



EdFed

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How to Fight for Forbearance

If you receive forbearance on your student loans, you must pay the interest charges on the loans, unlike with deferments. If you don't pay that interest before the end of the forbearance term, it gets capitalized and added to your loan repayment amount.

Forbearance is usually granted for up to one year at a time. While forbearance for a qualifying situation can last as long as three years, forbearance can technically be granted over and over without federal limitation on the cumulative amount of forbearance periods. Some qualifying circumstances include poor health and excessive loan debt (i.e., student loans in excess of 20 percent of your monthly income). You also can get forbearance based on military mobilization or a national emergency that might affect you as a borrower. So if you get called up to do battle as an enlistee for the government, if you are actively serving in the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marines, then by all means, you are in fact eligible to get forbearance or a deferment.

Beyond the situations described above, at some point in your life you may simply experience a really bad cash crunch due to a host of extenuating circumstances. If you expect your financial woes to last for several months or more, it's worthwhile to just call up your lenders, tell them about your dilemma, and request forbearance. It's far better to plan ahead and postpone your obligation to repay your student loans than to be late on your college debt payments or possibly even fall into default. As with deferments, forbearance options abound. Each case is different, so it's ultimately up to you to demonstrate credibly to your lender that you're having financial difficulty and are in need of forbearance. In most cases, when you're having a legitimate economic issue in your life, a simple phone call to your lender where you succinctly and earnestly explain your situation is sufficient to get that much-needed forbearance.