



Frequently Asked Questions

Mental Health Loan Repayment Program

Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply you must certify you hold the amount of debt equal to or exceeding the award, be willing to sign a contract for a one-year service obligation to an underserved area of West Virginia, you must be a graduate of an accredited program, having obtained a degree from an institution of higher education and you must be currently licensed in one of the following:

- Licensed doctoral clinical psychologist (PsyD)
- Master's level licensed psychologist (Psy M)
- Licensed independent clinical social worker (LICSW)
- Licensed certified social worker (LCSW)
- Licensed professional counselor (LPC)
- Licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT)

Other mental health disciplines which are experiencing a shortage of practitioners will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Senior Director of Health Sciences.

What is the application deadline?

The deadline for the 2020-2021 application is January 4, 2021. All application materials must be postmarked by January 4, 2021 or received via fax by this date.

What is the amount of the award?

The maximum amount of each award this year will be \$10,000, The total award must go towards qualified educational debt in return for a service obligation of one year in an underserved area in West Virginia. The award can be renewed up to three times for additional service obligations in underserved areas in West Virginia if you have additional qualified educational debt and are rewarded.

What is an eligible site?

If you need assistance on looking up your site to see if it qualifies click [here](#). Please note that even if your county is not a Health Professional Shortage Area county, please double check with the search function. An example would be Monongalia Co. We have two eligible sites even though the county itself is not a HPSA county. Additional resources can be found on our [website](#) or by emailing BehavioralHealth@wvhepc.edu.

How do I apply?

Complete an application found [here](#) and two professional reference forms found [here](#). If selected for an award, you will be required to provide proof of licensure and your educational degree. Please mail your application to: Attn: Michelle Ruppert, MHLRP 1018 Kanawha Boulevard East, Charleston, WV 25301, or fax to 304-712-9343.

Are LGSW professionals eligible to apply for MHLRP?

Unfortunately, at this time those with the license level of LGSW are not eligible. If you would like to join a contact list for updates and announcements about the Mental Health Loan Repayment Program, please send an email to BehavioralHealth@wvhepc.edu.

Are school counselors eligible to apply?

If you are a school counselor who holds a LPC or LMFT license and the majority of your time is spent providing therapy to groups or individuals in an approved underserved area, you would be eligible to apply. Due to the requirement that the majority of your practice be therapy, we do not anticipate many school counselors will meet the eligibility requirements.

Are psychiatrists eligible to apply?

At this time psychiatry professionals are not included in this program's eligible mental health professions. If you would like to join a contact list for updates and announcements about the Mental Health Loan Repayment Program, please send an email to BehavioralHealth@wvhepc.edu.

What if my license is expired or I am still under supervision?

Unfortunately, you will need to be licensed to qualify for this program. The population we are trying to reach and retain within Mental and Behavioral Health are those who are currently licensed in their field and providing therapy directly to the underserved populations in eligible sites at this time.

Will this award be taxed as income?

The award will not count as income. Please direct any other questions about awards to a tax professional for advisement.

Do private practice professionals qualify?

Yes, private practice can qualify as long as they are within a Health Professional Shortage Area and accept Medicaid.

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Do Counselors who work in corrections qualify?

Yes, correctional counselors would be eligible as long as they are providing therapy/counseling services for the majority of their time. It can be both individual and/or group sessions. The population must meet eligibility requirements as underserved.

Can students apply for this award?

No. You must have already graduated and be licensed and practicing in one of the approved disciplines. This program is designed for professionals who have graduated vs a traditional scholarship program which would pay a portion of tuition or make payment to the school for tuition.