

1830–0027). These tests and their test forms are approved for a period of three years from the publication date of this notice. A three-year approval is issued with a set of conditions that must be met by the completion of the three-year time period. If these conditions are met, the test would be approved for continued use in the NRS.

This notice also updates the delivery formats available for two tests with a three-year approval announced in the July 2023 annual notice and approved for use until July 13, 2026.

Under the transition rules in § 462.4, the Secretary also announces in this notice a test with NRS approval expiring on September 7, 2024, which States and local eligible providers may continue to use during a sunset period ending on June 30, 2025.

Adult education programs must use only the forms and computer-based delivery formats for the tests approved in this notice. If a particular test form or computer delivery format is not explicitly specified for a test in this notice, it is not approved to measure educational gain in the NRS.

#### **Tests Determined To Be Suitable for Use in the NRS for a Three-Year Period From the Publication Date of This Notice**

The Secretary has determined that the following test is suitable for use in Literacy/English Language Arts and Mathematics at all ABE levels of the NRS for a period of three years from the publication date of this notice:

*Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE 13/14)*. Forms 13 and 14 are approved for use on paper and through a computer-based delivery format. Publisher: Data Recognition Corporation—CTB, 13490 Bass Lake Road, Maple Grove, MN 55311. Telephone: 800–538–9547. Internet: [www.tabetest.com](http://www.tabetest.com).

The Secretary has determined that the following tests are suitable for use at all ESL levels of the NRS for a period of three years from the publication date of this notice:

*Tests of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System-English (TABE/CLAS-E)*. Forms C and D are approved for use on paper and through a computer-based delivery format. Publisher: Data Recognition Corporation—CTB, 13490 Bass Lake Road, Maple Grove, MN 55311. Telephone: (800) 538–9547. Internet: [www.tabetest.com](http://www.tabetest.com).

#### **Tests Determined To Be Suitable for Use in the NRS for a Three-Year Period From the Publication Date of the Original Notice in Which They Were Announced**

The Secretary has determined that the following test is suitable for use in Mathematics at all ABE levels of the NRS until July 13, 2026:

*ACT WorkKeys Applied Math*. Forms 014, 015, 016, and 017 are approved for use through a computer-based delivery format. Publisher: ACT, 500 ACT Drive, Iowa City, Iowa 52243–0168. Telephone: (319) 337–1270. Internet: [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

The Secretary has determined that the following test is suitable for use in Literacy/English Language Arts at ABE levels 2 through 6 of the NRS until July 13, 2026:

*ACT WorkKeys Workplace Documents*. Forms 018, 019, 020, and 021 are approved for use through a computer-based delivery format. Publisher: ACT, 500 ACT Drive, Iowa City, Iowa 52243–0168. Telephone: (319) 337–1270. Internet: [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

#### **Test With NRS Approval Expiring on September 7, 2024, That May Be Used in the NRS During a Sunset Period Ending on June 30, 2025**

The Secretary has determined that the following test is suitable for use in Literacy/English Language Arts and Mathematics at all ABE levels of the NRS during a sunset period ending on June 30, 2025:

*Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE 11/12)*. Forms 11 and 12 are approved for use on paper and through a computer-based delivery format. Publisher: Data Recognition Corporation—CTB, 13490 Bass Lake Road, Maple Grove, MN 55311. Telephone: 800–538–9547. Internet: [www.tabetest.com](http://www.tabetest.com).

#### **Revocation of Tests**

Under certain circumstances—*i.e.*, a determination by the Secretary either that the information the publisher submitted as a basis for the Secretary's review of the test was inaccurate or that a test has been substantially revised—the Secretary may revoke the determination that a test is suitable after following the procedures in § 462.12(e). If the Secretary revokes the determination of suitability, the Secretary announces the revocation, as well as the date by which States and local eligible providers must stop using the revoked test, through a notice published in the **Federal Register** and posted on the internet at [www.nrsweb.org](http://www.nrsweb.org).

*Accessible Format*: On request to the program contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, compact disc, or other accessible format.

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You may also access Department documents published in the **Federal Register** by using the article search feature at [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov). Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

*Program Authority*: 29 U.S.C. 3292.

**Amy Loyd**,

*Assistant Secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education*.

[FR Doc. 2024–13426 Filed 6–18–24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4000–01–P**

## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

[Docket ID ED–2024–OPE–0072]

### **Request for Information on Identifying and Tracking Data Related to Early Childhood Education Providers**

**AGENCY**: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.  
**ACTION**: Request for information.

**SUMMARY**: This notice is a request for information in the form of written comments that include information, research, and suggestions regarding operational aspects of the possible inclusion of for-profit early childhood education providers as eligible employers for the purpose of Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

**DATES**: We must receive your comments by July 22, 2024.

**ADDRESSES**: Comments must be submitted via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov). However, if you require an accommodation or cannot otherwise submit your comments via [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov), please

contact the program contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. The Department will not accept comments by email or by fax. To ensure that the Department does not receive duplicate copies, please submit your comments only once. Additionally, please include the Docket ID at the top of your comments.

*Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) to submit your comments electronically. Information on using *Regulations.gov*, including instructions for accessing agency documents, submitting comments, and viewing the docket, is available on the site under the “FAQ” tab.

*Privacy Note:* The Department’s policy for comments received from members of the public is to make these submissions available for public viewing in their entirety on the Federal eRulemaking Portal at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Therefore, commenters should be careful to include in their comments only information that they wish to make publicly available. We encourage, but do not require, that each respondent include their name, title, institution or affiliation, and the name, title, mailing and email addresses, and telephone number of a contact person for the institution or affiliation, if any.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Greg Marak. Telephone: (202) 401–6250. You may also email your questions to [greg.marak@ed.gov](mailto:greg.marak@ed.gov), but as described above, comments must be submitted via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov).

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and wish to access telecommunications relay services, please dial 7–1–1.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Background:*

Congress created the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program in 2007 as part of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, Public Law 110–84, to encourage individuals to enter into and remain employed in public service professions. The program alleviates financial burdens associated with Federal Direct Loans for borrowers working for certain public service providers by forgiving all remaining loan balances following 10 years of public service while the borrower makes qualifying student loan payments. Since its creation in 2007, PSLF has been available to borrowers working for government at all levels, non-profit organizations that are tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and other non-profits that provide at least one of the specific services listed

in the statute. This includes early care educators who work in the public sector or for non-profit organizations.

A significant share of early care educators, however, are not considered public sector or non-profit employees and current regulations do not provide a pathway for their eligibility for PSLF. Data from the National Survey of Early Care and Education, conducted by the Department of Health and Human Service’s Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, estimates that extending PSLF eligibility to early childhood education (ECE) workers regardless of the tax status of their employer would allow more than 450,000 additional ECE workers to earn credit toward PSLF—about 68,000 who work in home-based settings and 390,000 who work in center-based settings—if they have student loans.<sup>1</sup> This reflects roughly one-third of the overall ECE workforce.

On July 13, 2022, the Department published a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) in the **Federal Register** (87 FR 41878).<sup>2</sup> In the NPRM, the Department proposed improvements to PSLF that reduce regulatory and administrative barriers that have historically made it more difficult for borrowers to make progress toward forgiveness under PSLF. This included simplifying criteria to help borrowers certify employment, helping borrowers earn progress toward PSLF for months that did not count before, and providing borrowers with more opportunities to correct problems with PSLF.

Additionally, in the NPRM, the Department asked directed questions about the possibility of allowing ECE providers who are private for-profit businesses to be considered eligible employers for the purposes of PSLF. In response, the Department received many detailed comments about early childhood education as well as a range of comments in support of making other for-profit employers eligible to serve as qualifying employers for PSLF for individuals in certain occupations.

On November 1, 2022, the Secretary published final regulations<sup>3</sup> in the

<sup>1</sup> These estimates are from the Administration for Children and Families’ National Survey of Early Care and Education, both the 2019 Home-Based NSECE chartbook and the 2019 Center-Based NSECE chartbook. These data show that approximately three-fourths of home-based providers had at least some college, and 72 percent of for-profit ECE workers had some college or higher.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/07/13/2022-14631/student-assistance-general-provisions-federal-perkins-loan-program-federal-family-education-loan>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/11/01/2022-23447/institutional-eligibility-under-the-higher-education-act-of-1965-as-amended-student-assistance>.

**Federal Register**. Those final regulations did not include regulations regarding whether, and under what circumstances, private for-profit ECE providers employing borrowers working as early childhood educators, should be treated as qualifying employers for PSLF.<sup>4</sup>

*Solicitation of Comments:*

Early care educators are among the lowest-paid workers in the country; and the Administration has committed through Executive Order 14095, to better supporting the care workforce.<sup>5</sup> The E.O. states that investments in the care workforce are foundational to helping to retain care workers and improving health and educational outcomes for those in their care. The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to gather information about ECE providers. This RFI and the comments received in response to this RFI will not be considered as part the Affordability and Student Loans proposed rule (87 FR 41878) and any subsequent related final rules. The comments received in response to this RFI will not be used as part of the rulemaking related to the treatment of for-profit employers, including ECE providers, and eligibility for PSLF. Instead, the feedback from this RFI will help inform the Department’s understanding of different approaches that might be considered when implementing non-rulemaking solutions related to this issue.

Given the operational and implementation hurdles associated with PSLF, the Department is interested in understanding whether there are ways that eligibility could be streamlined if all ECEs became eligible. The Department is soliciting information and data from the public on how the Department could determine employer eligibility and related considerations if for-profit ECE employers were to be considered eligible employers if they provided one of the services listed in the statute. The Department encourages

<sup>4</sup> Section 103(8) of the Higher Education Act contains a definition of “early childhood education program” that includes public preschool, Head Start, and State licensed and regulated child care programs. It does not speak to the tax-status of providers. Unlike the public Kindergarten through 12th grade system, which provides free access to education for all age-eligible children and youth, there is no parallel system for our country’s youngest children. As a result, ECE is delivered through a system of mixed delivery that includes public programs, non-profit settings, and for-profit settings. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/policy-guidance/dear-colleague-letter-mixed-delivery>. The vast majority of ECE settings are home-based, and do not carry non-profit tax designations. Compensation across settings is low generally, regardless of the tax-status of the ECE provider. [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_va.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_va.htm).

<sup>5</sup> **Federal Register**: Increasing Access to High-Quality Care and Supporting Caregivers.

comments from researchers, academics, policy experts, and other individuals familiar with ECE employer data; organizations that work directly with ECE workers; State and Tribal government officials who oversee and administer ECE programs; ECE practitioners; and other members of the public. The Department will review all comments received, but does not intend to respond to comments.

The Department seeks feedback on the following questions:

(1) The Department has always relied upon employer identification numbers (EINs) to identify whether an employer is a non-profit under IRC 501(c)(3). This approach has allowed the Department to create a comprehensive list of eligible employers and use a consistent identifier system. However, some for-profit businesses may be sole proprietors or other providers that do not have an EIN. Are there other uniform sources that the Department might consider using for determinations of qualifying employers?

(2) If there are not other uniform sources, how should the Department address eligibility determinations of a for-profit ECE employer?

(3) If in consultation with the Department, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), issued a voluntary Public Records Act request from the States to create a nationwide registry of EINs of ECE providers, are State and Tribal agencies that oversee and administer ECE programs in a position to collect this information? Do commenters believe that all States would provide this information? Are there any additional considerations the Department should be aware of should HHS issue this request?

(4) What feedback can be provided concerning the time it would take a State or Tribe to undertake the collection of EINs for licensed and regulated providers, including the process, privacy, administrative, or other considerations that the Department should take into account?

(5) Should the Department consider a process that relies on unique identifiers associated with licensure as opposed to EINs to identify eligible employers?

This is a request for information only. This RFI is not a request for proposals and does not commit the Department to take any future administrative, contractual, regulatory, or other action. The Department will not pay for any information or costs that you may incur in responding to this RFI. Any documents and information submitted in response to this RFI become the property of the U.S. Government and will not be returned.

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You may also access documents of the Department published in the **Federal Register** by using the article search feature at [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov). Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

**Nasser Paydar,**

*Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education.*

[FR Doc. 2024-13446 Filed 6-18-24; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

[Docket Number: DOE-HQ-2024-0018]

### Notice of Request for Information Related to the Department of Energy's Environmental Justice Strategic Plan

**AGENCY:** Office of Energy Justice and Equity, Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Request for information (RFI).

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the Executive order (E.O.), *Revitalizing our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All*, the Department of the Energy (DOE) is drafting its Environmental Justice Strategic Plan and soliciting feedback on its draft environmental justice goals (included in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section).

**DATES:** Interested persons are invited to provide oral feedback on DOE's draft environmental justice goals DOE should evaluate to advance the draft environmental justice vision, goals, and objectives during one of three public virtual listening sessions. For the latest information on the dates and

registration, please go to: <https://www.energy.gov/justice/calendar-events>.

**Tentative Dates: Tuesday, July 9, 2024 3-5 p.m. ET.**

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 11-1 p.m. ET.

Thursday, July 11, 2024 5-7 p.m. ET.

Comments are being collected both orally and written. Written comments are requested on or before July 31, 2024, and must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. eastern time (ET) on July 31, 2024. Written submissions received after that date may not be considered. DOE will not reply individually to responders but will consider all comments submitted by the deadline.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

**Oral submission:** Participate in one of the scheduled virtual listening sessions where you have an opportunity to share your comments. Sessions will be recorded but engagement tools like Mentimeter and Slido will also be used to collect feedback. Register at <https://www.energy.gov/justice/calendar-events> to attend a listening session.

Listening sessions will be 90 minutes and they will be recorded. The sessions will start with an overview and then interested persons will have the opportunity to provide feedback using a variety of engagement tools.

If you require a reasonable accommodation to attend a listening session, please email [energyjustice@hq.doe.gov](mailto:energyjustice@hq.doe.gov) at least ten days prior to the session you are interested in attending.

**Electronic submission:** Submit electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal.

1. Go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and enter DOE-2024-0018 in the search field,

2. Click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and

3. Enter or attach your comments.

**Email:** Electronic submissions may also be sent as an attachment to [energyjustice@hq.doe.gov](mailto:energyjustice@hq.doe.gov) with "DOE EJ Strategic Plan RFI" in the subject line in any of the following unlocked formats: HTML; ASCII; Word; RTF; Unicode, or PDF.

**Mail:** Written comments may also be submitted by mail to: Department of Energy, Office of Energy Justice and Equity, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585.

Response to this RFI is voluntary. Submissions must not exceed ten (10) pages (when printed) in 12-point or larger font, with a page number provided on each page. Please include your name, organization's name (if any),