



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOIA Service Center

May 24, 2021

Mr. Alexander S Elson
Senior Counsel
National Student Legal Defense Network
1015 15th Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

RE: FOIA Request No. 21-01335-F

Dear Alexander S Elson:

This letter is a final response to your request for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, dated April 6, 2021 and received in this office on April 6, 2021. Your request was forwarded to the Dept. of Education to search for documents that may be responsive to your request.

You requested the following: Student Defense hereby requests that the Department produce the following within twenty business days: For borrowers who have been identified as eligible for a TPD discharge through the SSA Process to date (i.e. borrowers who have “matched” through the SSA Process), documents sufficient to show:

1. Since the SSA Process started in 2016, the total number of borrowers who have been positively identified as eligible for a TPD discharge.
 - a. Of those borrowers who have matched through the SSA process, the total number who have received a TPD discharge, and the total dollar value of their discharged federal student loan debt.
 - b. Of those borrowers who have matched through the SSA process, the total number who have not received a TPD discharge, and the total dollar value of their outstanding federal student loan debt.
2. The total number of SSA matches for whom the Department does not have a valid address on file.
3. The total number of SSA matches whose SSA match notification letters have been returned to sender.

Note: For each of these requests, in lieu of documents Student Defense would accept a chart or description providing the requested information.

In addition to the records requested above, Student Defense also requests records describing the processing of this request, including records sufficient to identify search terms used (if any); the locations and custodians searched; and any tracking sheets, questionnaires, emails, or

certifications completed by, or sent to, ED personnel with respect to the processing of this request. This specifically includes communications or tracking mechanisms sent to, or kept by, individuals who are contacted in order to process this request.

Student Defense seeks all responsive records, regardless of format, medium, or physical characteristics. In conducting your search, please understand the terms “record,” “document,” and “information” in their broadest sense to include any written, typed, recorded, graphic, printed, or audio material of any kind. We seek records of any kind, including electronic records, audiotapes, videotapes, and photographs, as well as letters, emails, facsimiles, telephone messages, voice mail messages, transcripts, notes, or minutes of any meetings, telephone conversations, or discussions. Our request includes any attachment to these records. In addition, ED has a duty to construe a FOIA request liberally.

Attached to this e-mail are 1 pages of fully releasable documents that are responsive to your request. The documents provided are:

- 21-01335-F TPD Discharge and SSA Process

Provisions of the FOIA allow us to recover the costs pertaining to your request. The Department has concluded that you fall within the category of Other. However, the Department has provided you with this information at no charge. The Department's release of this information at no cost does not constitute the grant of a fee waiver, and does not infer or imply that you will be granted a fee waiver for future requests made under FOIA to the Department.

You have the right to seek further assistance from the Department's FOIA Public Liaison, Robert Wehausen. The Department's FOIA Public Liaison can be reached by email at robert.wehausen@ed.gov; by phone at 202-205-0733; by fax at 202-401-0920; or by mail at Office of the Executive Secretariat, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, 7C132, Washington, DC 20202-4500, Attn: FOIA Public Liaison.

If you have any questions, please contact the FSC at (202) 401-8365 or EDFOIAMANAGER@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

Elise Cook

Elise Cook
Government Information Specialist
Office of the Executive Secretariat

Enclosure