



FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

Consumer Information

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Fake promises offer no sigh of (debt) relief

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An offer of reduced monthly payments — or complete forgiveness — on your student loan may make you want to sign up...and exhale. Unfortunately, though, some of those programs wind up costing you hundreds or thousands of dollars for nothing in return. What's more, you could've gotten real help for free.

Impetus Enterprise, Inc. and related defendants made such promises, according to a recent [complaint filed by the FTC \(https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2018/11/ftc-halts-deceptive-student-debt-relief-scheme-bilked-consumers\)](https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2018/11/ftc-halts-deceptive-student-debt-relief-scheme-bilked-consumers). The FTC says the defendants, doing business as Aidnest, Aiding Student Relief, and other names, deceived student loan borrowers by offering to get them reduced payments or even forgiveness on their loans. According to the complaint, the companies widely marketed things like complete loan forgiveness in under 10 years, which most borrowers are actually not eligible to get.

The FTC says people often paid around \$500 to get student loan debt “relief,” based on what turned out to be empty promises. In addition, the FTC says that the companies charged those fees up front, which is illegal to do before actually helping people with debt relief. The FTC asked the court to put a halt to these activities and is trying to get money back to people.

You can get free assistance from the US Department of Education to do things like:

- [Lower your monthly payments \(https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/understand/plans/income-driven#_blank\)](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/understand/plans/income-driven#_blank)
- [Consolidate federal student loans \(https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/consolidation#_blank\)](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/consolidation#_blank)
- [Check on loan forgiveness \(https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation#_blank\)](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation#_blank), and
- [Get out of default \(https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/default/get-out#_blank\)](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/default/get-out#_blank)

Also, be sure to learn more about student loans (<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/1028-student-loans>), including relief programs and how to spot scams.

Blog Topics: Money & Credit (<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/money-%26-credit>)