

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA Administrative Order <u>NAO 202-957</u>	
NOAA ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER SERIES	DATE OF ISSUANCE	EFFECTIVE DATE <b>MAR 10 2009</b>
SUBJECT <b>NOAA STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM</b>		
<p><u>SECTION 1. PURPOSE.</u></p> <p>.01 This Order establishes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) policy for the student loan repayment program (SLRP). The attached Handbook to this Order provides guidance and procedures to be followed for student loan repayment program requests. This Order supplements and is to be used in conjunction with Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-957, Department of Commerce Repayment of Student Loan Policy.</p> <p>.02 This Order is a revision of the previously issued NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 202-957. The revision updates information on the student loan repayment program.</p> <p><u>SECTION 2. SCOPE.</u></p> <p>The SLRP incentive may be offered to fill a position or to retain an employee. Student loans may be repaid for employees in full or part-time positions including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. permanent employees, except employees occupying a position which is excepted from the competitive service because of its confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy advocating character (e.g., employees serving under Schedule C appointments);</li> <li>b. temporary employees serving on appointments leading to conversion to permanent or term appointments;</li> <li>c. term employees with at least 3 years remaining on their appointment; or</li> <li>d. employees serving on an excepted appointment who are eligible for non-competitive conversion to a career, career-conditional, or term appointment (including, but not limited to, participants in the Federal Career Intern or Presidential Management Fellows Programs).</li> </ol> <p><u>SECTION 3. POLICY.</u></p> <p>.01 The Department of Commerce (DOC) authorizes NOAA to repay all or part of student loans in order to recruit workers from outside the federal sector or to retain highly qualified employees. The SLRP is a discretionary tool available to managers and is intended to aid in recruiting and retaining a high quality, diverse workforce.</p>		

.02 A total amount up to \$60,000 before taxes may be repaid on behalf of any eligible employee. The payment cannot exceed \$10,000 before taxes in a calendar year. Payments are made directly to the educational or lending institution on an annual basis. Reimbursements are not authorized for loan payments made prior to entering into a SLRP Service Agreement with NOAA.

.03 Authority has been delegated to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere by DOC to make the determination to repay a student loan as a recruitment or retention incentive. This authority is redelegated to the Director, Workforce Management Office. These officials also have the authority to require employees to reimburse the agency for loan payments made on their behalf when an employee receiving SLRP benefits becomes ineligible for continued benefits as outlined below:

- a. separates voluntarily or involuntarily from DOC;
- b. does not maintain a performance rating equivalent to the "Fully Successful" level;
- c. defaults on repayment of the student loan (i.e., outstanding balances that remain the employee's financial responsibility); or
- d. violates any of the conditions of the service agreement.

#### SECTION 4. RESPONSIBILITIES.

.01 Each potential or current employee must give NOAA authorization to verify his/her student loan information with the lending institution(s).

.02 Supervisors are responsible for submitting written requests for approval to use the SLRP through the Line/Staff Office to the servicing Workforce Management Office (WFMO) for initial approval or disapproval.

.03 Line/Staff Offices are responsible for monitoring payments that have been approved under the SLRP as outlined in the Handbook to this Order and taking appropriate action to either continue or discontinue payment.

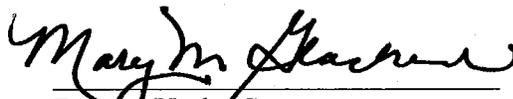
.04 The servicing WFMO is responsible for providing advice and guidance to managers on the SLRP, forwarding requests for approval/disapproval to the Director, WFMO, ensuring all required documentation is completed, and upon approval, processing personnel actions under the SLRP.

#### SECTION 5. REFERENCES.

- Title 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) §5379
- Title 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §537
- Department Administrative Order 202-957, Department of Commerce Repayment of Student Loan Policy

SECTION 6. EFFECT ON OTHER ISSUANCES.

This Order supersedes NAO 202-957, NOAA Student Loan Repayment Program, Issued February 9, 2005; Effective January 28, 2005.

  
Deputy Under Secretary  
for Oceans and Atmosphere

Office of Primary Interest:  
Workforce Management Office