipients must maintain performance at the FME level on every SPO during the service period to remain eligible for continued payments. If employee performance declines below the FME level on a SPO throughout the service period, the agreement is terminated. The employee is ineligible for further SLRP benefits under the current service agreement. An employee may reapply for SLRP benefits if performance improves to the overall FME level with no individual SPO rated less than FME and meets SLRP requirements.

e. Security Clearance.

If required, the recipient must maintain applicable security clearance. The recipient must meet all terms and conditions of employment for the duration of the service agreement. If the terms and conditions of employment are violated, (e.g., security clearance is revoked or the employee is separated involuntarily for misconduct), loan payments will terminate and the employee will be obligated to reimburse NNSA the full amount of the loan payments paid to the lender/loan holder, in accordance with NNSA's debt collection procedures.

f. Benefits Amount.

Maximum benefit amount must be:

(1) $10,000.00 per calendar year before deduction of payroll taxes and income tax withholding;

(2) $60,000.00 lifetime before deduction of payroll taxes and income tax withholding.

g. Benefit Payment.

(1) Student loan repayments are taxable. Appropriate tax withholdings must be deducted when the payment is made to the lender, to include withholdings for Social Security and Medicare. The amount is reported as tax withheld on the employee's earnings and leave statement, and the gross payment is included in the gross income. An income tax obligation resulting from the student loan repayment benefits are not considered basic pay or the aggregate limitation under 5 U.S.C. 5307.

(2) Student loan repayment benefits are not considered basic pay or the aggregate limitation under 5 U.S.C. 5307.

(3) Student loan repayment benefits are paid directly to the lender/note holder on a biweekly basis.

(4) NNSA must not make a payment of an amount exceeding the total

amount of student loan debt based on principal balance on the date the candidate enters into the service agreement.

(5) If an SLRP benefit represents only part of the financial obligation, the employee remains liable for the loan and debt balance. The employee is responsible for late fees or interest assessed by a loan holder or income tax obligations resulting from a student loan repayment benefit.

(6) If multiple loans are being repaid, each lender/note holder must be paid in the same manner and at the same time.

(7) For loans being repaid, the DOE Payroll Office must be provided with a copy of the service agreement(s) and other documentation required to process the payments.

(8) Differences in the amount of the loan repayment among eligible employees must be made based on consideration of the employee's (or job candidate's) value to NNSA as documented in the justification, in accordance with 5 CFR 537.106(c)(1). The requesting official must consider the availability of budgeted funds. If budgetary considerations are an issue, NNSA has the discretion to determine the repayment benefit amount given to an employee each year.

Note: A single lender/note holder may be servicing multiple loans, both qualifying and non-qualifying, for an individual. In such cases, the employee must notify the lender/note holder of the specific qualifying loans to be paid and advise the lender to apply payments to qualifying loans.

h. Annual Recertification.

(1) 120 days prior to the annual anniversary of a service agreement, or for a service agreement that is extended on an annual basis, certification in writing must be obtained from the requesting official that the employee continues to meet the requirements for student loan repayment and the terms of the service agreement (performance, security clearance, etc.).

(2) Certification must be obtained from Corporate Budget (NA-BA-10) that funds are available to continue payment. Funds for student loan repayment benefits are allocated from the Federal Salaries and Expenses budget, which is maintained by the Associate Administrator for Budget and Accounting Office (NA-BA) If eligibility requirements continue to be met, the status of the student loan obligation, including the remaining loan balance and whether the loan is current or in default, must be verified by Human Resources (HR).

(3) The recertification must be recorded by a personnel action in the

automated HR information and reporting system for Office of Personnel Management (OPM) reporting purposes. If the amount of the benefit will be reduced from the prior year, or terminated, the employee, payroll office, and lender/note holder should be informed at least 90 days before such a decision takes effect. If the loan is in default, payments must terminate.

i Service Agreement.

(1) Recipients of a student loan repayment benefit must complete a period of service with NNSA and sign a service agreement. The service agreement is the contractual instrument whereby NNSA, and an SLRP recipient, both agree to certain terms, limitations, and conditions of the repayment for qualifying loans.

(2) The initial minimum service period requirement must be: (1) Three years for loan repayment amounts of $10,000 or less; (2) Four years for amounts of $10,001-$20,000; and (3) Five years for amounts of $20,001-$30,000. An initial service agreement can be extended by adding one additional year of service for each subsequent year of authorized loan repayments. Each service agreement/extension starts the day after the prior service agreement/extension ends. The maximum allowable amount is $60,000 per employee.

(3) NNSA and the employee must agree to modify an existing service agreement, subject to the above limitations, to provide additional student loan repayment benefits for an additional 1-year service obligation without the need for an additional service agreement.

(4) The service agreement must be signed prior to the entry on duty date of the employee, or at least two pay periods before the first payment for current employees. The service agreement becomes effective, and the obligatory service period begins the first day of service in the position.

Note: The loan disbursement will not commence until after entrance on duty, or for a current employee, the pay period in which the payments begin. It is the responsibility of the employee to continue making regular payments to the lender according to the terms of the loan agreement even as NNSA disburses partial or full payment to the lender on behalf of the employee. The employee is liable for paying the difference in amount owed.

(5) Periods of leave without pay (LWOP) must be excluded in completion of the required service agreement period. The service agreement completion date is extended by the amount of time spent in LWOP status, unless the period of LWOP is based on active duty in a uniformed service, or due to a compensable injury in accordance with 5 CFR 353.107. During periods of LWOP, payments to the lending institution

must continue unless NNSA is notified by the lender that the loan(s) is in deferment, or the employee requests NNSA discontinue making payments during the period of LWOP status.

(6) A service agreement for this purpose does not constitute a right, a promise, or an entitlement to continued employment, promotion, or noncompetitive conversion to the competitive service.

j. Termination of Eligibility.

(1) An employee receiving student loan repayment benefits becomes ineligible for continued benefits when:

(a) Separated from NNSA employment for any reason.

(b) Is unsuccessful in maintaining performance at the FME level on every SPO during the service period; or

(c) Violates the term or condition of the service agreement.

k. Employee Reimbursement Requirements.

(1) An employee receiving student loan repayment benefits must reimburse NNSA when the employee:

(a) Voluntarily separates from NNSA before completing the service agreement. They must reimburse NNSA for the gross amount of student loan repayment benefits paid. If benefits are extended beyond the initial service agreement period, and the employee voluntarily separates from federal service before the additional service obligation is complete, they must reimburse NNSA for the gross amount of payments made during the extension period.

(b) Involuntarily separates from NNSA before completing the service agreement due to misconduct or unacceptable performance, as indicated by an official rating below FME, or a negative suitability determination under 5 CFR section 731.

(c) Transfers to a position at another federal agency prior to completion of the service period, they must reimburse NNSA for the gross amount of student loan repayment benefits paid unless the other agency agrees to reimburse NNSA, or unless exemption is obtained pursuant to 8.a.(3).

(2) An employee receiving student loan repayment benefits is not required to reimburse NNSA when the employee:

(a) Involuntarily separates from NNSA before completing the service agreement for reasons other than misconduct, unacceptable

performance, or a negative suitability determination under 5 CFR section 731 is not required to reimburse NNSA, (e.g., a reduction-in-force separation or medical reasons).

(b) Is reassigned or promoted to a position in another DOE element or from NNSA to DOE, either voluntarily or through the agency Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) before the expiration of the service agreement, is not required to reimburse NNSA. There is no requirement for the gaining DOE element, including NNSA, to assume the loan repayment obligation. The employee must complete remaining service period to satisfy the 3-year requirement to avoid being required to reimburse DOE/NNSA. There is no requirement for NNSA to make additional payments to the lender.

(c) Reimbursement from the employee to NNSA may be waived by the Administrator (or designee) in whole or in part, when it is determined recovery would not be in the public interest or would be against equity and good conscience (i.e., employee is separated because of death, disability retirement, active military duty, or is incapable to continue working because of a disability as evidenced by acceptable medical documentation). In making this determination, consistency, fairness, and the cost to the taxpayer of recovering monies owed to the Government are considered.

Note: An employee who changes positions within NNSA, through promotion, reassignment, management direction, reduction in band, Reduction in Force (RIF) displacement action or RIF assignment will continue to receive scheduled student loan repayment benefits with the existing service agreement continuing in force, provided funding is available.

l. Reduction in Funding.

(1) Approved student loan repayment agreements must continue to receive payment before other requests are authorized.

(2) Available funding must be awarded proportionally when the total amount for existing student loan repayment commitments is unsubstantiated in the fiscal year.

(3) Fund allocation must be determined based upon the number of SLRP participants and amount of funds available. Each participant must receive a percentage based on the original funding level commitment.

(4) When benefits are terminated due to lack of funding, employees must be considered for loan repayment benefits during a subsequent year if funds are available under a new service agreement.

m. Records and Reports.

(1) A record of each student loan repayment determination must be maintained for review upon request by OPM. The incentive package records must be destroyed 3 years after date of approval, completion of the service agreement, or termination of the incentive/payment, whichever is later; longer retention is authorized when required for business use. Records involving disputes, or the subject of litigation, are to be maintained until pending claims are resolved and litigation actions have been concluded. Records involving agency debt collection must be kept until notified by agency counsel the debt is fully collected or settled and the applicable period for seeking further review has elapsed.

(2) To implement 5 CFR 537.110 by March 31 of each year, NNSA must provide the following information to the DOE Office of Human Capital Management:

(a) The number of employees who receive benefits;

(b) The job series and title of employees who receive benefits; and

(c) The annual cost to NNSA of those benefits.

n. Forms.

The required forms may be retrieved by visiting the Employment & Workforce Planning, Staffing and Recruitment Documents Page on the NNSA Intranet Portal: https://nnsaportal.energy.gov/, or by request from your servicing Staffing Human Resources Consultant.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Administrator.

(1) Ensures the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 5379 and 5 CFR section 537 are administered within NNSA.

(2) Approves student loan repayment requests for eligible Senior Executive Service (SES), Senior Level (SL), Scientific or Professional (ST), and NNSA Excepted Service (EN) candidates with a basic rate of pay above General Schedule-15, Step 10, or equivalent, consistent with recommendations of the Executive Resources Board(s).

(3) Approves requests for the waiver of repayment benefits received

when a recipient neglects to complete the required service agreement or violates the terms of the agreement.

b. Deputy Associate Administrator for Human Resources and Strategic Operation (HRSO).

(1) Consistent with the authority provided in NNSA Delegation Order 00-003.02A, establishes a system for the approval and payment of student loan.

c. Deputy Associate Administrator for Human Resources and Strategic Operation

(1) Approves or disapproves NNSA Student Loan Repayment Requests other than those for SES, SL, ST, and EN candidates with a basic rate of pay above GS-15, Step 10, or equivalent.

d. NNSA Executive Resources Board.

(1) Recommends approval for Student Loan Repayment benefit for SES, SL, ST, and EN candidates with a basic rate of pay above GS-15, Step 10, or equivalent, and forwards the recommendation to the Administrator.

e. Planning, Programming, Budget, and Evaluation.

(1) Certifies funds are available; and

(2) Approves budget requests from NNSA Elements.

f. Office of Secure Transportation, Resources Division.

(1) Verifies funds are available for Office of Secure Transportation requests.

g. Director, Human Resources.

(1) Directs and oversees the development of policies and procedures for the implementation of the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 5379 and 5 CFR section 537.

(2) Provides guidance to the Administrator and Heads of NNSA Elements on SLRP policies and procedures to promote effective program implementation and oversight.

(3) Confirms certified documents are in statutory, regulatory, and policy compliance.

(4) Recommends approval of requests for waivers of repayment and

forwards recommendation to the Administrator for final approval.

(5) Terminates student loan repayment benefits in the absence of approved recertification, or when no longer needed.

(6) Prepares memorandum to the NNSA Chief Financial Officer when a repayment waiver is approved, requesting the federal debt not be collected under the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 5379(c)(3) and 5 CFR 537.109(e).

(7) Directs and oversees the periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of the SLRP within NNSA.

h. Director, Staffing, Classification and Processing Division (SCPD).

(1) Reviews requests for adequacy and completeness, as well as for statutory, regulatory, and policy compliance; and signs the appropriate SLRP Request Form.

(2) Confirms compliance with internal/external reporting requirements.

(3) Maintains copies of requests, signed approvals, concurrences, and other associated documentation.

i. Human Resources Consultant (HRC).

(1) Provides technical advice and assistance to the requesting official.

(2) Checks the status of each loan, including an obligation the employee may have, and discusses the terms and amount of the outstanding obligation(s) with the requesting official.

(3) Reviews requests for completeness using the appropriate checklist, as well as for statutory, regulatory, and policy compliance, and signs the OPM Standard Form 52 (SF-52), Request for Personnel Action, and the appropriate SLRP Request Form.

(4) Forwards approvable requests to the Director of HR, Deputy Associate Administrator for Human Resources and Strategic Operation (HRSO), or the Director of Staffing, Classification, and Processing Division (SCPD), as appropriate.

(5) After approval by the Deputy Associate Administrator for Human Resources and Strategic Operation (HRSO), the HRC processes the approved Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) action in Workday.

(6) Confirms the DOE payroll office has the documents required to make the payments to the loan/note holder and for proper gross wage compensation, payroll taxes, and income tax withholding.

(7) Makes certain, in collaboration with the payroll office, the lender is informed of the specific qualifying loans being paid; and advises lender not to apply payments to non-qualifying loans in instances when the lender/note holder holds both qualifying and non-qualifying loans for the individual.

(8) Notifies the supervisor to begin the annual recertification process at least 120 days prior to the anniversary date.

(9) Verifies the status of each student loan obligation, e.g., loan balance, payments are current or in default, performance or clearance issues, etc., during the annual recertification and service agreement extension process. Confirms appropriate personnel and payroll actions are taken.

j. Supervisor (Selecting/Requesting Official).

(1) Discusses possible use of the student loan repayment authority with servicing HRC.

(2) Obtains NA-BA-10 funding approval, and Head of Element concurrence prior to providing requests to the HRC.

(3) Completes and forwards to HRC the student loan repayment request form with written justification, and SF-52, including concurrence signatures.

(4) Works with the HRC to verify sufficient information is obtained from the applicant to verify the status of each loan and the amount of the financial obligation.

(5) Notifies servicing HRC at once, if the employee terminates employment, security clearance is suspended or revoked, employee is unsuccessful in maintaining required job certifications, receives rating of less than FME level on a SPO, or otherwise violates the service agreement.

(6) Completes annual recertification justification of student loan as described in Appendix A, Section 2 of this policy.

(7) Completes request for waiver of repayment of student loan benefit.

9. DEFINITIONS. See Appendix B.

10. REFERENCES. See Appendix C.

11. CONTACT. Staffing, Classification and Processing Division , (505) 845-5474.

BY ORDER OF THE ADMINISTRATOR:

Appendices:

A. Administrative Procedures and Process.
B. Definitions.
C. References.

Administrative Change Approved: 10-07-2026

APPENDIX A: ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND PROCESS

1. INITIAL REQUESTS.

   a. The requesting official and the servicing Human Resources Consultant (HRC) determine if a student loan repayment incentive is appropriate.

   b. The requesting official obtains budget approval from the Associate Administrator for Budget and Accounting Office (NA-BA) When a student loan repayment incentive is determined appropriate, the requesting official prepares a *Student Loan Repayment Request Form*, a written justification addressing the criteria on the *Student Loan Repayment Request Checklist*, and an Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Standard Form 52 (SF-52), *Request for Personnel Action*. The requesting official signs the SF-52, obtains a concurrence signature from the Head of the Element and submits it to Associate Administrator for Budget and Accounting, Corporate Budget, NA-BA-10.

   c. The HRC obtains information from the candidate sufficient to verify the status of each qualifying loan, repayment terms, due dates, balance amounts, and loan expiration dates.

   d. The HRC reviews the package for compliance and completeness using the appropriate checklist, signs, and then forwards for review by the Staffing, Classification and Processing Division, and the NNSA Human Resources Director.

   e. The Staffing, Classification and Processing Division, and the NNSA Human Resources Director sign the request form to recommend approval.

   f. Deputy Associate Administrator for Human Resources and Strategic Operation (HRSO) approves or denies the request for the student loan repayment benefit in the case of an NNSA pay-banded position, or an NNSA Excepted Service (EN)/DOE Excepted Service (EJ) position not subject to NNSA Executive Resources Board (ERB) action.

   g. After approval by the NNSA Human Resources Director, the HRC processes the approved SLRP action in Workday. Review the remaining approval-routing language in items f. thru g. for consistency with this current process.

   h. Student loan repayment requests for eligible Senior Executive Service (SES), Senior Level (SL), Scientific or Professional (ST) candidates, and EN candidates with a basic rate above General Schedule (GS)-15, Step 10, must follow the approval procedures described in the appropriate Executive Resources Board charter, which, in general, requires approval of the respective NNSA or DOE ERB, and the Administrator.

i. When the intention of the requesting official is to give a job applicant (for position not subject to an ERB) both a student loan repayment benefit and a recruitment incentive, the NNSA Office for Human Resources and Strategic Operations must be advised in advance.

2. ANNUAL RECERTIFICATION.

a. At least 120 days prior to each 1-year anniversary of the service agreement, or when a completed service agreement is extended on an annual basis, the HRC contacts the requesting official to determine if the employee continues to meet the criteria for student loan repayment benefits using *Student Loan Repayment Request Annual Recertification Checklist*. The requesting official confirms with Associate Administrator for Budget and Accounting, Corporate Budget, NA-BA-10 that funds are available to continue the payment benefit.

b. If the eligibility continues to be met, the requesting official prepares a *Student Loan Repayment Request Form*, a written justification of continued need to address the criteria on the *Student Loan Repayment Request Annual Recertification Checklist*, and an SF-52, *Request for Personnel Action*. The requesting official signs the SF-52, obtains a concurrence signature from the Head of the Element, and Associate Administrator for Budget and Accounting, Corporate Budget, NA-BA-10 certifies funds are available.

c. The HRC verifies the status of the student loan obligation; the loan balance, as well as if it is current or is in default.

d. If the amount of the benefit is reduced from the prior year, or terminated, the employee, payroll office, and the lender/note holder should be informed at least 90 days before such a decision takes effect.

e. Following the required approval by the NNSA Human Resources Director, the HRC processes the approved SLRP recertification/action in Workday.

APPENDIX B: DEFINITIONS

a. Direct Student Loan Program. A loan authorized under Part C of Title 20, United States Code (U.S.C.), Chapter 28, Subchapter 4, for which the U.S. Department of Education is the lender. Direct loans include Federal Direct PLUS loans and Federal Direct Stafford Loans.

b. Federal Family Education Loan Program. A loan authorized under Part B of Title 20, U.S.C., Chapter 28, Subchapter 4, insured by the U.S. Department of Education that is issued privately by a bank, credit union, or other participating lender.

c. Highly Qualified. This higher category will be used for those candidates who possess the type and quality of experience that substantially exceeds the minimum qualifications of the position, including all selective placement factors and appropriate quality ranking factor(s) as determined by the job analysis.

d. Loan Payment. The net payment made by NNSA to the holder of a student loan, following application of taxes and withholding to the gross amount.

e. Non-qualifying Student Loan.

(1) Loans not made, insured, or guaranteed under Parts B, D, or E of Title IV of the *Higher Education Act* of 1965.

(2) Health education assistance loans not made or insured under Part A of Title VII of the *Public Health Service Act*, or under Part E of Title VIII of that Act.

(3) Previously repaid student loans.

(4) Future student loans accrued by an employee (i.e., a qualifying student loan that the eligible employee acquires after the service agreement has been executed).

f. Qualifying Degree/Major. Any degree or major provided that the loan is a Qualifying Student Loan (as defined below). A degree, diploma, or certificate need not have been awarded.

g. Qualifying Student Loan.

(1) Outstanding loans made, insured, or guaranteed under Parts B, D, or E of Title IV of the *Higher Education Act* of 1965;

(2) Outstanding health education assistance loans made or insured under Part A of Title VII of the *Public Health Service Act*, or under Part E of Title VIII of that Act;

h. Student Loan Repayment Benefit.

(1) Benefit provided to an employee in which NNSA repays (by direct payments to the loan holder on behalf of the employee) a qualifying student loan previously taken out by the employee.

(2) Student loan repayments are fully taxable. The nominal dollar value of a respective benefit is the gross amount before income tax deductions and withholding. Student loan repayment benefits are not considered basic pay for any purpose.

i. Subsidized Loan. A loan in which the U.S. Government pays the interest on the loan while the student is in school, during the grace period, and during periods of authorized deferment.

j. Unsubsidized Loan. A loan for which the student is responsible for paying the interest accrued while the student is in school, during the grace period, and during the period of authorized deferment.

APPENDIX C: REFERENCES

1. 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) 5379, *Student Loan Repayment*

2. 5 Code of Federal Regulations 537, *Repayment of Student Loans*

3. OPM *Federal Student Loan Repayment Program FAQS*: https://www.opm.gov/faqs/topic/payleave/index.aspx?cid=3504d1bb-6043-4299-9366-6526fa1e4764

4. OPM *Student Loan Repayment Information*: https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/student-loan-repayment//

5. DOE Order 322.1C Chg. 1, *Pay and Leave Administration and Hours of Duty*, dated 05/10/2012