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With 50 Days until Deadline, PSLF.nyc Coalition Launches “Student Debt Free, ASAP” Campaign to Promote Federal Loan Forgiveness for Teachers, Nurses, and Other Government/Nonprofit Workers

To date, over 5,000 New Yorkers received average of \$64,000 in relief, significantly more than amounts offered by new Biden Administration student debt plan

“[Week of Action](#)” to feature free webinars for thousands of City workers and series of in-person and virtual events at the Brooklyn, New York and Queens Public Libraries

October 31, 2022 is deadline to take advantage of federal waiver that makes hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers eligible for public service loan forgiveness

NEW YORK, NY, Sept. 13, 2022 / — With a looming October 31st deadline for as many as 250,000 eligible New Yorkers in public service to apply for potentially life-changing federal student loan forgiveness, PSLF.nyc’s “Student Debt Free, ASAP” Campaign launched a [Week of Action](#) in collaboration with the City of New York, CUNY, the Brooklyn, New York and Queens Public Libraries and the New York State Unified Court System.

The [Week of Action](#), which comes with 50 days until the deadline imposed by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), is intended to raise awareness among employees of government agencies and nonprofits, including those who may have previously been denied public sector student loan forgiveness, to now take advantage of the temporary “PSLF waiver” introduced by DOE last year that eliminated many of the program’s prior restrictions.

As part of the effort, New York City Mayor Eric Adams recently [released a video](#) encouraging all public service workers with student loans to apply for the waiver even if they had been previously rejected. Anyone with federal student loans who has worked in a government or nonprofit job since 2007, when the original but flawed program was introduced, is eligible — even if they never completed a degree. And for those that do not yet have 10 total years of service that is the threshold for loan forgiveness, they can get the appropriate adjusted credit for the payments they have made to-date, shortening their path to debt relief.

“The new federal government plan to address student debt would be great – but the reality is that we’ve got a much bigger opportunity right now for public service workers that can yield much, much more than \$10-20K in debt relief. And we’ve got only 50 days for people to act,” said **Rich Leimsider, founder of the PSLF.nyc Campaign** and former executive director of the Safe Passage Project, and who himself benefited from forgiveness of his remaining student debt because of the waiver.

“As someone who’s worked in the nonprofit and government sector my entire career, I know the commitment it takes — and I’ve also known firsthand the heavy burden of student debt,” said

New York City Deputy Mayor Sheena Wright. “I recently completed my own application for the PSLF waiver, and along with Mayor Adams, I encourage all government and nonprofit professionals who have student debt to do so ASAP while they have the chance. Take advantage of the public resources available to get the debt relief you deserve.”

“The federal government’s Public Sector Loan Forgiveness program was badly broken for over a decade — resulting in hundreds of thousands of workers who’ve dedicated their careers to public service not receiving the debt relief they had been promised,” said **Richard Buery, Jr., CEO of Robin Hood.** “Now, the the PSLF program has finally been fixed and is a seminal opportunity for New York City families — especially those of color who have long borne a greater share of the student debt burden. Robin Hood is proud to support this critical campaign to encourage all who may be eligible to apply for the waiver, and we exhort our partners and government and elected officials to do everything they can to spread the word.”

“The elimination of student loan debt for these workers equals money in families’ pockets,” said **Anthony Wells, President of SSEU Local 371 of DC 37.** “In most cases, that’s hundreds of dollars a month back into the wallets of working families that can now go to other critical expenses like groceries, childcare, transportation and rent. Part of what is so essential about the PSLF program is that it will encourage more people to work in public service at a time when it’s imperative that we attract the next generation of talent.”

PLSF.nyc’s “Student Debt Free, ASAP” Campaign is a nonprofit effort in partnership with Robin Hood, Nonprofit New York, SSEU (DC 37), the Human Services Council and others designed to help the 250,000 New Yorkers access the estimated \$10 billion available to them via the federal waiver that expires on October 31, 2022. PSLF.nyc will be hosting a number of free webinars on the waiver this week, including on Thursday, September 15, when tens of thousands of City employees are being encouraged by their respective agencies to tune in. Additionally, a series of in-person and virtual public events are being hosted by the Brooklyn, New York and Queens Public Libraries that will offer coaching and online counseling for those who need further assistance. Additional information and resources about the Week of Action are available [here](#).

Members of the public [can register](#) for a free PSLF webinar being hosted via Zoom on Wednesday, September 14th at 12 PM by campaign founder Rich Leimsider.

Over 5,000 New Yorkers who are teachers, nurses and other government/nonprofit workers have already received an average of nearly \$64,000 in federal student debt relief as part of this waiver — and some have received amounts well over six figures – but that number pales in comparison to the estimated 250,000 New Yorkers who are eligible, adding urgency to the imperative to ensure they are educated about the program and the opportunity. The Campaign has also embarked on a digital advertising campaign that will target populations on social media to encourage them to go to [StudentAid.gov/PSLF](#) to apply for loan forgiveness, a process which takes less than 30 minutes, or to attend one of the free webinars at PSLF.nyc for more information.

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CONTACT: Ben Branham, Pythia Public | 718-719-5893 | ben@pythiapublic.com