



FINANCIAL AID GUIDANCE MEMO

REFERENCE: **FA 21-004**
TOPIC: **HEI SUBMISSION REQUESTS**
AUTHOR: **TAMIKA BRASWELL, DIRECTOR**
DATE: **16 JULY 2020**
RELEVANT STATUTE: **NOT APPLICABLE**

The Higher Education Information (HEI) System is the primary tool used by institutions of higher education to request payments and issue refunds for financial aid programs on behalf of students. The Office of Financial Aid within the Department of Higher Education takes seriously the obligation to fulfill all legitimate payment requests presented in a timely manner.

A specific edit/submission window is available to each institution during each term. All HEI financial aid data reporters and financial aid contacts are sent an e-mail reminding them of the dates of the edit/submission window at the beginning of each term. The edit/submission window is based on the individual academic calendar submitted by each campus. An edit/submission window generally opens 15 days after the first day of any given term and closes 30 days after the last day of any given term. The edit/submission window is identical for most Department of Higher Education financial aid programs submitted through HEI in any given term.

Ideally, campuses will completely reconcile and submit all payment and refund requests to the Office of Financial Aid before the specific edit/submission window for any given term has closed. In the event an institution is approaching the expiration of its edit/submission window for a given term and needs additional time to reconcile and submit, an extension can be requested.

The timing of an extension request is crucial. ***Extension requests should be made before an edit/submission window closes and not after.*** Additionally, extension requests should be based on compelling circumstances, not convenience. Every effort should be made to submit payment requests within the original edit/submission window or to request an extension before the edit/submission window closes. If your institution is requesting an extension prior to the original edit window close date, you can submit up to a 28-day extension request.

To avoid any instance of payment requests being denied, every attempt should be made to submit payment requests in a timely manner within the specific edit/submission window. However, the Department of Higher Education realizes there are times when situations arise that may cause an institution to miss an edit/submission window.

In the event an institution misses an edit/submission window and has not requested an extension, the Department of Higher Education will consider opening the edit window if an institution has not missed an edit/submission within the past 5 years. This one-time exception applies to all financial aid programs for any one term during the academic year. This exception can be used once per financial aid program. Those institutions that have missed more than one edit window for an institution code will only be allowed to request an extension for one term (chosen by the institution) per financial aid program. The 5-year window will be effective following the issuance of this directive; therefore, institutions that have previously been granted an extension under this exception will *not* have that extension counted

as a missed edit/submission window. If your institution has missed an edit window for the above one term exception, you can submit up to a 7-day extension request.

For those institutions that receive an extension within the 5-year period and would like to make another extension request; the Department of Higher Education will consider a one term request to those institutions at the end of the fiscal year *if* funds are available from current year appropriations. ***Please note that your extension request may be denied if there are not adequate funds from current year appropriations for that financial aid program.***

The Department of Higher Education will honor extensions beyond term window submission deadlines in the current academic year without requiring the use of the 5-year exception **ONLY** for the following circumstances that are generally beyond the control of the institutions. ***Please note that the explanation for the extension request provided through HEI must be detailed enough to reference one of the following scenarios:***

- ▶ Institution experiences an unexpected turnover with staff and therefore is unable to request the financial aid funds in the original edit/submission window.
- ▶ Student completes federal verification late (original FAFSA completion date was before the October 1 state deadline) in the academic year and becomes OCOG eligible. School applies state grant retroactively to past term(s) in which student was enrolled.
- ▶ Institution sends FAFSA data (original completion date was before the October 1 state deadline) to school late in the academic year and appears on school's roster as OCOG eligible. School applies state grant retroactively to past term(s) in which student was enrolled.
- ▶ Institution completes a special circumstance/professional judgment late (original FAFSA completion date was before the October 1 state deadline) in the academic year and student becomes OCOG eligible. School applies state grant retroactively to past term(s) in which student was enrolled.
- ▶ Institution receives an ISIR override from the Department of Higher Education late (original FAFSA completion date was before the October 1 state deadline) in the academic year and student becomes OCOG eligible. School applies state grant retroactively to past term(s) in which student was enrolled.

If your institution has missed an edit window for any of the above exceptions, you can submit up to a 7-day extension request. Extension requests are made in the HEI system: <https://hei.ohiohighered.org/> under the Institution Management tab.

An institution can submit up to a 7-day extension request for refunds at any time.