

Case study



Using Public Service Loan Forgiveness in the nonprofit sector as an attraction and retention tool is everything.



- Dr. Grace Ingram,
Wellbeing Program Manager, City of Alexandria

The challenge



Promoting physical and mental wellbeing through its healthcare programs was straightforward for the City of Alexandria. However, financial wellbeing proved challenging with resource constraints, limited bandwidth and unclear ROI.

The solution



Employees have access to a comprehensive digital student loan solution including automated federal program enrollment, college savings resources, and dedicated customer support. Plus, with a digital employer certification process, a once-difficult HR process is now seamless.

The results



- \$317 in average monthly savings
- \$114,000 in average projected loan forgiveness
- 100% satisfaction rate across across employees

Case study



Our employees have been highly engaged with the benefit, and it has been well received as a valuable addition to our benefits package. Overall, we highly recommend Summer to any organization looking to offer a student loan repayment benefit to their employees.

– Breanna Ramos, HR Manager, TechSmith



The challenge

The competition to hire and retain top tech-talent had become increasingly fierce as remote work took the industry by storm, making geography less of a barrier to poaching.



The solution

With highly-qualified talent comes higher student debt balances – and an opportunity for TechSmith to reward their workforce with a tax-free student loan repayment benefit.



The results

- Enrolled 1 in 4 employees in student loan contribution
- Projected to save individuals an average of 3.4 years in repayment
- Improved recruitment and retention with no administrative HR burden

Intelligent Contribution

Contribution, Made Intelligent.

A smart, digital solution for student loan contribution.

Intelligent Contribution applies proprietary technology to the standard student loan contribution process, ensuring high employee engagement while automating tedious workflows for the HR function. And when contribution is paired with the full Summer solution, impact and ROI are supercharged.

Summer

My Plan

My Student Loans

Tools

Intelligent Contribution

Get \$100/month towards your loans

- 1 Connect all your loans**
Sync with your servicers so we can determine the best repayment strategy.
- 2 Confirm your recurring payment**
We'll send you an email, and you can track your progress and savings.
- 3 Watch the savings roll in!**
Track your progress and calculate your projected payoff date.

Connect my servicers



Sydney K.

Customer Service Representative with \$41,000 in student debt

“Summer’s online platform helped me easily identify ways to save on my student loans and helped me enroll in a plan that will save me hundreds of dollars a month. This is such a relief as I now have extra cash on hand to focus on other obligations.”

Using Summer’s tools, Sydney enrolled in an income-driven repayment plan to lower her monthly payment.

With Summer, Sydney saved:

\$484/month **\$5,808/year**

What can Intelligent Contribution do for you?



Activate smart and impactful allocation

Ensure that company dollars are being allocated to the right student loan solutions for each employee, automatically. Due to the CARES Act, contribution can be tax-favorable up to \$5,250 per employee until 2025.



Help employees save today

Summer supports the entire implementation process and beyond, making contribution a turnkey solution for you and an engaging resource for your employees on day one.



Build goodwill and real value

Employees have access to an engaging student loan dashboard showing the immediate and lasting value of employer contribution.

Summer

The Big Book of
Student Loan
Assistance for
Employers



VOLUME I | 2022

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Part 1:

Introduction

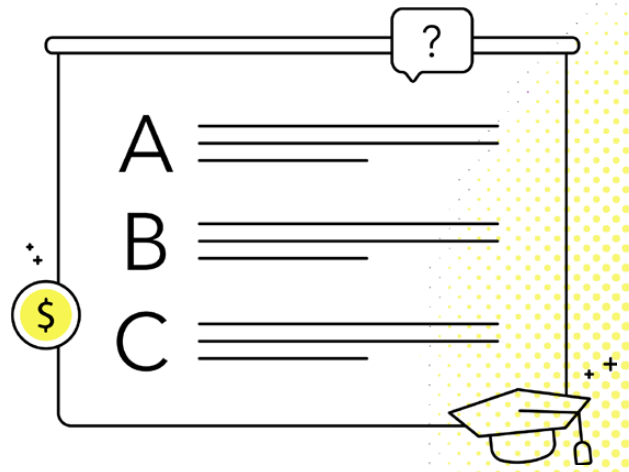


The United States is in the midst of a student loan crisis. Nearly 46 million Americans carry a staggering \$1.8 trillion in student loan debt, a burden that extends far beyond individual borrowers and bleeds into every workplace in the country.

This massive debt limits the options of both employers and employees in several ways. Many organizations are missing out on top talent because their benefit plan design lacks a comprehensive student loan solution. Student loan debt also delays or prevents millions of workers across all industries from reaching many of life's major milestones, creating an overwhelming sense of financial insecurity. That insecurity leads to stress across the entire well-being spectrum, ultimately affecting employees' productivity and performance.

To complicate matters, the repayment plans and loan forgiveness programs that would alleviate a lot of this stress have been poorly publicized, mismanaged, and unnecessarily complex. As a result, many borrowers who would benefit from these initiatives have yet to take advantage of them. Not to mention that the pandemic and subsequent student loan pause have thrown a wrench into what is already a challenging space.

This is where employers come in: as an employer, you are uniquely positioned to provide much-needed relief to your workers with student debt, and the team at Summer is here to help. In this complete guide, we explore how you can help your employees find pathways to financial success through student loan assistance benefits, and improve your workplace in the process.



Glossary of Key Terms

Before launching into this guide, let's get familiar with the key terms you'll see throughout the world of student loans. The industry is filled with complex jargon, alphabet-soup acronyms, and various government and private institutions involved in the lending, borrowing, and repayment process. Here are the main terms you'll see repeatedly in this guide:

Student Loan Payment Pause: As part of the federal government's COVID relief efforts in March 2020, the CARES Act suspended payments, interest accrual, and default collection on federally held student loans. The pause had been extended during the pandemic, though payments and interest on federally-held student loans are now set to resume 60 days after a court decision on President Biden's forgiveness program. If no decision has been issued by June 30th, 2023, payments will resume 60 days later.

Borrower: The person who has borrowed money to pay for educational costs.

Lender: The institution that provides funding to borrowers. Examples of lenders include the Department of Education, the borrower's school, a credit union, a private lending institution, or a bank.

Servicer: The institution that handles administrative tasks on behalf of the lender, from sending and collecting bills to providing customer service. During the student loan payment pause, major servicers including Navient, FedLoan, and Granite State Management & Resources announced their intentions to end their contracts with the federal government. This means about 16 million borrowers will have a new servicer when their loan payments resume.

Default: The failure to make payments on a loan according to the terms of the agreement. For most student loans, a period of default can begin after 270 days, or nine months, of no payments. There are measures borrowers can take to avoid default, but once a loan is officially in default, borrowers may face garnished wages, loss of income tax refunds, and/or a lowered credit score.

Direct Loan: A loan made directly through the Department of Education, as opposed to a private lender or bank.

Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF): A program that allows Direct Loan borrowers who make 120 qualifying monthly payments—while working for a nonprofit organization—to have the remainder of their loan balance forgiven tax-free. While designed as a reward for 10 years of nonprofit service, the program has been criticized for previously having a 98% rejection rate thanks to confusing, complex rules.

PSLF Limited Waiver: In October 2021, the Department of Education issued a PSLF Limited Waiver in an effort to ease the PSLF restrictions and enable borrowers to have previously ineligible payments count toward their 120 payments. The waiver has already made a huge impact: before, only 7,000 borrowers had received forgiveness, but that number jumped to 70,000 as of February 2022. The Limited Waiver expired on October 31st, 2022, but most of the expanded benefits are still available through July 2023 under the IDR Adjustment.

Standard Federal Repayment Plans: Federal loans have a number of set repayment plans that borrowers can choose from. One is the standard plan, in which borrowers make fixed monthly payments for up to 10 years to pay off their loans. If a borrower does not request a different plan, their loans will automatically be placed into a Standard Repayment Plan.

Income-Driven Repayment Plans (IDR): This covers several federal repayment plans where monthly payments are based on the borrower's income and family size. Enrolling in an IDR plan is a requirement for PSLF.



Refinancing: The process of replacing existing loans with a new, private loan that offers lower interest rates or preferable repayment terms. It's often recommended that borrowers refinance private loans if they can get a lower interest rate. Federal student loans shouldn't be refinanced if a borrower is working toward forgiveness through PSLF, since privatizing the loans would make them ineligible for the program.



A Note from Bridget

Hello! I'm Bridget, VP of Client Experience at Summer, and I couldn't be more excited to share how student loan assistance can have a positive impact on your employee population.

As an HR and benefits leader, you have more power than most to alleviate the burden of student loans. Whether you're making sure that an employee is on the path to forgiveness, helping them file paperwork correctly, or just being a clarifying voice in a confusing student debt world, you're taking much-needed action to lighten your employees' burden.

The negative financial and mental health effects of the student loan crisis impact borrowers in nearly every industry, and it's not a problem that your organization needs to tackle alone. By partnering with Summer, your HR expertise and our digital solutions can work in harmony to help your employees' financial well-being.

Happy reading, and please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Summer team at any point with questions or comments!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget Haile". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bridget Haile

VP of Client Experience at Summer

Part 2:

Unpacking Student Loan Assistance



Student debt is delaying home ownership for many borrowers

Why Do Student Loans Matter?

Let's take a look at a few key stats around student debt to unpack why employers should engage with this issue, especially as an employee benefit:

- In a regular year, when student loans aren't paused, the total student loan debt grows **6 times faster than the U.S. economy**.
- The average borrower owes **more than \$37,000 in student debt and takes 20 years to pay off their student loans**.
- **~81%** of borrowers say that because of their loans, they've **delayed milestones like getting married or growing their family**.
- **About a third of borrowers** who have not yet purchased a home cite loan payments as the reason why, and 20% of non-homeowner borrowers believe it will take them an **extra 8 years to purchase a home**.
- Borrowers are also at risk of less financial security in the future: **40% pay their student loans rather than invest**, and 38% say their payments hold them back from saving for retirement.

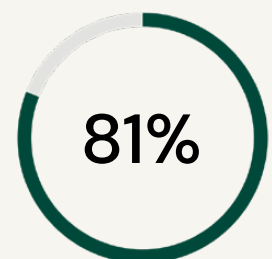
A look at the latest facts and figures



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These considerations are thrown into even sharper relief when you compare the burden of Black borrowers to white borrowers. On average, Black college grads owe \$25,000 more than their white peers, all while making just 80% of the household income of white families in the same positions (or as low as 63% for Black women). This combination of higher debt and lower salaries means Black borrowers are more likely to default on loans, put off buying a home, and less likely to build savings.

But the negative impact of student loans isn't limited to the borrower—it also seeps into the workplace. To start, the financial stress of carrying this debt can cause problems with sleep, health issues, and poor performance for employees. Additionally, nearly half of millennials and a third of Gen Z workers admit to being distracted at work because of their finances. Of those distracted employees, 49% say they spend at least three hours per week thinking about or dealing with personal finance issues while at work, taking time and productivity away from their job.



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A look at the latest facts and figures

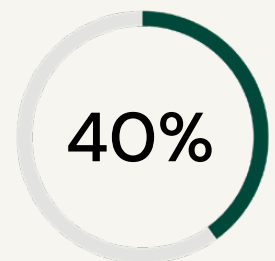
1/3



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20% of non-homeowner borrowers believe it will take them an extra 8 years to purchase a home.



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How Student Loan Solutions Drive HR Outcomes

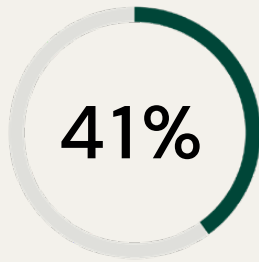
While employers can't solve the \$1.8 trillion student loan crisis alone, it is possible to help employees navigate their student debt with more confidence and less stress. HR departments can provide employees with access to student loan assistance programs, which offer much-needed guidance on repayment options and help eligible employees apply for forgiveness.

To be clear, employees aren't the only ones who benefit from these programs—employers do too. There are several advantages associated with implementing a student loan assistance program:

Supports recruiting: When asked about preferred benefits, 41% of young job seekers list student loan repayment plans among their top three options. Even if you don't offer repayment programs, providing guidance can help you stand apart: 85% of millennial employees say they want to see financial planning and educational workshops from their employers.

86% of millennials say that they'd commit to five or more years at a company that offered student loan assistance.

Boosts satisfaction and retention: When you let potential hires know that you're committed to helping them achieve financial security, you're not just letting them know that you can help



When asked about preferred benefits, 41% of young job seekers list student loan repayment plans among their top three options.

guide them through the student loan repayment process. You're also letting them know that their overall well-being matters to you. This helps employees stick around: 86% of millennials say that they'd commit to five or more years at a company that offered student loan assistance. Rather than constantly spending money bringing new people aboard, it can be far more valuable to invest in the assistance programs that will retain your top talent.

Enhances mental health and DEI efforts:

If your organization is committed to improving the mental health and overall well-being of your employees, student loan assistance is a great place to start since it can help decrease financial stress. Additionally, these programs enhance DEI efforts by demonstrating a long-term commitment to hiring underrepresented employees, and they recognize the added strain these employees may be under to pay back loans. Finally, it should go without saying that inclusive workplaces are better workplaces, and they're likely to outperform less equitable

organizations by as much as 35%.

There has never been a better time to help your employees make sense of the student loan repayment space. The pandemic has made many employees' financial situations and outlooks more precarious. Plus, the pause on student loan payments means that when federal payments resume, millions of borrowers may be paying their loans for the very first time, paying under a new employer or servicer, or will simply be stressed and/or unprepared to handle the added monthly bill.

No matter their situation, every borrower could use the assurance that they're on the right repayment path. At least 35% of borrowers say they've had difficulty accessing trusted information about their loans or repayment status, while 57% report experiencing unexpected changes from a servicer. As an employer, you can provide assistance, share practical information about IDR programs, offer guidance on saving for the future, and—if you're a nonprofit employer—the PSLF Limited Waiver. With your help, your employees can feel more confident taking on their student debt.



Student Loan Solutions for Nonprofits:

How to Benefit from Public Service Loan Forgiveness

Earlier, we mentioned that nonprofit employers are in a unique position to help their employees on their financial journey, and that's thanks to PSLF. PSLF is, without a doubt, the best deal in the student loan world. The premise is simple: a borrower—with federal student loans—works in the public sector and makes 120 qualifying monthly payments on their loan(s). At the end of those 10 years, the remaining balance is forgiven, tax-free.

Unfortunately, PSLF has proved to be anything but simple. It launched with stringent, confusing rules that can be difficult for borrowers to navigate on their own, and it requires frequent paperwork filings with multiple institutions throughout the year. And if one deadline was blown on that paperwork, one payment missed, or even one clerical error made on a form? The borrower would be back to square one, with none of their previous payments counting toward that magic 120 number.

As a result, PSLF had a sky-high rejection rate of 98%. Many of those rejected had believed

they were following the rules only to learn, upon applying for forgiveness, that somewhere along the way there'd been a minor infraction.

The PSLF Limited Waiver was designed to help ease those restrictions and help more borrowers finally take advantage of the program. The great news is that, so far, it's working. Tens of thousands of borrowers have had their balances forgiven thanks to past payments becoming newly eligible; some have even received refunds for making more than 120 newly qualifying payments.

Take it from these employees, whose lives were completely changed by the waiver:

Megan is a teacher in Philadelphia. She'd been working there since 2007, but under the previous PSLF rules, wouldn't have been able to qualify for forgiveness until after she consolidated her FFEL loans to Direct Loans in 2011. With guidance from Summer following the announcement of the PSLF Limited Waiver, Megan had \$37,000 worth of loans forgiven and received an additional \$11,000 refund for payments she made between 2007 and 2011.

Nicole has worked in public service since 2006 but hadn't consolidated her FFEL loans into

Direct Loans until 2015, so her early payments hadn't counted toward PSLF. But with the new waiver, Nicole was able to receive \$148,967 in loan forgiveness and saw her credit score improve by 70 points.

Chris was one of the many public service employees who had repeatedly applied for PSLF forgiveness but kept getting rejected—and even worse, he received different reasons for each rejection. Thanks to the PSLF waiver and Summer's help with pushing back against an incorrect claim that he had 14 remaining payments, Chris got \$20,000 forgiven and \$12,500 refunded.

A few Public Service Loan Forgiveness success stories:



Megan

Pennsylvania

Total forgiveness:

\$37,000

Payments refunded:

\$11,000



Nicole

Ohio

Total forgiveness:

\$148,967



Chris

Florida

Total forgiveness:

\$20,000

Payments refunded:

\$12,500



So how do you make sure your employees can benefit from PSLF and the waiver?

1 Make sure everyone with federal student loan debt is enrolled in the program.

Remember: any of your employees with federal student loans qualify, but they do have to apply, and you have to certify the paperwork that says they're working at a nonprofit organization.

2 Help your employees determine if they have newly qualifying loans.

In the past, only Direct Loans could count toward forgiveness. Under the Limited PSLF waiver, FFEL loans and Perkins loans qualify—even if they were consolidated in the past. Although the PSLF Limited Waiver expired on October 31st, 2022, most of the expanded benefits are still available through July under the IDR Adjustment.

3 Inform employees of the latest changes to PSLF.

In the past, only payments for the exact dollar amount owed and paid on the due date owed counted toward forgiveness. Now, under the waiver, early payments and those in excess of

the amount due qualify. Active military service also counts toward forgiveness. The waiver also suspends the requirement that borrowers have to continue working in the public sector until after they receive forgiveness; previously, a borrower had to stay at their nonprofit job, even after making 120 qualifying payments, until receiving confirmation that their balance had been forgiven. These changes are supposed to be applied automatically so long as the borrower had already certified their employment, but it can be helpful to let your employees know what to look for on their end.

When in doubt, you can always check out [Summer's Guide to PSLF Updates](#) for an overview of the changes to the program. In addition to the guide, our suite of solutions can help you and your employees with each of the aforementioned steps. From online loan consolidation to employment certification, Summer's tools makes staying on top of all things PSLF a pain-free experience for you and your employees.

How Can Student Loan Assistance Programs Work at My Organization?

If your organization is new to student loan assistance programs, you may be surprised to learn how many options are available. And even if your benefits cover part of the student loan equation, like refinancing, a comprehensive solution that can service all borrowers in your employee population should be the top requirement. Here are some of the key benefits that assistance offers for your employees:

Lowered monthly payments: There are so many payment plans available—more than many borrowers know of or have the time to examine. Student loan assistance programs can do this work for your employees, making sure they're on the best payment plan for their situation. Take Summer's digital solutions, for example, which help borrowers save an average of \$333 per month. These savings translate to decreased financial stress, which plays a big role in improving retention and productivity in your workplace.

Refinancing options: Some borrowers don't realize they can refinance their loans in order to pay off their debt faster. Through student loan assistance programs, borrowers can evaluate refinancing options and see how close they are to actually paying off their debt rather than just the interest.

Default resolution: As federal student loan payments prepare to resume after a nearly three-year pause, many borrowers may be overwhelmed and on the verge of default.

The consequences of defaulting can be severe, including a lowered credit score, garnished wages, and liens on valuable assets.

There are several steps borrowers can take to rehabilitate before default actually sets in, though, and default—not the late payments—can even be removed from a borrower's credit history if they take the right steps. Student loan assistance programs allow you to guide your employees out of this potentially terrifying situation and ensure they won't have to look elsewhere for help paying their debt.

Part 3:

Solution and Partner Considerations

How to Implement a Student Loan Solution

Once you select a digital solution like Summer, integrating a student loan solution into your organization or expanding your existing offering is easier and more seamless than you may think.

First, avoid the most common mistake that many employers make: not actively offering guidance about student loans to employees. Use the onboarding process and internal communication throughout the year to ensure your employees see you as a trusted source of information when it comes to this complicated space.

Next, consider the best way to communicate this information to both your current employees and the job-seekers you're hoping to attract. Student loan information can be dense and overwhelming, so people will look to you for clear, thorough, and practical information presented in

an easy-to-understand way. Following are some tips for effective communication around student loan assistance.

Student loan information can be dense and overwhelming, so people will look to you for clear, thorough, and practical information presented in an easy-to-understand way.



Tips for effective communication when providing student loan assistance:



Start early. During the recruitment and onboarding process, outline the student loan assistance programming you offer, making sure new hires know you're there to help them through even the thorniest parts of the process.



Set a point person. If you have a large HR team, it helps to assign point people to each individual receiving student loan assistance. This way, guidance remains consistent and employees understand whom to contact whenever they have a question.



Keep conversations open. When possible, set up informal chats where people feel comfortable asking questions. There's no such thing as a bad question when it comes to the student loan repayment process!



Set annual check-ins. Information changes quickly in this space, and employees may forget information they've learned during early onboarding processes. Each year, schedule a check-in with everyone receiving student loan assistance to review their info, make sure they're on the plan that works best for them, and find out what else you could do to alleviate their student debt stress.

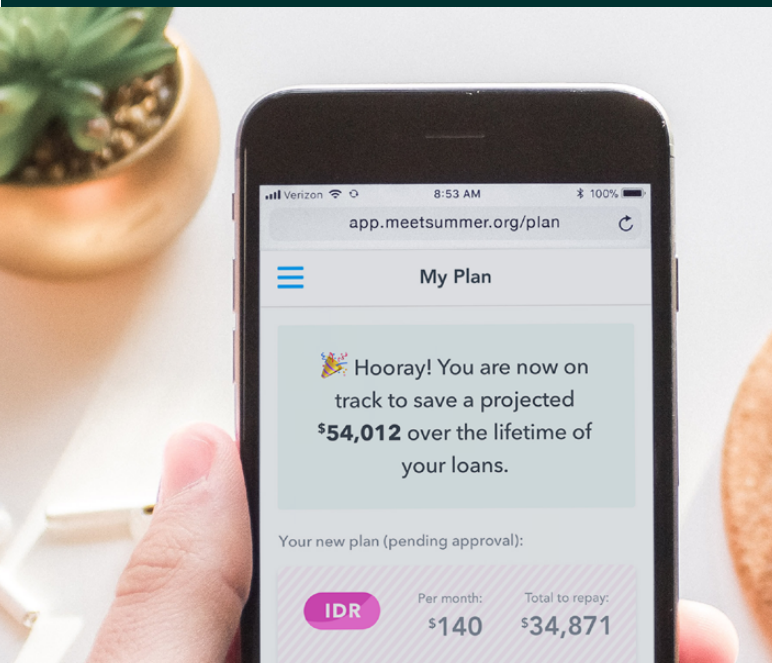


Don't pretend to know all the answers. Misinformation is one of the biggest problems borrowers face, and the last thing you want to do is add to that. If someone asks a question you don't know the answer to, take your time to find the right answer (whether through a tool like Summer, making a phone call to a servicer, or via another online resource), and get back to them when you have one.



Turn to digital solutions for a helping hand.

No matter your needs, digital platforms, such as the ones available through Summer, minimize the administrative work you have to do and maximize the time you can spend guiding employees on their financial journeys. For example, Summer makes it easy to complete employer certification forms and digitally enroll employees in the PSLF program.



Digital solutions can free your employees from handling the burden alone, with minimal support from HR.



Bridget's Pro Tips

Have trouble convincing management to introduce or expand your student loan assistance offerings?

Remind them that workplaces that offer student loan assistance programs are equitable, productive, attractive to recruits and current employees, and outperform competitors.

If that isn't enough to convince management, try conducting an internal survey and ask employers if they're interested in a benefits package that includes student loan assistance.

We'll bet the answer will be an overwhelming yes—and giving your employees what they ask for is a great way to ensure they'll perform their best at your company.

FAQs for HR and Benefit Leaders

Ready to start offering your employees student loan assistance, or build a more holistic program based on the solution you already have in place? We've gathered some of the most frequently asked questions to help you design benefits that can improve your employees' financial well-being.



What if my organization can't offer repayment assistance?

Repayment assistance is only one type of student loan assistance benefit; there are others you can offer. Educational seminars on financial guidance, digital tools that help lower monthly payments, resources to ensure employees are on the best student loan repayment plan, and assistance with consolidation or refinancing are all excellent benefits to show employees their financial health is important to you.



What if I want to start offering repayment programs?

Now's the time! As of 2020, employers can give employees up to \$5,250 toward their loans without paying income tax on that benefit. For now, this measure is in place until 2025, so it could be a great recruitment and retention tool.



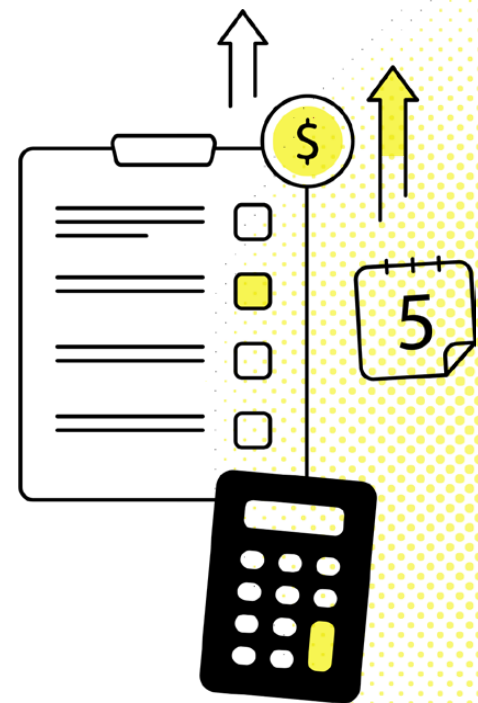
How do I know which plans are best for my employees?

Each individual will have different financial needs, types of loans, and personal situations, so there is no one-size-fits-all solution for repaying student loans. The best way to determine which plan is best is by having one-on-one conversations with your employees about their loans as well as their financial and career goals. You can share information about each type of repayment plan and schedule a meeting where employees can ask more detailed questions and receive guidance on the best option for their unique situation.

Lastly, keeping up with the latest news in the student loan space can be hard. Check the [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau](#), which creates toolkits for borrowers and employers, for helpful resources. Summer's tools can also help with assessing employees' repayment options, reducing the time HR teams spend on loan-related administrative tasks.

2022 Key Actions for Quick Wins

With payments and interest on federally-held student loans set to resume 60 days after a court decision on President Biden's forgiveness program,* it's a critical time to consider how you can support your employees on their financial journey. Here's a list of timely opportunities that can result in quick wins for your department and employees alike.



For all employers:

Review your employee benefits program. Since student loan payments and interest will restart in 2023* for the first time in nearly three years, there's a lot of uncertainty on what to do next. Your team can consider implementing a digital solution like Summer off-cycle to simplify the process and provide expert help. In doing so, you can go ahead and skip the following three suggestions, as they'll be automated for you.

Reach out to employees about payments resuming on August 31st, 2022. Remind them that this date is approaching, let them know the kind of communication they can expect about their upcoming bill, and let them know they can always reach out to you (or your benefits

provider) with any questions about payment plans or student loan solutions.

Send internal communications to ensure all your employees' servicer accounts are up to date, or do so through your digital student loan solution. This is always important, but it's absolutely crucial now that several major players have left the space.

Reach out to employees about loan consolidation or refinancing. Sit down with employees and figure out whether a consolidation or refinancing plan could help lower their monthly payments or streamline their repayment plan.

*Payments and interest on federally-held student loans are now set to resume 60 days after a court decision on President Biden's forgiveness program. If no decision has been issued by June 30th, 2023, payments will resume 60 days later.



Bonus wins if you're a nonprofit employer:



Certify full-time employees' paperwork to confirm that they work for a public service institution.



Don't forget the consolidation conversation. This year, this is an important step for nonprofit employees, since some types of loans are newly qualifying for the PSLF Limited Waiver, as long as they are consolidated into Direct Loans.



Remind employees to submit PSLF certification forms. It's valuable to let your employees know that you want them to take advantage of the Limited Waiver, and any paperwork—including loan consolidation for borrowers who have yet to do so—must be submitted before October 31, 2022. Having trouble managing all the additional paperwork, or have questions about the

exacting nature of the forms? Summer's digital solutions do the hard work for you. When using Summer, it takes a median time of just 11 minutes to submit a form, and you don't have to worry that you're messing up on any of the strict requirements. And the best news? You'll be able to let them know that with Summer's tools, they can look forward to an average projected forgiveness of \$84,727!

Remember: leveraging a digital solution is a great way to execute these quick wins.

Summer's solutions help you keep track of key dates, manage the extra work when important deadlines approach, and stay up to date on the latest changes in the space so that you're always offering your employees the surest pathway out of debt.



Carrying Your Employees into the Future

The pandemic has been a trying time for everyone, and the added financial stress has made the last few years even more taxing for many borrowers in the workforce. As an employer, investing in a benefit that can improve your employees' financial health is one way to alleviate that stress—and stand out in a red-hot job market.

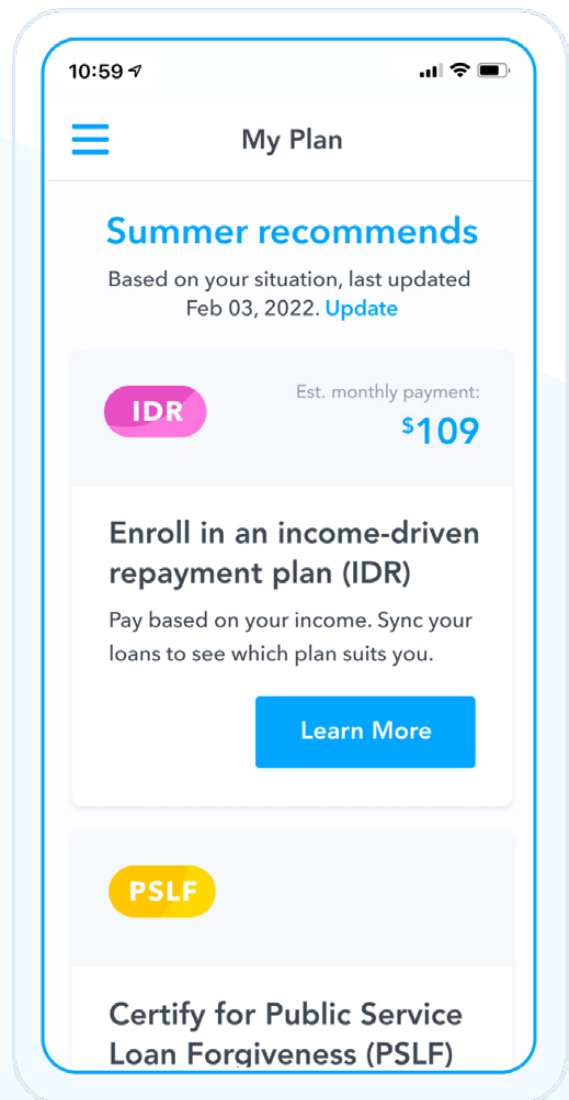
In 2019 and 2020, just 8% of employers offered some sort of student loan repayment assistance, though that was up from 4% in the years prior. Today, more employers than ever are giving employees one of the most in-demand benefits.



Looking for student loan assistance?

Schedule a personal demo or email us to learn more about how Summer can help your employees conquer their student debt.

[Schedule a demo](#)



About Summer

Summer partners with organizations to help their employee populations navigate and reduce student loan debt with proven technologies, policy expertise, and a human touch. Founded in 2014, Summer offers industry-leading tools like digital PSLF enrollment to help all borrowers reach their financial goals.



Summer is a Certified B Corporation.

Learn more about Summer at www.meetsummer.org

We help employees simplify their student debt

Summer has helped thousands of borrowers save an average of over \$31,000 on their loans.

Your Current Plan

\$722

Monthly payments

\$86,600

Total amount to pay

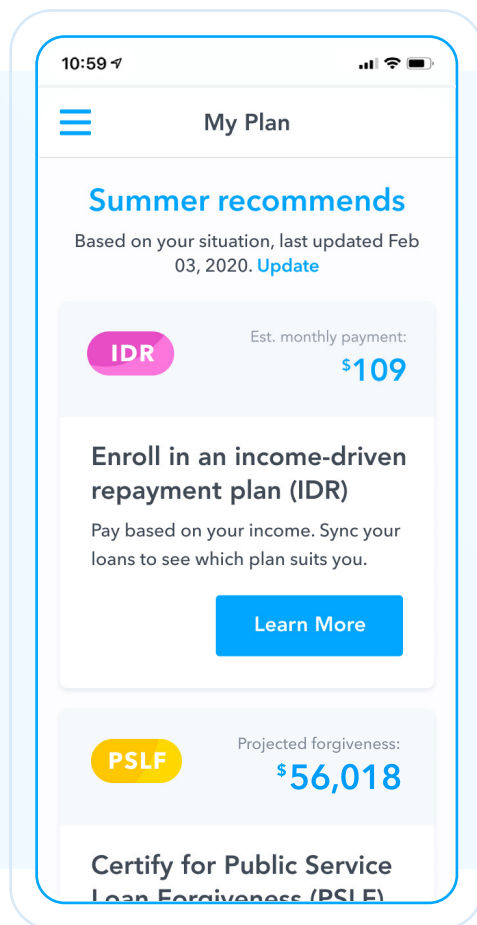
Recommended Plan

\$169

Monthly payments

\$58,541

Total amount to pay



Why partner with Summer



Summer's holistic tool supports all borrowers

We analyze over 120 savings and forgiveness programs to help borrowers enroll in the best plans to reduce their payments and free up cash flow.



Implementation is easy and secure

Summer's team supports the entire implementation process. Our best-in-class security standards ensure customer data is protected.



We provide ongoing support and assistance

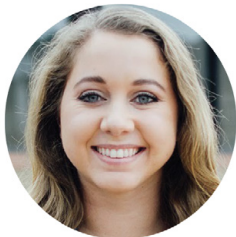
Summer's Partner Success team handles and supports each stage of the partnership from communications and marketing to data analysis and reporting.

FEATURED IN:

Summer's solution provides impact and value for employers

Most student loan benefits are prohibitively expensive to implement or only serve a small fraction of borrowers. Summer offers a cost-effective, holistic benefit that helps all borrowers.

	Summer	Refinancing	Contribution
Low cost	✓	✓	✗
Supports all borrower situations	✓	✗	✓
Ease of implementation	✓	✓	✗



Sydney K.

Customer Service Representative with \$41,000 in student debt

Using Summer's tools, Sydney enrolled in an income-driven repayment plan to lower her monthly payment.

SUMMER HELPED SYDNEY SAVE: \$484/month \$5,808/year

“Summer’s online platform helped me easily identify ways to save on my student loans and helped me enroll in a plan that will save me hundreds of dollars a month. This is such a relief as I now have extra cash on hand to focus on other obligations.”

Help your employees conquer their student debt

Email partner@meetsummer.org or visit www.meetsummer.org to get started today.



PARTNER



Last Month

Account Creations
LAST MONTH

1,567

Applicants
LAST MONTH

1,014

Form Submissions
LAST MONTH

1,738

Cumulative

Account Creations
CUMULATIVE

22,749

Applicants
CUMULATIVE

6,113

Forms Submitted
CUMULATIVE

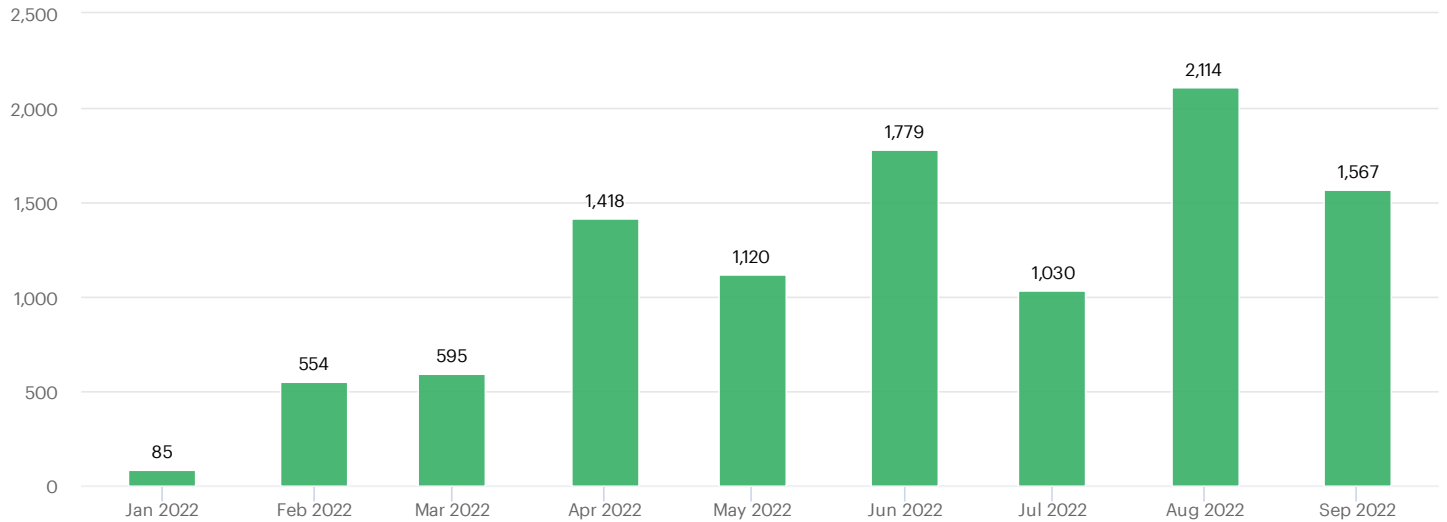
13,249



Account Creations Over Time

Past 12 Months

Account Creations Over Time



Average Student Loan Balance (\$)
SELF-REPORTED BY USER

\$66,218.71

Average Salary (\$)
SELF-REPORTED BY USER

\$94,978.03

Total Lifetime Savings (\$)
TOTAL PROJECTED LIFETIME SAVINGS FOR IDR APPLICANTS

\$131,499,395.63

Average Lifetime Savings (\$)
AVERAGE LIFETIME PROJECTED SAVINGS PER IDR APPLICANT

\$52,733.63

Total Lifetime Forgiveness (\$)
SUM OF PROJECTED LIFETIME FORGIVENESS FOR APPLICANTS

\$260,357,221.30

Average Lifetime Forgiveness (\$)
AVERAGE LIFETIME FORGIVENESS PER APPLICANT

\$79,864.18

SUMMER SERVICES AGREEMENT

This SUMMER SERVICES AGREEMENT (this “**Agreement**”), effective as of the Effective Date, is made by and between SUMMER, PBC, a Delaware benefit corporation (“**Summer**”), with offices at 33 Irving Place, Suite 4013, New York, NY 10017, and the company named below (“**Client**”).

Client		
Client Name	Client Legal Name	
Jurisdiction of Incorporation	Corporate Form incorporated in insert state or country of incorporation	
Client Address	Street	Street Address
	City, State Zip Country	City, State Zip Code Country
Client’s Main Contact		
Name and Title	Name, Title	
Email	Email Address	
Phone	Phone	
Summer Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Loan Debt Advisory Services <input type="checkbox"/> Student Loan Contribution Program	
Legal Notices to Branch	Legal Notices to Client	
Attn: Summer, PBC 33 Irving Place, Suite 4013 New York, NY 10017 Email:	Attn: Name, Title Company Name: Client Legal Name Street: Street Address City, State Zip Country: City, State Zip Code Email: Email Address	

Contractual Obligations	This Agreement is governed by the attached Terms and Conditions and exhibits.
Effective Date	mm/dd/yyyy

By signing below, each party, by its duly authorized representative, hereby agrees to be bound by this Agreement, including the attached Terms and Conditions and exhibits.	
Summer, PBC	Client: Client Legal Name
Signature:	Signature:
Name:	Name:
Title:	Title:
Date:	Date:

Your employees may be closer to student loan forgiveness than you think



Recent policy changes to Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) have created a limited window for more of your employees to qualify for forgiveness.

Summer makes it easy for your staff to manage their PSLF journey and be accepted in minutes with no additional paperwork or follow-up inquiries needed for your team.

AS FEATURED IN

The New York Times



Forgiveness can be a financial lifeline for your employees

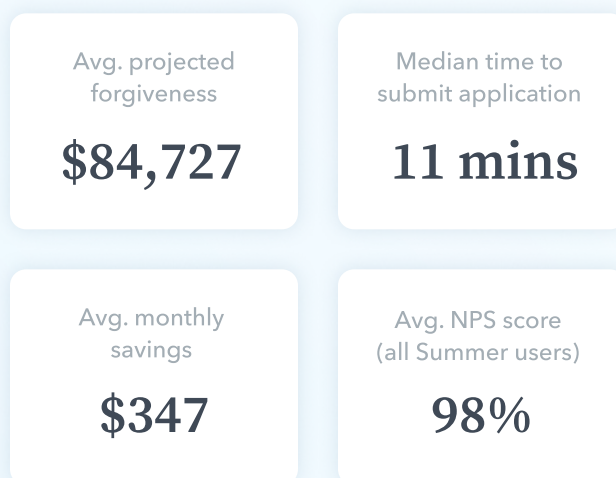
Recognize the limited opportunity to make an impact

Through October 31, 2022, the Department of Education is offering a Limited PSLF Waiver to count past payments that were previously ineligible because of loan types or repayment plans, creating a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for your previously ineligible employees. Summer guides your internal HR team and employees through the entire turnkey process, with engaging digital tools and live expert support.

Give your employees a (figurative) raise

As part of Optimization by Summer, your employees can reach financial freedom sooner with nearly \$350 in monthly savings earned across the full program. This means greater financial mobility for your staff so they can get back to their meaningful work, faster.

Public sector partner results



Help your employees get forgiveness once and for all

Email partner@meetsummer.org or visit www.meetsummer.org to get started today.

Your employees may be closer to student loan forgiveness than you think



Earning Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) can seem like an impossible hurdle for employees with a rejection rate of nearly 99%.

Summer makes it easy for your staff to qualify and be accepted in minutes with no additional paperwork or follow-up inquiries needed for your team.

Forgiveness can be a financial lifeline for your employees

Recognize the opportunity

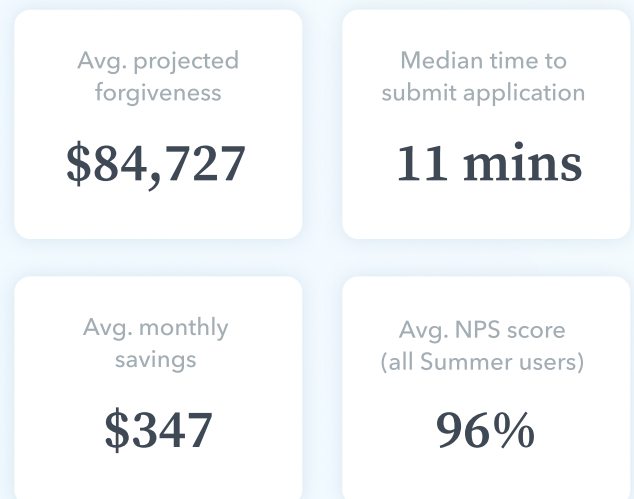
Nearly eight in ten public service employees recognize student loan debt as a major financial burden. Yet 70% of public service employees indicate a minimal understanding of PSLF rules and requirements.* Summer alleviates this burden by guiding your internal HR team and employees through the entire turnkey process, with engaging digital tools and live expert support.

Give your employees a (figurative) raise

As part of Optimization by Summer, your employees can reach financial freedom sooner with nearly \$350 in monthly savings earned across the full program. This means greater financial mobility for your staff so they can get back to their meaningful work, faster.

*Source: [AIG Retirement Services Study](#)

Public sector partner results



Help your employees get forgiveness once and for all

Email partner@meetsummer.org or visit www.meetsummer.org to get started today.

Financial Wellbeing That Goes Beyond a Paycheck

How the City of Auburn Has Teamed Up with Summer to Prioritize Financial Wellbeing for its Employees

The City of Auburn has a long history of prioritizing the holistic health and wellbeing of its employees, and seeks to do what it can to promote one of the most overlooked areas of the benefits arena—financial wellbeing. Return-to-work, mental health considerations and student loans coming due create a perfect storm that expedites this need to prioritize financial health.

That’s why the City of Auburn has partnered with [Summer](#), a Certified B Corporation whose digital solution supports student loan borrowers, to make repayment easier for borrowers employed with the city.

HR and benefits leadership recognize the impact of student debt on the whole household – with ripple effects on spouses, dependents, and society as a whole. They are aware that BIPOC student loan borrowers graduate with far more debt than their white peers, and far fewer personal and generational resources to repay their loans.

By leveraging Summer as a holistic approach to student loan debt for their employees and dependents, The City of Auburn has identified financial wellbeing as an opportunity area in its benefit package.

What this partnership with Summer offers City of Auburn Employees

The City of Auburn’s partnership with Summer will unlock a number of potential benefits for city employees, including assistance with:



Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)

PSLF offers a path to full forgiveness for public service employees. As an employee of the City of Auburn, you not only are eligible for PSLF, you also receive Summer’s assistance to guide you through the process of applying for PSLF. Summer has helped borrowers achieve more than million of dollars in loan forgiveness to date, and they’ve seen firsthand how transformational reaching this milestone has been.



Income-Driven Repayment (IDR)

IDR allows borrowers to find payments that align with their family’s income. IDR is a free federal program that ties borrowers’ monthly student loan payments to their income with potential forgiveness options. IDR will make your payments more affordable while you work toward the full forgiveness available through PSLF. Minimize monthly payments and maximize forgiveness. Summer will help find the least expensive plan for you and your family, and help you easily enroll online.

“[Summer] seemed like a great opportunity to provide our existing employees (and future new hires) access to an easy-to-use platform to manage their student loans and PSLF progress. The dashboard is user friendly, and the certification process is streamlined through the system, which shortens the timeline and kills less trees!”

Melissa Medisch

HR Manager, City of Auburn

Summer

Employee Impact

Across city municipality employers, the results are impressive. The following numbers highlight the positive results for employees:



\$317

Average monthly savings



\$114K

Average projected loan forgiveness



100%

Employee satisfaction rate

City of Auburn employees can envision outcomes similar to those of the following borrowers - who have worked with Summer and are finally free of student loan debt.

Summer Success Stories:



Meghan McCabe

“Summer helped me to feel less alone and confused in the loan forgiveness application process. They were very responsive, knowledgeable, and supportive in the process, which turned out to be much faster than I expected it would!”

Forgiveness:

\$37,000



Nicole Williams

“The Summer program has changed my life which means “CREDIT” score by a whopping 70 points! Five more years of stress have been eliminated with the PSLF waiver! I am forever grateful, I have GREAT CREDIT now! Didn’t really see paying \$145K+ off in this lifetime without winning the lottery.”

Forgiveness:

\$148,967



Richard Schmertzing

“The folks at Summer, with whom AFT connected us, have been a life saver! In 10 months time after paying faithfully on a student loan for over 20 years, they helped us go from still owing more than \$93,000 in student loans (on \$99,000 original amount) to a status of ‘completely forgiven,’ and we got back over \$10,000.00 in refunds.”

Forgiveness: Refunded payments:

\$93,000 \$10,000



Partnership Report

Helping AFT Members Reach Financial Freedom

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Letter from the CEO

Nearly four years ago, Randi and I met in a New York coffee shop to discuss a partnership that would help thousands of AFT members achieve student loan savings.

Randi opened the conversation by asking why I started Summer. After years of working to improve student loan policies in Washington, D.C., I told Randi that I was fed up. I saw firsthand the sheer amount of help that borrowers needed to successfully navigate their loans. Yet most major institutions--from federal and state governments to universities--were failing to provide adequate guidance.

We agreed that unions like AFT were already filling this void with much-needed resources. Although we both wanted to take this a step further--empowering AFT to make even more impact with better tools and resources that could create hundreds of millions of dollars in member savings.

My "lightbulb moment" was the day I realized that while the government programs to help borrowers already existed--the real solution was in addressing why people weren't utilizing them. In other words, millions could benefit by enrolling in programs like Income Driven Repayment (IDR) and Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), though three major roadblocks prevented them from doing so:

One, the majority of borrowers had never heard of these programs. Randi and I realized that this was a marketing problem--and we wanted to work together to ensure that every single member knew these programs existed.

Two, borrowers were often deterred from applying in the first place due to the lengthy, complex paperwork required to apply. Randi and I discussed how Summer could mitigate the hassle and confusion for AFT members by giving them a streamlined, easy-to-use interface that would also boost annual recertifications.

And, three, even if a person went through the lengthy paperwork on their own, they would then get ensnared by a slew of loan servicer hiccups. More than just a "digital tool," I assured Randi that Summer could provide AFT's members with a team of smart, compassionate loan experts, giving them the personalized support and accountability that they weren't getting from the Dept. of Education--from start to finish.

Looking back on that conversation years later, I take pause to celebrate how far we've come.

Through countless mailers, emails, posters, conferences, social media campaigns, info sessions, Zooms, and more--there's no longer a doubt that every AFT member is now aware of the benefits of IDR and PSLF! Even more, AFT won a landmark case that expanded PSLF access to millions of borrowers. And Summer is now on track to have assisted 25,000 AFT members by the end of this year--determining their eligibility for an array of loan assistance programs and getting them on track to save a combined total of nearly \$400 million.

There have been so many wonderful memories over the last three years and it's the people whose lives we've changed that make this partnership so special. From helping Edie from Colorado get \$110,000 forgiven, to helping Christi from Minnesota appeal a PSLF rejection to achieve a whopping \$220,000 in forgiveness after teaching since 1999--among so many other, powerful stories.

Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words--and that's certainly the case with this photo of Education Minnesota staff getting a sneak peek of Summer's new product feature: a federal loan consolidation tool that expands access to PSLF for borrowers with older loans. Who knew that a tech-based solution for a government loan program could cause this much joy?!

We've certainly weathered an unprecedented time together--from a global pandemic to the student loan moratorium to the PSLF Waiver and more. Undoubtedly, we'll face new challenges in the future as loan payments resume after nearly three years of pause. No matter what, Summer stands ready to help AFT and its members through the twists and turns to come.

Thank you for a wonderful three years of partnership, and here's to many more.

Sincerely,



Will Sealy
and the team at Summer



A moment showing the impact we can have when great minds come together to solve real problems for real people.

Impact

What We've Accomplished Together

Impact

What We've Accomplished Together

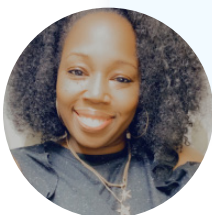
Borrower Impact

For an individual AFT member with student debt, the impact of Summer and access to federal loan programs and savings is literally life changing. It's estimated that still only 15% of eligible borrowers have applied for PSLF. Without help, encouragement, and tools, many find the system too challenging to overcome. And even when they do, we know that these programs are difficult to navigate solo -

mistakes are easy to make and costly to repair, if they can be repaired at all.

With Summer's support, forgiveness is actually within reach. Student loans have a ripple effect on all other areas of a member's financial life. Without monthly debt payments and with a significantly improved credit score, there are now options open to Nicole that she may not have been able to access before.

“The Summer program has changed my life which means “CREDIT” score by a whopping 70 points! Five more years of stress have been eliminated with the PSLF waiver! I am forever grateful, I have GREAT CREDIT now! Didn't really see paying \$145K+ off in this lifetime without winning the lottery.”



Nicole
AFT Member in Ohio

Nicole got nearly
\$150,000
in PSLF using Summer's tools and team for help

By the numbers

Over the past 3 years, Summer has helped

22,000+

AFT members across 1,510 local affiliates

Student Loan Forgiveness

AFT members who have applied for PSLF through Summer are expected to see an average of

\$79,772

in student loans canceled

We've achieved over

\$7.3M

in PSLF forgiveness to date... and counting!

MOHELA is 90 days behind (at least) in processing forms, so we should see additional forgiveness come through over the coming months.

We expect to see

\$257M

in total projected forgiveness across all AFT members who have applied for PSLF to date

We've also achieved over

\$145K

from [Teacher Loan Forgiveness](#). Summer has the first and only online tool for this program, built for AFT members

Income Driven Repayment

AFT members who have enrolled in an Income Driven Repayment plan through Summer are saving an average of

\$52,848

over the life of their loan

We've generated

\$130M

in total projected savings across all members who have enrolled in Income Driven Repayment to date

Many borrowers simply can't do this on their own



Richard

“Every time we tried to follow the rules and get in the right forgiveness plan or make the payments manageable, the loan situation got worse—it cost more monthly, people were rude, and no one would give us straight answers. Two different companies “lost” our records or were accused of “fraudulent” practices, but not only could no one make the wind shift in our favor, no one wanted to—until Summer.”

—Lorraine (Richard's wife)

\$93,000 **\$10,000+**
in forgiveness in refunds in May 2022

\$110,000
in forgiveness after working with Summer for 3 years



Chris

“I tried applying for PSLF many times over the years with no success, only frustration. I decided to give it one more attempt with help from Summer, and my remaining \$20,000 was forgiven. Summer walked me through the process and provided wonderfully prompt feedback.”

\$6,500 **\$12,500**
in forgiveness in refunded payments



Andrew

“Summer consistently steered me towards success through the processes of PSLF and TEPSLF submissions. Their guidance and determination to see my application succeed often surpassed my own feelings on the process. If you have found Summer, you are half-way to your own success.”

\$30,123
in forgiveness



Edie

“I am confident that this would have NEVER happened without Summer's help. There are no words to adequately express my gratitude.”

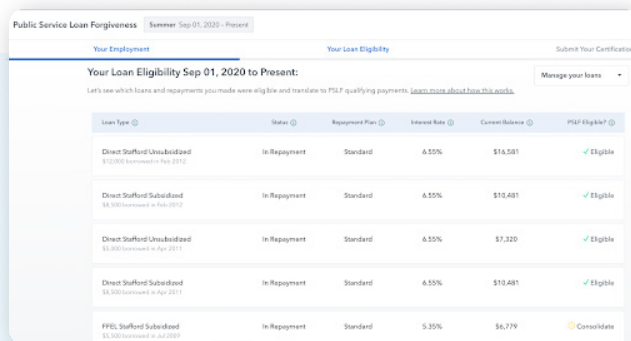
Best in Class Tools and Support

Summer is a combination of smart technology and smart people. Our online tools allow borrowers to see their eligibility, loan by loan, for forgiveness options and repayment plans, and to weigh those options against each other with clear next steps.

We can tell if a loan needs to be consolidated to qualify for PSLF, or if a borrower received a Pell grant to attend school, all online in an automated experience. Borrowers can use Summer's tools to enroll in all of these programs on their own time without needing to wait.

David, an AFT member from Minnesota, says:

“It was very helpful to have so many parts automated. Even when I didn't enter something accurately you were able to easily fix it! Very easy!” Our Borrower Success Team reviews every application before it's submitted, ensuring accuracy and acceptance.



Loan Type	Status	Repayment Plan	Interest Rate	Current Balance	PSLF Eligible?
Direct Stafford Unsubsidized \$12,000 (borrowed in Feb 2012)	In-Repayment	Standard	6.55%	\$16,581	✓ Eligible
Direct Stafford Subsidized \$8,300 (borrowed in Feb 2012)	In-Repayment	Standard	6.55%	\$10,481	✓ Eligible
Direct Stafford Unsubsidized \$5,300 (borrowed in Apr 2011)	In-Repayment	Standard	6.55%	\$7,320	✓ Eligible
Direct Stafford Subsidized \$5,300 (borrowed in Apr 2011)	In-Repayment	Standard	6.55%	\$10,481	✓ Eligible
FFEL Stafford Subsidized \$5,300 (borrowed in Jul 2009)	In-Repayment	Standard	5.35%	\$6,779	⚠ Consolidate

Our Borrower Success Team reviews every application before it's submitted, ensuring accuracy and acceptance.

But we also know that many members both want and appreciate extra help as they navigate the process, and our team is here to help. We communicate with AFT borrowers through email, chat, text, phone. The stress of navigating student loan repayment can be overwhelming, and we stand on the side of borrowers. Alan, an AFT member from Illinois, thanked us for our “reassuring candor with my stream of questions.”

By the numbers

Summer maintains a
97%
with AFT members

Summer has submitted
12,814
forms (+1,600 forms outside
of the platform) on behalf of

6,058
AFT members

17,059
emails

643
chats

477
phone consultations

Borrowers love working with Summer

“

Every time I contacted the support team they were very knowledgeable, helpful, and thorough in answering my questions and helping me complete my forms. Thank you so much. It took a load off my shoulders!!

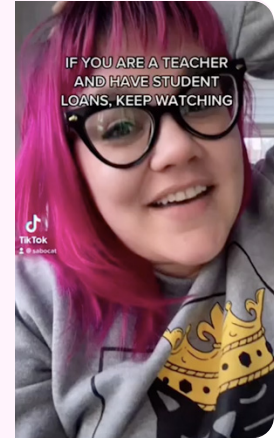
“

All the people have been so amazing, I could CRY

“

Dealing with my student loans is a major source of anxiety for me. In trying to navigate any student loan website I have devolved into full on anxiety attacks. It was such a source of anxiety that I began avoiding it all-together and I have had student loans since 2007. If it weren't for Summer, and my union paying for Summer, I would have missed out on the IDR and PSLF and probably landed in default. My plan was to just take my student debt with me to my grave. The ease of the website and the support received has truly been a life saver. I'm an intelligent individual (teacher with a masters degree, etc.) but dealing with student loans made me feel like a total idiot! Summer and the help provided helped me not feel stupid when trying to deal with this. So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you!”

Hear from Mandi, an AFT member, teacher, and TikTok star, as she explains how Summer can help fellow members save on their student loans and earn forgiveness.



“

I've had different agents who assisted me at different times and the results have always been the same. Knowledgeable, assuring, respectful, and kind in their response to the inquiries I've made! I'm very happy for the service this team provides!”

And it's not just savings!

Summer does much more for AFT members than submitting forms for PSLF and IDR. From correcting loan servicer errors, to helping with other federal loan assistance programs like default rehabilitation, to weeding out scams, Summer provides comprehensive support for AFT members. Additionally, Summer regularly communicates with AFT members to ensure they are keeping up with the latest student loan policies as they emerge. About 55% of users took action within the Summer product after receiving a message from our team.

Correcting servicer errors

Borrowers often don't know that their servicer has made an error—they just see their monthly payment shoot up or get rejected for a forgiveness program and assume that's the way it goes. With Summer to help, we can not only identify where there is an error but help get it corrected.

Before the payment pause, Miguel was paying \$528 per month in an IDR plan. When he recertified his IDR plan, the loan servicer told him to pay \$1,228. Miguel went to his union, AFT, asking for help. AFT directed him to Summer, and Summer was able to uncover that his monthly payment should be \$265. We helped him escalate the issue to his servicer and lower his monthly payment back to where it should be.

Weeding out scams

Borrowers regularly forward us emails and voicemails wondering if they're legitimately from their servicer or FSA or not. It's often hard to tell and easy to be taken in by bad actors.

Miguel

(134271) AFT borrower from Illinois

“Seeing my monthly payment double created lots of stress for my family and me. I emailed Summer and the team looked into my student loan debt situation and then found that the student loan service provider has miscalculated my repayment plan.”

Jennifer

(135341) AFT borrower from Massachusetts

“I keep getting voicemails that I prequalify for the student loan forgiveness program and need to call to set it up. According to my account on Summer I've already completed my sign up and I am a part of this program. I think these phone calls are scams, but I just wanted to check in to make sure.”

Helping with default

Even though AFT borrowers have lower default rates than the national average (6.5% compared to 15%), default is still a barrier not just to PSLF, but to financial security. With up to 20% penalties imposed each time a borrower defaults (and re-default rates are incredibly high) and significant damage to a credit score, it often stands in the way of housing access, emergency savings, and more.

Summer was able to help Danica work on her loans in default and eventually certify her employment for PSLF.

Unique borrower situations

The federal government recently allowed spousal consolidation loans to be separated. Once we finally received guidance on how public service borrowers can get credit under the Limited Waiver, our team reached out with next steps to every borrower who has indicated they have spousal loans.

Sample of Summer's communications during a recent borrower-specific policy update.

Helping with other federal programs

Summer offers comprehensive service beyond IDR & PSLF, including online tools for consolidation, default rehabilitation, Teacher Loan Forgiveness, refinancing private loans, CARES Act eligibility, and Biden Loan Forgiveness eligibility, etc. Whether a borrower needs to "set it and forget it" with their loan situation, or needs help managing it with ongoing support and consultation, Summer has versatile solutions to meet each situation.

Danica

AFT borrower from California

**“Quick, easy, and convenient!
Tremendously helpful!”**

Becca Soto Today 10:21 (assign)
Hi Tony

I hope you're doing well! I'm reaching out to follow up on your previous conversation regarding your spousal (or joint) consolidation loan.

As you may have heard, the [Joint Consolidation Separation Act](#) was recently passed! This new legislation will allow borrowers to separate their loans proportionally based on the percentage each individual contributed to the loan and opens the door to forgiveness options borrowers otherwise may not have been eligible for.

While the application to separate your loan is not available yet, Federal Student Aid (FSA), a branch of the Department of Education, has given [directions](#) for borrowers to make sure they can benefit from the [Limited PSLF Waiver](#). **To be considered under the Waiver, you must take the following steps by October 31st.**

First, you will need to certify your employment using [Federal Student Aid's PSLF Help Tool](#). Once you have a completed employment certification form instead of submitting it to MCHELA, the servicer who typically handles PSLF, you will submit it directly to FSA by [filing a reconsideration request](#). When completing the request, you should put the following in the description: "I am a borrower impacted by the [Joint Consolidation Loan Separation Act](#)." This will indicate that your process will be slightly different and that you will have additional steps to take once loan separation becomes available.

If you already have a completed employment certification form dated within the last 90 days, you can submit that through [FSA's reconsideration request tool](#).

Please let us know if you have any questions and we'll be happy to help!

Summer is on your side,
Becca
Borrower Success Team

Summer
The trusted advisor for your student debt

Melissa

(139145) AFT borrower from Maryland

“I had lung cancer and only have the middle node on the right side. The co-pay cost for my monthly medicine will not allow me to pay \$316.00 monthly in student loans, can you help me get the payments reduced.” We helped her access cancer treatment deferment in the short term and got her set up for PSLF in the long term. She said, “My experience with Summer was awesome.”

Going Above and Beyond for AFT and Members

Summer not only increases the value of membership for current AFT members, but can also serve as an incentive to grow the member base as well. When AFT members have a great experience with Summer, they refer their partners, children, grandchildren, and friends to sign up for AFT to receive the benefit. Summer has received more than 200 requests from borrowers asking how they can become an associate member.

On a organizational level, we've worked together in weekly meetings over the past three years on event attendance for both regional and national conferences, led [webinars on major policy changes](#), created materials and visuals for AFT's debt clinics, and worked with large organizations within AFT (like Rutgers) on customized borrower and employer help for PSLF certification.

While these past few years have made it challenging to meet in-person, Summer has prioritized AFT's keystone events. From the beginning of our partnership, Summer has joined AFT's Convention to meet with hundreds of AFT members who are faced with the burden of student debt. Here are just a few examples of members we've met:



[Hear from Joel](#), an AFT member and public school teacher in New York City, who shares his reaction to using Summer for the first time to track his student loans and certify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness.



[Hear from Anna](#), an AFT member, who speaks to her experience consolidating her loans and applying for forgiveness with Summer.



[Hear from Jim](#), an AFT member and public school teacher in Illinois, who shares his gratitude and excitement for Summer's help, plus hope for a student-debt-free future very soon.

Leveraging Key Relationships

Together, AFT and Summer have been able to deliver borrowers the most accurate and timely updates based on our respective relationships with key contacts at the Department of Education, Federal Student Aid, and the loan servicers. The guidance of the AFT team in the lead up to the PSLF Limited Waiver announcement was crucial to Summer's product being ahead of even FSA in making the necessary updates for borrowers to access.

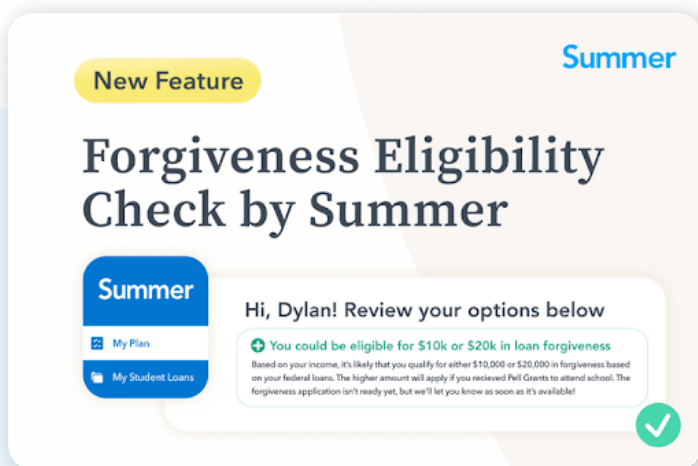
Summer's relationships have also provided unique value in a few other areas. We've been in regular contact with MOHELA during the PSLF servicer transition to ensure that borrower forms were always submitted to the proper place. Federal Student Aid's Tech Team approached Summer for help as they built online tools for the new \$10,000 loan forgiveness plan, allowing us a [head start on communicating those changes](#) and working on tools for Summer users.

Both AFT and Summer have also used these connections to advocate for borrower needs. In June 2022, our Borrower Success Team began to notice borrowers reporting that their servicer was giving them much higher IDR monthly payments than Summer (and FSA's Loan Simulator) had estimated for them. With careful documentation, we narrowed it down to a very specific situation. Using both the trend and the individual cases, we were able to raise the issue to FSA, who identified it as an error in their own system and with the loan servicers as well.

Here was part of our response from FSA:

“Thanks to your questions, we have identified some inconsistencies in the way studentaid.gov and our servicers are calculating the monthly payments for ICR. We will be working to resolve this issue promptly. [...] I think the updates to Studentaid.gov are scheduled for this summer and we will be flagging for our servicers soon. We very much appreciate your help to identify this issue affecting borrowers.”

Members benefit from having Summer's expert and sharp-eyed advocates on the look out for these all too common mistakes. And of course they benefit from being members of a union that's so committed to fighting for their rights at the policy level, in court, and in providing them tools to take control of their individual loan situations.

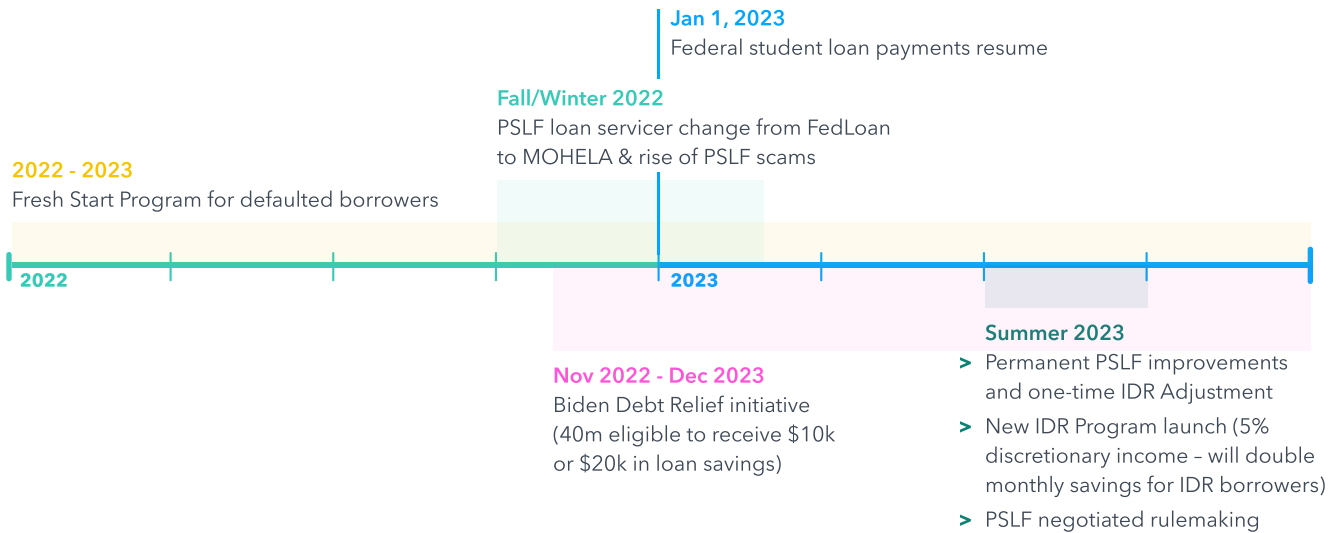


Looking Ahead

AFT and Summer in 2023

Looking Ahead

AFT and Summer in 2023



Next year looks poised to be a major period of change in the student loan landscape. Payments are resuming, programs are changing, and borrowers have more opportunities than ever to lower their monthly payments and access forgiveness. Those outcomes are more important than ever against the backdrop of inflation and economic uncertainty. It's a perfect time for AFT and Summer to work together to leverage these changes to help members access demonstrable savings.

Near Term: The PSLF Limited Waiver

What happens when the dust settles on the flurry of applications submitted for this program? It's unlikely that MOHELA will quickly and accurately process all the forms it's received over the last few months. They're overwhelmed, moving slowly, and are still new to the PSLF program.

We may see a great deal of paperwork fumbles and servicer errors ahead of us once MOHELA actually begins processing forms at scale. Phone wait times have been up to three hours and there are scam accounts impersonating servicers on Twitter to steal borrowers' personal info.

We think we'll see other cases like Zeynep, who eventually got \$69,000 in forgiveness with Summer, but only after being incorrectly denied.



[Summer] sent me an expedited email address and a response to the rejection. It worked immediately. ... I am debt free, finally! I even shared the information with a colleague in another state who was told if she pays \$1,000 per month for one year, she would receive forgiveness. Upon using the same response through the expedited line she got forgiveness and a 14K reimbursement check. A million thanks go to AFT, UNAC, and the Borrower Success Team at Summer.org!!!!

We're already seeing these mistakes start to happen.

Jordan, an AFT member in Vermont, received a rejection letter from MOHELA for a PSLF form he hadn't even submitted yet.

Melanie, another AFT member, is not alone in receiving two contradicting letters from MOHELA at the same time - one saying her form was rejected, one saying it was accepted but only for two eligible payments because they aren't yet counting under the Limited Waiver rules.

Over the next six months, we'll regularly communicate and work with borrowers to make sure that their PSLF applications have been accepted, and to correct for any mistakes and errors that may arise.

Engaging Members to Take Action

The unprecedented changes to the student loan landscape will continue in 2023, starting with student loan payments resuming for 43 million borrowers in nearly three years.

IDR Enrollment

The stakes have never been higher to ensure borrowers have a secure and affordable payment plan. Summer's IDR enrollment product is the right product at the right time and we're ready to leverage this moment for AFT members.

Even during the payment pause,

64%

of AFT members say they have trouble making payments on their student loans. With an average student loan payment of approximately \$350 per month, it will be difficult for borrowers to find room in their monthly budget.

New consumer data released by the CFPB and TransUnion reveals that 46% of student loan borrowers have [taken on more debt in other credit categories](#) relative to before the pandemic –and that their combined monthly payments will increase 44% when student loan payments resume in January.

Additionally, millions of borrowers were transferred to a new loan servicer over the course of the payment pause, and will need to create new accounts and set up new payments to avoid delinquency and default.

The IDR Adjustment and PSLF

In one of the more convoluted policy updates we've seen to date, the [Department of Education extended](#) many of the provisions of the PSLF Limited Waiver under the IDR Adjustment through July 2023.

In fact, the IDR Adjustment provisions are even more generous than those of the PSLF Limited Waiver because forbearances will have the chance to qualify for the first time.

NOTE: The information contained in this communication is based on the current PSLF program regulations. MOHELA will implement all PSLF Limited Waiver Program (LWP) regulation changes as directed by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) when detailed instructions are provided specific to your account. Individual borrower account adjustments must be provided by Federal Student Aid (FSA); we are working expeditiously to make adjustments as we receive the required information. This means changes to your loans, if affected by the waiver, may not be reflected in this correspondence. Please visit StudentAid.gov/pslflwaiver for more information including an estimated timeline for execution of the LWP.

An excerpt from a MOHELA borrower letter

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The key takeaway is that most of the waiver provisions have been extended, and borrowers still have time to enroll.

We'll work together to engage and enroll as many AFT members as we possibly can to get them on track for forgiveness. We'll be working against apathy, inaction, and confusion with all of the other changes going on, but the opportunity here is huge.

90% of all PSLF forgiveness has been granted during the Limited Waiver, and that number will likely grow over the coming months as more and more borrowers cross the 120 payment threshold under these new rules.

Biden Forgiveness

The impact of this \$10,000 or \$20,000 in forgiveness will be enormous in reducing the burden of student debt for many members. Our shared mandate is to cut through the headlines and noise to ensure that every single borrower who is eligible applies for and receives forgiveness.

For the approximately

77%

of AFT borrowers who will likely still have remaining debt, to harness the other available programs to reduce their debt burden as well

Policy Changes in 2023

A slew of other program changes have also been announced, all of which Summer will help borrowers navigate. Those include new PSLF and IDR rules, the [Default Fresh Start program](#), Borrower to Defense to Repayment—the list goes on!

Summer not only keeps borrowers up to date on the latest policy changes - we turn information into action. With an up to the minute online product and customized, targeted, and encouraging outreach, Summer is poised to help members take action to get the help they deserve.

A New and Improved IDR Plan

The newly announced IDR plan, expected in July 2023, will be hugely impactful for borrowers across the spectrum. It will halve the monthly payments of even those borrowers who are already enrolled in IDR! It also removes some of the traditional barriers to the program, like interest accrual, which we know can be very psychologically difficult for borrowers to watch. And for those pursuing PSLF, it'll make it even more achievable since fewer borrowers will pay off their loans before they can achieve forgiveness.

Many AFT members will want to enroll in this plan when it comes available—it will lower monthly payments and maximize PSLF forgiveness. Summer's IDR tool will allow folks to enroll seamlessly online with support from our team.

Sheri, an AFT member from New Jersey, is an example of what we hear from many borrowers. Sheri is faced with a combination of rent, mortgages, medical expenses, and/or dependents, and her current monthly payments under IDR are unaffordably high.


“ **The plan recommendation is changing my Extended Graduated plan to an IDR, or going from \$202/month to \$450/month. I understand that I need the IDR plan to qualify for loan forgiveness, but the bottom line is that I cannot afford \$450/month. Do I have any other options?** ”

The Extended Graduated plan doesn't qualify for PSLF, so without this new IDR plan, Sherri actually wouldn't have many options besides hoping that TEPSLF is still funded by the time she's ready for forgiveness.

With the new plan though, her IDR monthly payment could be lowered from \$450 to \$225 a month, and she'd still be on track for forgiveness.

Sheri's New Plan

- ✓ **Lowered from \$450/month to \$225/month**
- ✓ **Still on track for forgiveness**



AFT and Summer are united by a shared mission for student loan borrowers: not only to make sure every borrower gets the best outcome possible, but also to make them feel seen, heard and supported in this daunting process. With a strong and engaged partnership, the future looks brighter for student loan borrowers as we carry out that mission together.

