

## 4.1.7.5 Federal Student Loan Appeal Process

### Policy Information

#### Issuing Office

Financial Aid

#### Affected Parties

Students

#### Policy Language

Students who dispute how a federal student loan was processed or a decision regarding eligibility may contact the Federal Student Aid (FSA) Ombudsman.

#### Policy Rationale

This policy is in place with the U.S. Department of Education to ensure the proper disbursement and handling of federal student loans.

#### Definition of Glossary Terms

**Ombudsman:** Mediating investigative official

**Title IV:** The portion of the Higher Education Act (see HEA) that includes most of the federal financial aid programs.

**Loan:** Financial aid which must be repaid. Loans may have a variety of repayment methods.

### Procedural Information

#### Procedures

The FSA Ombudsman resolves disputes from a neutral, independent viewpoint. The Federal Student Aid (FSA) Ombudsman will informally conduct impartial fact-finding about student complaints. The Ombudsman will recommend solutions, but does not have the authority to reverse decisions. The Ombudsman will also work to bring about changes that will help prevent future problems for other student loan borrowers. This free service is provided by the U. S. Department of Education.

The Ombudsman will research the problem and determine whether the student has been treated fairly. If the student loan complaint is justified, the Ombudsman will work with the student and the office, agency, or company involved in the problem. On the student's behalf, the Ombudsman will contact other offices within the U.S. Department of Education, his or her private lender, his or her loan *guaranty agency*, and the *servicing agency* or firm collecting the loan.

If the student's complaint is not justified, the Ombudsman will take the time to explain how the U.S. Department of Education reached this conclusion. The Ombudsman may be contacted as follows:

FSA Ombudsman Group  
P.O. Box 1843  
Monticello, KY 42633  
Phone: (877) 557-2575  
Fax: (606) 396-4821

Direct link: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/disputes/prepare>.

You can also complete the secure and confidential *Ombudsman Assistance Request Form*. (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/disputes/prepare/contact-ombudsman> ?)

Remember, the Ombudsman Group can help resolve disputes about federal student loans. If you have a dispute about your private student loan, contact the *Consumer Financial Protection Bureau* (<https://www.consumerfinance.gov/complaint/>).

## Sanctions

If the student loan complaint is justified, the Ombudsman will work with the student and the office, agency, or company involved in the problem. On the student's behalf, the Ombudsman will contact other offices within the U.S. Department of Education, his or her private lender, his or her loan *guaranty agency*, and the *servicing agency* or firm collecting the loan.

## Exceptions

None