

Accreditation Group, State Liaison Team Roles, Duties, and Responsibilities

To help strengthen the postsecondary institutional accountability triad among the (1) Department of Education (Department), (2) States, and (3) Accrediting Agencies, the Accreditation Group (AG) has reinstated its former State Liaison roles. The former State Liaison Unit within AG was responsible for coordinating liaison activities with Federal Student Aid (FSA), state higher education organizations, and accrediting agencies on issues related to state licensure, authorization, school closure, and accreditation as part of the oversight of postsecondary institutions participating in Title IV HEA Programs. The State Liaison Unit facilitated partnerships with these organizations to strengthen communication and cooperation in order to provide the Department with valuable insight into higher education issues at the state, national, and federal levels. In coordination with FSA, the State Liaison Unit provided technical guidance to these organizations on regulations, policies, and procedures that support the Department's Title IV gate-keeping responsibilities to protect students and federal dollars, as well as ensure quality education.

The State Liaison team within the Accreditation Group will be composed of five currently assigned Accreditation Group analysts and will have the following responsibilities:

- Provide technical guidance to state officials on the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended (HEA) and Department regulations in 34 CFR §§ 602 and 603;
- Participate in meetings and conferences designed to promote and advance dialogue with state higher educational organizations regarding state and federal statutory and regulatory requirements governing authorization, licensure, and accreditation of Title IV institutions;
- Respond to routine correspondence, and phone inquiries from state officials, and coordinate with the appropriate staff analyst or Department office;
- Identify higher education issues that needed to be brought to the attention of the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education and initiating public forums for discussion and dialogue among members of the higher education community;
- Create and maintain a directory which would list each state's key higher education staff (including SHEEOS), and state licensure officers along with their contact information;
- Work closely with state officials and accrediting agencies on school closures regarding the following:
 - Adequacy of teach-out plans and teach-out agreements;
 - Confer with state officials and accrediting agencies regarding the status of institutions included in teach-out plans and agreements;
 - As a courtesy, obtain information from state officials regarding student records and where student records are stored for the closed institution.

State Assignments

Karmon Simms-Coates (Karmon.Simms-Coates@ed.gov): Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia

Mike Stein (Michael.Stein@ed.gov): Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts

Stephanie McKissic (Stephanie.Mckissic@ed.gov): Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico

Reha Mallory (Reha.Mallory@ed.gov): New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota

LG Corder (LG.Corder@ed.gov): Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, District of Columbia

U.S Territories

Karmon Simms-Coates (Karmon.Simms-Coates@ed.gov): U.S Virgin Islands, Republic of Marshall Islands.

Mike Stein (Michael.Stein@ed.gov): American Samoa, Guam

Stephanie McKissic (Stephanie.Mckissic@ed.gov): Puerto Rico

Reha Mallory (Reha.Mallory@ed.gov): Northern Mariana Islands

LG Corder (LG.Corder@ed.gov): Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau