

**§ 685.208**

**34 CFR Ch. VI (7–1–10 Edition)**

(3) A borrower is responsible for the interest that accrues on a Direct Unsubsidized Loan during in-school and grace periods. Interest begins to accrue on the day the first installment is disbursed. Interest that accrues may be capitalized or paid by the borrower.

(4) The repayment period for a Direct Unsubsidized Loan begins the day after the grace period ends. A borrower is obligated to repay the loan under paragraph (a) of this section during the repayment period.

(d) *Direct PLUS Loan repayment.* The repayment period for a Direct PLUS Loan begins on the day the loan is fully disbursed. Interest begins to accrue on the day the first installment is disbursed. A borrower is obligated to repay the loan under paragraph (a) of this section during the repayment period.

(e) *Direct Consolidation Loan repayment.* (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (e)(2) and (e)(3) of this section, the repayment period for a Direct Consolidation Loan begins and interest begins to accrue on the day the loan is made. The borrower is obligated to repay the loan under paragraph (a) of this section during the repayment period.

(2) In the case of a borrower whose consolidation application was received before July 1, 2006, a borrower who obtains a Direct Subsidized Consolidation Loan during an in-school period will be subject to the repayment provisions in paragraph (b) of this section.

(3) In the case of a borrower whose consolidation application was received before July 1, 2006, a borrower who obtains a Direct Unsubsidized Consolidation Loan during an in-school period will be subject to the repayment provisions in paragraph (c) of this section.

(f) *Determining the date on which the grace period begins for a borrower in a correspondence program.* For a borrower of a Direct Subsidized or Direct Unsubsidized Loan who is a correspondence student, the grace period specified in paragraphs (b)(2) and (c)(2) of this section begins on the earliest of—

(1) The day after the borrower completes the program;

(2) The day after withdrawal as determined pursuant to 34 CFR 668.22; or

(3) 60 days following the last day for completing the program as established by the school.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087a *et seq.*)

[59 FR 61690, Dec. 1, 1994, as amended at 64 FR 58968, Nov. 1, 1999; 68 FR 75430, Dec. 31, 2003; 71 FR 45712, Aug. 9, 2006]

**§ 685.208 Repayment plans.**

(a) *General.* (1) Borrowers who entered repayment before July 1, 2006. (i) A borrower may repay a Direct Subsidized Loan, a Direct Unsubsidized Loan, a Direct Subsidized Consolidation Loan, or a Direct Unsubsidized Consolidation Loan under the standard repayment plan, the extended repayment plan, the graduated repayment plan, the income contingent repayment plan, or the income-based repayment plan, in accordance with paragraphs (b), (d), (f), (k), and (m) of this section, respectively.

(ii) A borrower may repay a Direct PLUS Loan or a Direct PLUS Consolidation Loan under the standard repayment plan, the extended repayment plan, or the graduated repayment plan, in accordance with paragraphs (b), (d), and (f) of this section, respectively.

(2) *Borrowers entering repayment on or after July 1, 2006.* (i) A borrower may repay a Direct Subsidized Loan or a Direct Unsubsidized Loan under the standard repayment plan, the extended repayment plan, the graduated repayment plan, the income contingent repayment plan, or the income-based repayment plan, in accordance with paragraphs (b), (e), (g), (k), and (m) of this section, respectively.

(ii)(A) A Direct PLUS Loan that was made to a graduate or professional student borrower may be repaid under the standard repayment plan, the extended repayment plan, the graduated repayment plan, the income-contingent repayment plan, or the income-based repayment plan in accordance with paragraphs (b), (e), (g), (k), and (m) of this section, respectively.

(B) A Direct PLUS Loan that was made to a parent borrower may be repaid under the standard repayment plan, the extended repayment plan, or the graduated repayment plan, in accordance with paragraphs (b), (e), and (g) of this section, respectively.

(iii) A borrower may repay a Direct Consolidation Loan under the standard repayment plan, the extended repayment plan, the graduated repayment plan, the income contingent repayment plan, or, unless the Direct Consolidation Loan repaid a parent Direct PLUS Loan or a parent Federal PLUS Loan, the income-based repayment plan, in accordance with paragraphs (c), (e), (h), (k), and (m) of this section, respectively. A Direct Consolidation Loan that repaid a parent Direct PLUS Loan or a parent Federal PLUS Loan may not be repaid under the income-based repayment plan.

(iv) No scheduled payment may be less than the amount of interest accrued on the loan between monthly payments, except under the income contingent repayment plan, the income-based repayment plan, or an alternative repayment plan.

(3) The Secretary may provide an alternative repayment plan in accordance with paragraph (1) of this section.

(4) All Direct Loans obtained by one borrower must be repaid together under the same repayment plan, except that—

(i) A borrower of a Direct PLUS Loan or a Direct Consolidation Loan that is not eligible for repayment under the income-contingent repayment plan or the income-based repayment plan may repay the Direct PLUS Loan or Direct Consolidation Loan separately from other Direct Loans obtained by the borrower; and

(ii) A borrower of a Direct PLUS Consolidation Loan that entered repayment before July 1, 2006, may repay the Direct PLUS Consolidation Loan separately from other Direct Loans obtained by that borrower.

(5) Except as provided in § 685.209 and § 685.221 for the income contingent or income-based repayment plan, the repayment period for any of the repayment plans described in this section does not include periods of authorized deferment or forbearance.

(b) *Standard repayment plan for all Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Loan, and Direct PLUS Loan borrowers, regardless of when they entered repayment, and for Direct Consolidation Loan borrowers who entered repayment before July 1, 2006.* (1) Under this repayment

plan, a borrower must repay a loan in full within ten years from the date the loan entered repayment by making fixed monthly payments.

(2) A borrower's payments under this repayment plan are at least \$50 per month, except that a borrower's final payment may be less than \$50.

(3) The number of payments or the fixed monthly repayment amount may be adjusted to reflect changes in the variable interest rate identified in § 685.202(a).

(c) *Standard repayment plan for Direct Consolidation Loan borrowers entering repayment on or after July 1, 2006.*

(1) Under this repayment plan, a borrower must repay a loan in full by making fixed monthly payments over a repayment period that varies with the total amount of the borrower's student loans, as described in paragraph (j) of this section.

(2) A borrower's payments under this repayment plan are at least \$50 per month, except that a borrower's final payment may be less than \$50.

(d) *Extended repayment plan for all Direct Loan borrowers who entered repayment before July 1, 2006.*

(1) Under this repayment plan, a borrower must repay a loan in full by making fixed monthly payments within an extended period of time that varies with the total amount of the borrower's loans, as described in paragraph (i) of this section.

(2) A borrower makes fixed monthly payments of at least \$50, except that a borrower's final payment may be less than \$50.

(3) The number of payments or the fixed monthly repayment amount may be adjusted to reflect changes in the variable interest rate identified in § 685.202(a).

(e) *Extended repayment plan for all Direct Loan borrowers entering repayment on or after July 1, 2006.*

(1) Under this repayment plan, a new borrower with more than \$30,000 in outstanding Direct Loans accumulated on or after October 7, 1998 must repay either a fixed annual or graduated repayment amount over a period not to exceed 25 years from the date the loan entered repayment. For this repayment plan, a new borrower is defined as an individual who has no outstanding

principal or interest balance on a Direct Loan as of October 7, 1998, or on the date the borrower obtains a Direct Loan on or after October 7, 1998.

(2) A borrower's payments under this plan are at least \$50 per month, and will be more if necessary to repay the loan within the required time period.

(3) The number of payments or the monthly repayment amount may be adjusted to reflect changes in the variable interest rate identified in § 685.202(a).

(f) *Graduated repayment plan for all Direct Loan borrowers who entered repayment before July 1, 2006.*

(1) Under this repayment plan, a borrower must repay a loan in full by making payments at two or more levels within a period of time that varies with the total amount of the borrower's loans, as described in paragraph (i) of this section.

(2) The number of payments or the monthly repayment amount may be adjusted to reflect changes in the variable interest rate identified in § 685.202(a).

(3) No scheduled payment under this repayment plan may be less than the amount of interest accrued on the loan between monthly payments, less than 50 percent of the payment amount that would be required under the standard repayment plan described in paragraph (b) of this section, or more than 150 percent of the payment amount that would be required under the standard repayment plan described in paragraph (b) of this section.

(g) *Graduated repayment plan for Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Loan, and Direct PLUS Loan borrowers entering repayment on or after July 1, 2006.*

(1) Under this repayment plan, a borrower must repay a loan in full by making payments at two or more levels over a period of time not to exceed ten years from the date the loan entered repayment.

(2) The number of payments or the monthly repayment amount may be adjusted to reflect changes in the variable interest rate identified in § 685.202(a).

(3) A borrower's payments under this repayment plan may be less than \$50 per month. No single payment under

this plan will be more than three times greater than any other payment.

(h) *Graduated repayment plan for Direct Consolidation Loan borrowers entering repayment on or after July 1, 2006.*

(1) Under this repayment plan, a borrower must repay a loan in full by making monthly payments that gradually increase in stages over the course of a repayment period that varies with the total amount of the borrower's student loans, as described in paragraph (j) of this section.

(2) A borrower's payments under this repayment plan may be less than \$50 per month. No single payment under this plan will be more than three times greater than any other payment.

(i) *Repayment period for the extended and graduated plans described in paragraphs (d) and (f) of this section, respectively.* Under these repayment plans, if the total amount of the borrower's Direct Loans is—

(1) Less than \$10,000, the borrower must repay the loans within 12 years of entering repayment;

(2) Greater than or equal to \$10,000 but less than \$20,000, the borrower must repay the loans within 15 years of entering repayment;

(3) Greater than or equal to \$20,000 but less than \$40,000, the borrower must repay the loans within 20 years of entering repayment;

(4) Greater than or equal to \$40,000 but less than \$60,000, the borrower must repay the loans within 25 years of entering repayment; and

(5) Greater than or equal to \$60,000, the borrower must repay the loans within 30 years of entering repayment.

(j) *Repayment period for the standard and graduated repayment plans described in paragraphs (c) and (h) of this section, respectively.* Under these repayment plans, if the total amount of the Direct Consolidation Loan and the borrower's other student loans, as defined in § 685.220(i), is—

(1) Less than \$7,500, the borrower must repay the Consolidation Loan within 10 years of entering repayment;

(2) Equal to or greater than \$7,500 but less than \$10,000, the borrower must repay the Consolidation Loan within 12 years of entering repayment;

(3) Equal to or greater than \$10,000 but less than \$20,000, the borrower must

repay the Consolidation Loan within 15 years of entering repayment;

(4) Equal to or greater than \$20,000 but less than \$40,000, the borrower must repay the Consolidation Loan within 20 years of entering repayment;

(5) Equal to or greater than \$40,000 but less than \$60,000, the borrower must repay the Consolidation Loan within 25 years of entering repayment; and

(6) Equal to or greater than \$60,000, the borrower must repay the Consolidation Loan within 30 years of entering repayment.

(k) *Income contingent repayment plan.*

(1) Under the income contingent repayment plan, a borrower's monthly repayment amount is generally based on the total amount of the borrower's Direct Loans, family size, and Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) reported by the borrower for the most recent year for which the Secretary has obtained income information. The borrower's AGI includes the income of the borrower's spouse. A borrower must make payments on a loan until the loan is repaid in full or until the loan has been in repayment through the end of the income contingent repayment period.

(2) The regulations in effect at the time a borrower enters repayment and selects the income contingent repayment plan or changes into the income contingent repayment plan from another plan govern the method for determining the borrower's monthly repayment amount for all of the borrower's Direct Loans, unless—

(i) The Secretary amends the regulations relating to a borrower's monthly repayment amount under the income contingent repayment plan; and

(ii) The borrower submits a written request that the amended regulations apply to the repayment of the borrower's Direct Loans.

(3) Provisions governing the income contingent repayment plan are in § 685.209.

(1) *Alternative repayment.* (1) The Secretary may provide an alternative repayment plan for a borrower who demonstrates to the Secretary's satisfaction that the terms and conditions of the repayment plans specified in paragraphs (b) through (h) of this section are not adequate to accommodate the borrower's exceptional circumstances.

(2) The Secretary may require a borrower to provide evidence of the borrower's exceptional circumstances before permitting the borrower to repay a loan under an alternative repayment plan.

(3) If the Secretary agrees to permit a borrower to repay a loan under an alternative repayment plan, the Secretary notifies the borrower in writing of the terms of the plan. After the borrower receives notification of the terms of the plan, the borrower may accept the plan or choose another repayment plan.

(4) A borrower must repay a loan under an alternative repayment plan within 30 years of the date the loan entered repayment, not including periods of deferment and forbearance.

(5) If the amount of a borrower's monthly payment under an alternative repayment plan is less than the accrued interest on the loan, the unpaid interest is capitalized until the outstanding principal amount is 10 percent greater than the original principal amount. After the outstanding principal amount is 10 percent greater than the original principal amount, interest continues to accrue but is not capitalized. For purposes of this paragraph, the original principal amount is the amount owed by the borrower when the borrower enters repayment.

(m) *Income-based repayment plan.* (1) Under this repayment plan, the required monthly payment for a borrower who has a partial financial hardship is limited to no more than 15 percent of the amount by which the borrower's AGI exceeds 150 percent of the poverty guideline applicable to the borrower's family size, divided by 12. The Secretary determines annually whether the borrower continues to qualify for this reduced monthly payment based on the amount of the borrower's eligible loans, AGI, and poverty guideline.

(2) The specific provisions governing the income-based repayment plan are in § 685.221.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087a *et seq.*)

[71 FR 45712, Aug. 9, 2006, as amended at 71 FR 64400, Nov. 1, 2006; 73 FR 63255, Oct. 23, 2008]