



# U.S. Department of Education \* Office of Inspector General

## Let's Work Together to Stop Student Aid Fraud

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) disburses billions of dollars each year to State and local educational agencies, schools, colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education. It also disburses financial aid to millions of students, making ED one of the largest financial institutions in the country. But each year, criminals intentionally abuse Federal student aid programs, embezzle student aid meant for learners, unlawfully access ED computer systems and databases for nefarious purposes, and even use Federal student aid to support terrorism. As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, billions of more dollars are flowing into States and territories to assist institutions of higher education in meeting their needs and the needs of their students impacted by the pandemic. Criminals and bad actors are taking advantage of this crisis, preying on students, schools, and other educational entities charged with administering and overseeing these funds. We want to stop them.

### OIG Investigation Services

As the independent arm of ED, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) works to ensure that Federal education funds are used as required and reach the intended recipients. This includes investigating misuse, theft, fraud, and other civil and criminal activity involving ED programs and funds. Coordinating this work is the Office's Investigation Services—our team of law enforcement professionals with decades of experience in conducting education-related investigations and stopping education-focused fraud schemes. But we can't do this alone. We need and rely on your help! As someone on the front line in administering Federal student aid, you are our on-the-ground eyes and ears! By reporting your suspicions of fraud to the OIG, you will be meeting statutory and regulatory requirements, while helping to protect and ensure the integrity of the Federal student aid programs.



### Federal Student Aid Highlights

- \$115 billion+ in student aid
- \$1.5 trillion+ student loan portfolio
- 10.8 million+ student borrowers
- 5,600+ participating postsecondary schools
- \$76.2 billion in coronavirus Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds

### What Does Federal Student Aid Fraud Look Like?

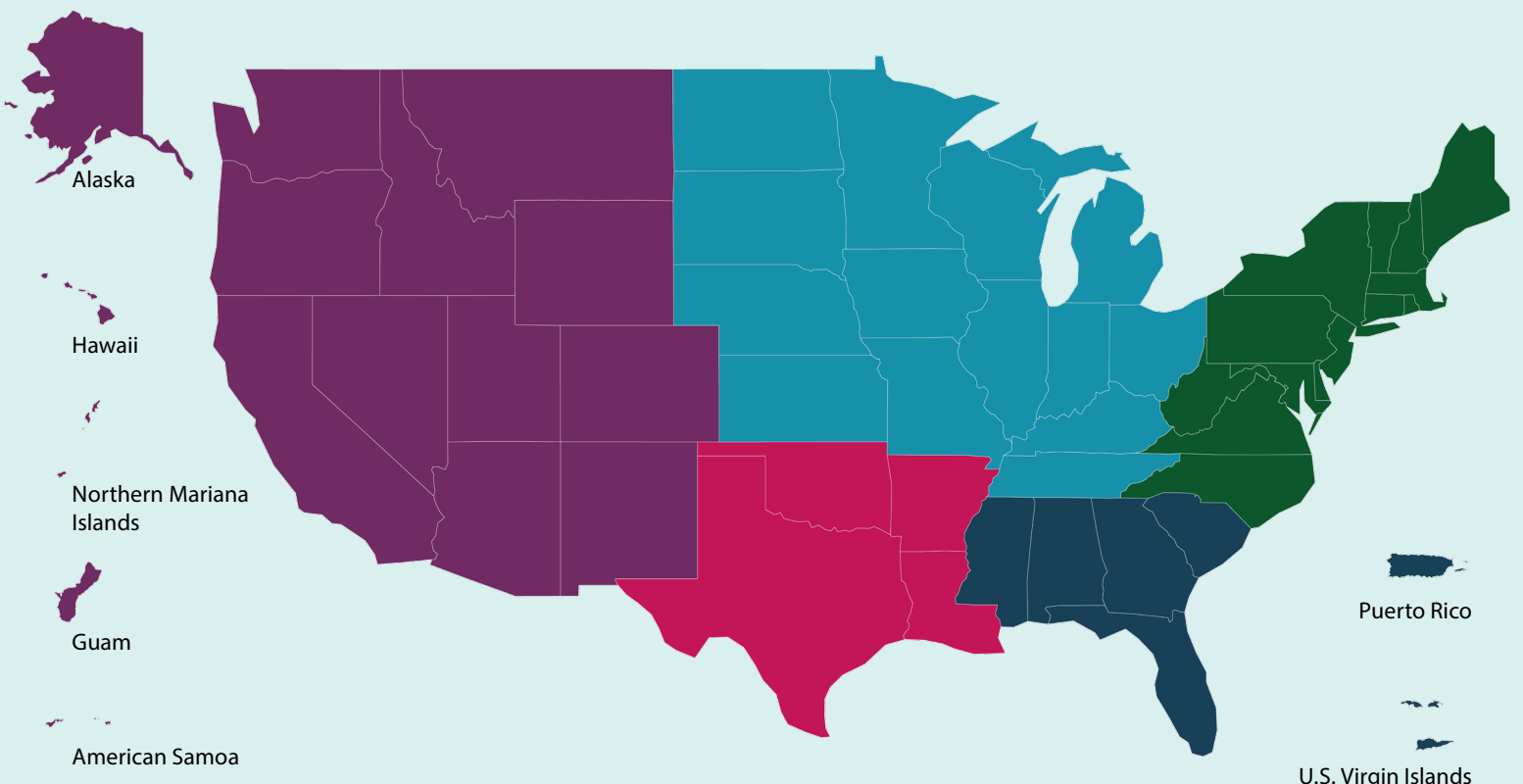
Here are some examples.

- Nonexistent or ineligible students
- Commonalities between students having the same bank account numbers or email addresses
- Students withdrawing from school after receiving aid or frequently changing schools
- Failure to disburse Federal student aid refunds
- Lost or destroyed student records

### Free Resources to Help You Identify and Report Student Aid Fraud

We have a number of free resources available to help you identify and report fraud to the OIG so together we can stop it!

- **Virtual Trainings.** Get an overview of student aid fraud and how to spot it and report it. In fact, we have a training specifically geared toward student aid administrators on our website right now!
- **One-on-One Meetings.** Meet with us to discuss any specific concerns you may have about student aid fraud.
- **Fraud Indicator Materials.** Download brochures and posters with helpful tips on identifying and reporting suspicions of student aid fraud or other criminal activity involving Federal education funds.



### Investigation Services Regional Offices

Headquarters: Washington, DC (202) 245-8467

Western Regional Office (562) 980-4141

Southwestern Regional Office (214) 661-9530

Eastern Regional Office (202) 245-6918

Special Investigations Unit (215) 656-8693

Southeastern Regional Office (404) 974-9430

Midwestern Regional Office (312) 730-1630

See [our website](#) for field office addresses and other info

### Contact OIG Investigation Services

Call us to find out more about these free resources and the vital role you play in identifying and stopping student aid fraud. You can reach us via our Washington, D.C., headquarters or the regional investigative office closest to you.

You can also report suspicions or allegations of fraud that you have received directly to our toll-free hotline 1-800-MIS-USED (1-800-647-8733) and online portal. For more information on the OIG, visit our website and connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.