

The CARES Act (P.L. 116-136) which passed on March 27, 2020, has implications for the U.S. House of Representatives' (USHR) Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP). Below is guidance for those who are currently participating in the program. If you have questions, please call the Office of Payroll and Benefits at 202-225-1435 or email the Benefit Counselor for your office, who can be found on the Support Services lookup tool. This information has also been sent directly to all participants in the program.

1. Tax provisions of the CARES Act allow SLRP payments made by the USHR on your behalf to the lender between April 1 and December 31, 2020, to be non-taxable up to \$5,250.
 - This means that the additional tax withholdings for the SLRP payment will not be deducted each month until the total SLRP payments total reaches \$5,250. Staff will see an increase in net take-home pay for these periods as taxes will not be deducted on the SLRP income.
 - Staff participating and receiving SLRP payments towards a Federal Parent Plus loan may not be eligible for the tax-exempt provisions up to \$5,250.
 - Once Student Loan payments reach the \$5,250 limit, you will see the tax withholdings deducted from your monthly paycheck.
 - The Office of Payroll and Benefits will continue to send SLRP payments as normal based upon the current agreement that you have in place.
2. The CARES Act directs Federal student loan providers not to charge interest or require payments be made through September 30, 2020. As a result, loan providers are automatically changing the status of their borrower's Federal loans from active "Repayment" to "Administrative Forbearance".
 - Although the Student Loan Repayment Program requires that a qualifying loan be in active "Repayment" status to be eligible for the program, the Committee on House Administration has approved of expanding the qualifying student loan requirements to include "Administrative Forbearance" with "Repayment" status as a qualifying loan through December 31, 2020.
3. The CARES Act provides that Federal civilian employees participating in the Public Student Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF) who do not make payments on their direct loans during the suspension period (April – September 30, 2020) will receive credit towards PSLF program requirements.

- DOE CARES Act Guidance: If you have a direct loan, were on a qualifying repayment plan prior to the suspension, and work full-time for a qualifying employer during the suspension, then you will receive credit toward PSLF for the period of suspension as though you made on-time monthly payments.
- Staff participating in the House's Student Loan Repayment program may want to stop receiving SLRP payments to preserve some the House's lifetime limit of \$60,000 for the program. Staff can end participation in the program by working with their Employing Authority to submit the End Participation form by the 7th of the month they wish to stop receiving payments.
- Staff that choose to end participation must submit a new Student Loan Repayment Agreement to re-enter the program and resume receiving payments after September 2020.

We understand your student loans are important and impact your financial obligations. We will continue to keep you informed of any changes.