Introduction

This document provides you with information about the correspondence Great Lakes sends to borrowers at certain milestones during the time their student loan is serviced by Great Lakes. Not only can you use it to gain a better understanding of the correspondence Great Lakes sends to borrowers, but you can also use it to better answer borrower questions and guide them through the correspondence they receive as they transition from being enrolled in school to repaying their student loans.

Note: This document does not include all correspondence that borrowers receive, and all correspondence described in this document does not apply to all borrowers; instead, this document includes the correspondence that Great Lakes most commonly sends to borrowers.

Note: Samples included in this document are accurate as of 04/15/2016; some content may have changed.

When Great Lakes Communicates with Borrowers

Great Lakes is committed to reaching out to our borrowers at all stages of the student loan lifecycle to ensure that they can successfully repay their student loans.

The following table provides the total number of pieces of correspondence sent during specified milestones, including those we’re required to send and additional correspondence we send beyond that.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correspondence Milestone</th>
<th>Required Contacts</th>
<th>Additional Contacts</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In School</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications include early engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>to ensure borrowers understand who their servicer is and regular information related to their student loans.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Unique borrower situations require additional correspondence not noted here.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repayment Transition (Grace)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications ensure borrowers know it’s going to be time to start paying soon.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Correspondence Milestones Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correspondence Milestone</th>
<th>Required Contacts</th>
<th>Additional Contacts</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repayment</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications are focused on the borrower's situation in an effort to ensure they successfully repay their loans.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Unique borrower situations (e.g., the income-driven repayment application process, postponing payments, or Direct Loan consolidation) require additional correspondence not noted here.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servicemember Benefits</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications are focused on Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) benefits, such as general information, how to apply for benefits, and benefit status.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Due</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications are focused on reaching borrowers and working through their repayment options.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How Great Lakes Communicates with Borrowers

Great Lakes sends correspondence to borrowers whose loans we service in either electronic or paper format. While some correspondence is always sent in paper format, Great Lakes encourages borrowers to sign up to receive electronic correspondence in order to provide a higher level of service to borrowers and to be more environmentally friendly.

Electronic Correspondence

On the Great Lakes website ([https://mygreatlakes.org](https://mygreatlakes.org)), borrowers can manage all aspects of their student loans in one convenient location, taking actions such as viewing account and loan details and making payments. Borrowers can take full advantage of the functionality of the Great Lakes website by signing up to receive electronic correspondence. Borrowers can also receive electronic correspondence on the Great Lakes website via Message Center.

Email

In general, borrowers receive email correspondence if they’ve provided an email address. For certain types of correspondence, borrowers must sign up (i.e., provide additional consent) to receive it via email. One common email correspondence example is the monthly billing statement email, which borrowers receive when their monthly billing statements are available.

When borrowers open the email, they’re notified their monthly billing statement is available. The email also contains a link that borrowers can click to access their monthly billing statement on the Great Lakes website.
Not only is this a convenient, fast, and free way for borrowers to receive information, but it also benefits the environment by reducing the amount of paper used.
**Message Center**

Message Center provides a central location for borrowers to easily and securely receive correspondence from Great Lakes. It’s available to all borrowers when they log into their Great Lakes website account. Borrowers can receive Message Center messages, for example, after they submit a deferment request. When borrowers access Message Center, unread messages display in bold formatting, similar to how they would display in an email inbox.

![Figure 2. Example of Message Center with an unread message](image)

Borrowers can then click the message subject to open and read the message.

![Figure 3. Example of a Message Center message acknowledging receipt of a deferment request](image)
Paper Correspondence

Borrowers may receive paper correspondence (i.e., letters and forms) if they have not signed up to receive electronic correspondence, if they have not provided an email address, or if an electronic version is not available for a specific type of correspondence. All paper correspondence is sent in envelopes that contain a distinctive logo and text so that borrowers can recognize the correspondence is from Great Lakes and contains information about their federal student loans.

The following samples depict the front and back of the envelope in which Great Lakes sends correspondence when they begin servicing borrowers’ Direct Loans. While Great Lakes may send different versions of this envelope based on the correspondence type, the envelope always features the Great Lakes logo.

Figure 4. Example of the front of the envelope used to send correspondence to borrowers

Figure 5. Example of the back of the envelope used to send correspondence to borrowers
Correspondence Milestones

This section provides information about the correspondence borrowers receive at major milestones. This section does not include all correspondence that borrowers receive; instead, it includes information about the written correspondence Great Lakes sends to borrowers who have federally-held loans (i.e., Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) Loans sold to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and Direct Loans) serviced by Great Lakes.

The following figure illustrates the major milestones during which borrowers receive correspondence.

FiguRE 6. Correspondence milestones timeline

In School

Borrowers receive the following correspondence often when they are still in school. The milestone associated with this correspondence is a new loan on the Great Lakes servicing system and the beginning of Great Lakes’ servicing of that loan.

In 2010, Great Lakes began servicing Direct Loans under the Federal Direct Loan Program on behalf of ED as part of a servicing contract. Direct Loans are assigned to Great Lakes by ED once the first disbursement is made. After Great Lakes is assigned as the loan servicer, loan information is then sent to Great Lakes. (This information is usually available within 48 hours of assignment.) Once loans are available on the servicing system, correspondence is automatically generated and sent to borrowers.
New Loan Correspondence

When borrowers are new to Great Lakes (i.e., they have their first loan(s) on the servicing system), new loan correspondence is automatically generated and sent. This correspondence introduces Great Lakes as borrowers’ student loan servicer. In addition, it provides reassurance that Great Lakes will keep borrowers up-to-date with information about their loans, and encourages them to visit the Great Lakes website (https://mygreatlakes.org) and to sign up for a website account.

The following is an example of a new loan letter, which is sent to borrowers in this situation. Borrowers may receive different versions of the correspondence based on their loan type.

Figure 7. Example of a new loan letter
New Loan Follow-Up Correspondence

Approximately 30 days after borrowers receive new loan correspondence, they receive follow-up correspondence, reminding them their new student loans are serviced by Great Lakes and reaffirming that Great Lakes is here to help them succeed. In addition, it provides information about and resources for successfully managing student loans and encourages borrowers to visit the Great Lakes website and to sign up for a website account.

The following is an example of a new loan follow-up email, which is sent to borrowers in this situation. Borrowers may receive different versions of the correspondence based on their loan type. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

![Example of a new loan follow-up email](https://example.com/example_email.png)

Figure 8. Example of a new loan follow-up email
Additional Loan Correspondence

When borrowers already have an initial loan on the servicing system, they receive additional loan correspondence when more loans are added. Once loans are available on the servicing system, correspondence is automatically generated and sent to borrowers. The correspondence informs borrowers that their new student loan will be serviced by Great Lakes and reaffirms that Great Lakes is here to help them succeed. In addition, it provides information about and resources for successfully managing student loans, and encourages borrowers to visit the Great Lakes website and to sign up for a website account.

The following is an example of an additional loan email, which is sent to borrowers in this situation. Borrowers may receive different versions of the correspondence based on their loan type. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

![Example of an additional loan email](image)

Figure 9. Example of an additional loan email
Repayment Transition

Borrowers receive the following correspondence during the time period in which their enrollment in school has ended, but before their first payment is due. The milestones associated with this correspondence are the beginning and end of the grace period.

Less than Half-Time Enrollment Correspondence

When the information Great Lakes has on system indicates that borrowers are no longer enrolled as at least half-time students, borrowers receive correspondence indicating the date this enrollment change occurred. The correspondence introduces Great Lakes and explains important items that borrowers should be aware of, including information about when they'll have to make payments and a reminder to update their enrollment and contact information. In addition, this correspondence gives borrowers an idea of what they can expect next.

The following is an example of the less than half-time enrollment email, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. Borrowers may receive different versions of the correspondence based on whether they have requested a deferment, forbearance, or leave of absence, and depending on their loan type. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

![Example of a less than half-time enrollment notification email](image)
**Estimate Your Payment Correspondence**

When borrowers are approximately halfway through their grace period, they receive correspondence notifying them of this and encouraging them to start thinking about their upcoming monthly payments. The correspondence explains important items that borrowers should be aware of, including information about when they'll have to make payments and a reminder to update their enrollment and contact information. In addition, this correspondence helps borrowers to understand payments, explaining why making payments is important, how to estimate their monthly payment amount and explore other repayment plans, and how to plan ahead if they encounter trouble.

The following is an example of the Estimate Your Payment email, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. This correspondence is generated in email format.

![Image](image-url)

**Figure 11. Example of the Estimate Your Payment email**
Get Ready for Repayment Correspondence

When borrowers are close to the end of their grace period, they receive correspondence notifying them of the date on which their grace period expires and explaining that they can choose a repayment plan that best suits their circumstances. It also explains what borrowers can expect next, such as a payment schedule or confirmation that their payments have been postponed.

The following is an example of the Get Ready for Repayment email, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

Re: Stafford Loan Account with U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Hi John,

It’s time to decide how you want to pay back your student loans. You determine whether you begin making full payments or pursue an income-based plan that could possibly lower your payments to $0. Since your first loan payment will be due soon after 3/4/2014, let’s find out which option will work best for you.

Select Your Best Option

1. **Estimate your monthly payment amount.** Log into mygreatlakes.org and select Repayment Plans from the Quick Links for level and graduated plan estimates. Or view available income-based options.

2. **Make a choice.** Unless you select a different option before 3/4/2014, we’ll set you up with a level repayment plan. It consists of monthly payments that stay the same over a maximum of 10 years. If you know that won’t work, choose a better option now.

3. **Unable to pay?** If you’re unable to start repaying your loans, take action now! Don’t wait. Select Pause or Lower Payments to explore postponing your payments with deferment or forbearance.

On-time payments build good credit, which can be a factor when looking for a job, securing housing, or buying a car. Selecting the right student loan repayment option will put you on a successful path.

Next Up

Soon, we’ll send you additional information based on the option you chose, like a payment schedule or confirmation that your payments are postponed. We’ll also check in with you once more before your first payment is due, to be sure you’re all set.

Sincerely,

Great Lakes Borrower Services
Your Great Lakes ID: 99-9999999

Explore Career Options

Great lakes is helping you go to school, but what happens after you graduate? We’re working with 1st Gg to help you start building a great career with an employer that’s right for you.

Get started today.

How to Contact Us For Help

Visit mygreatlakes.org,

(800) 236-4360 or (608) 246-1700
TTY: 711
You can self-serve 24/7.

Please do not reply to this email – the reply address is not monitored. | Modify your email preference. Some cells may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance purposes.

The information contained in this communication may be confidential, is intended only for use of the recipient(s) named above, and may be legally privileged. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication, or any of its contents, is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete the original message and all copies of it from your computer system. If you have any questions concerning this message, please contact the sender. Some cells may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance purposes.

Figure 12. Example of the Get Ready for Repayment email
**Exiting Grace Correspondence**

When borrowers reach the end of their grace period, they receive correspondence notifying them they will have a payment due soon and recapping important items they should be aware of. It includes a list of actions borrowers can take to smoothly transition into repayment (e.g., sign up for a Great Lakes website account, enroll in Auto Pay, etc.). In addition, it explains that borrowers can select a repayment plan that best suits their circumstances and stresses the importance of building good credit through on-time payments.

The following is an example of the Exiting Grace email, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. This correspondence is generated in email format.

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Figure 13. Example of the Exiting Grace email

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Payment Schedule Correspondence

Before their first payment is due, borrowers receive correspondence informing them about their payment schedule, which explains and outlines their repayment terms. It contains information about repayment options and encourages borrowers to think about their financial situation and their ability to make payments.

The following is an example of the Payment Schedule Available email, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. This email links to the borrower’s payment schedule on their Great Lakes website account. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

Note: When this correspondence is generated in letter format, borrowers receive a cover letter with an attached payment schedule. Borrowers can access their current payment schedule online at any time after they have signed up for a Great Lakes website account.

Figure 14. Example of the Payment Schedule Available email
The following is an example of the Payment Schedules page, which can be accessed from the Payment Schedule Available email (Figure 14).

Figure 15. Example of the Payment Schedules page, as seen from a borrower’s Great Lakes website account
Repayment

Borrowers receive the following correspondence after they begin their repayment period. The milestones associated with this correspondence are the beginning of repayment through to the account being paid in full.

**Monthly Billing Statement Correspondence**

If borrowers have not provided a valid email address, they receive a paper monthly billing statement letter; however, if borrowers have provided a valid email address, they receive an electronic monthly billing statement via email. Monthly billing statement correspondence indicates the borrower’s monthly billing statement is available. Refer to the [Electronic Correspondence](#) section in this document for additional information and samples.

When viewing their monthly billing statement via their Great Lakes website account, borrowers can also click a link to view a printable version of their monthly billing statement, which includes account and payment information, as well as contact information for Great Lakes.
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Correspondence Milestones Overview

10/08/2014 Billing Statement

Lender: LENDING AGENCY A (BBBSE)
Lender: LENDING AGENCY B (BBBSE)

CURRENT AC 8006080814 PAYMENT RECEIVED NUMBER: 00000000000000

Payments received in the last 30 days $632.65
Scheduled Monthly Payment $569.95
Amount Due Ahead $401.30
Please see the “Accounts in this Statement” section for Past Due information.

Total Amount Due $196.41

BALANCE OVERVIEW

Original Loan Amount (Disbursed) $223,142.00
Total Amount Paid $145,221.37
Adjusted Payment Balance (Principal and Interest) $37,910.63
Total Amount Due $196.41

Accounts in this Statement

Lender: LENDING AGENCY A (BBBSE)

Payment Reference Number 00000000000000
Original Loan Amount (Disbursed) $223,142.00
Current Balance $170,878.33
Subordinated Principal Balance $2,472.93
Unsubordinated Principal Balance $1,930.75
Accrued Interest $1,901.28
Estimated Monthly Payment $1,910.41
Total Amount Due $196.41

Lender: LENDING AGENCY B (BBBSE)

Payment Reference Number 00000000000000
Original Loan Amount (Disbursed) $223,142.00
Current Balance $170,878.33
Subordinated Principal Balance $2,472.93
Unsubordinated Principal Balance $1,930.75
Accrued Interest $1,901.28
Estimated Monthly Payment $1,910.41
Total Amount Due $196.41

Important Disclosure Information

"Making difficult payment decisions"

A different repayment plan may help. The availability of other plans depends on several factors, including your loan type, when you borrow the money, and the amount of time left in repayment. Such plans could reduce your monthly payments, extend the loan or extend repayment period, or a repayment amount that touches on your income.

Learn more about your options. visit https://studentaid.ed.gov/ and click on the Student Option or call 1-800-109-877

Student Loan Ombudsman

"Request alternate formats"

Alternate formats of your bill are available on the website.

"Pay by check"

You may provide a check or payment. You authorize us to pay the following information from your checking account or to order a check for payment. Your authorized balance is not the balance on your account as the same at the same time at your account balance and you are required to check from your financial institution.

"Follow up your credit report"

We may report information about your account to credit bureaus. Late payments, missed payments, or other defaults on your account may be reflected in your credit report.

"Get in touch with us"

- Log on to our website at studentaid.ed.gov.
- Call us with questions at 1-800-109-877.
- Write to us at: Lenders, F.O. Box 7003, Madison, Wi 53707-7003.

"How your payments are applied"

Your payments are applied to your student loans based on the number of factors. In most cases, payments are applied first to any accrued interest and then to your principal balance. Check out https://studentaid.ed.gov/ for more information.

Figure 16. Example of the printable version of a borrower’s monthly billing statement
Servicemember Benefits Correspondence

Borrowers who are serving or have served in the military receive correspondence twice a year to notify them of the servicemember benefits that may be available to them, along with how they can contact Great Lakes for additional information.

The following is an example of the Servicemember Benefits email, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. Borrowers may receive other versions of the correspondence based on their account status. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

Figure 17. Example of the Servicemember Benefits email
1098-E Student Loan Interest Statement Correspondence

While in repayment, borrowers receive correspondence annually indicating the amount of interest they paid on their accounts the previous year. With the correspondence, borrowers receive their Student Loan Interest Statement form (1098-E), which can be used for tax-filing purposes.

The following is an example of the Interest Statement letter, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. Borrowers may receive other versions of the correspondence based on their loan type. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

![Image of the Interest Statement letter]

Figure 18. Example of the Interest Statement letter
Account Statement Correspondence

If borrowers request an account statement, Great Lakes generates the borrower obligation statement correspondence on demand to send to them. It provides account information and encourages borrowers to visit the Great Lakes website (https://mygreatlakes.org) for more information. This correspondence is generated in letter format.

![Example of the borrower obligation statement cover letter](image1)

![Example of the borrower obligation statement](image2)
**Difficulty Making Payments Correspondence**

If borrowers are having difficulty making payments, they receive correspondence informing them of the options they may have to postpone or lower their payments. It encourages borrowers to visit the Great Lakes website or contact Great Lakes for more information. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

![Example of the Difficulty Making Payments email](image_url)

**Figure 21. Example of the Difficulty Making Payments email**
**Approved for Income-Driven Repayment Correspondence**

If borrowers have applied for an income-driven repayment plan and their request has been approved, they receive correspondence informing them of this and about their payment schedule, which explains and outlines their repayment terms.

The following is an example of the income-driven repayment Payment Schedule Available email, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. This email contains information about the borrower’s income-driven repayment plan and links to their payment schedule on their Great Lakes website account. Borrowers may receive other versions of the correspondence based on the amount of their accruing interest. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

**Note:** When this correspondence is generated in letter format, borrowers receive a cover letter with an attached payment schedule. Borrowers can access their current payment schedule online at any time after they have signed up for a Great Lakes website account.

![Example of the income-driven repayment Payment Schedule Available email](image-url)

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**Figure 22. Example of the income-driven repayment Payment Schedule Available email**
Deferment Approval Correspondence

If borrowers have applied for a deferment and their request has been approved, they receive the Deferment Acceptance correspondence informing them of this. It provides information on the dates of the deferment period, as well as information about making payments during deferment. Borrowers may receive other versions of the correspondence based on their loan type. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

Figure 23. Example of the Deferment Acceptance letter
Forbearance Approval Correspondence

If borrowers have applied for forbearance and their request has been approved, they receive correspondence informing them of this. It provides information on the dates of the forbearance period, as well as information about making payments during forbearance.

The following is an example of the Forbearance Approval letter, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. Borrowers may receive different versions of the correspondence based on their ability to make payments. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

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**Figure 24. Example of the Forbearance Approval letter**

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**Past Due Notice Correspondence**

When borrowers are past due on their account, they receive correspondence informing them of this and the options they may have if they’re struggling to make payments. It also provides borrowers with information on making payments and encourages them to contact Great Lakes if they have questions about their account or their repayment options.

The following is an example of a past due notice email, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. Borrowers may receive different versions of the correspondence based on the amount of time their loan is past due. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

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**Image: Example of a past due notice email**

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**Figure 25. Example of a past due notice email**
Paid in Full Notification Correspondence

When borrowers have paid their account in full, they receive correspondence informing them of this.

The following is an example of the Paid in Full Notification letter, which may be sent to borrowers in this situation. Borrowers may receive other versions of the correspondence based on whether or not loans are paid in full due to consolidation. This correspondence is generated in email or letter format.

Figure 26. Example of the Paid in Full Notification letter