

Utah Healthcare Workforce Financial Assistance Program

Loan repayment incentives for primary care providers to work in underserved areas

Eligible Professions

Provider Type:

- Physicians
- Dentists
- Physician Assistants
- Nurses (APRN, RN, BSN, LPN)
- Mental Health Professionals
- Geriatric Professionals

Allowed Award Amount:

- \$50,000
- \$50,000
- \$30,000
- \$4,000 to \$30,000*
- \$30,000
- Depends on specialty

*Award amount dependent on specific nursing licensure

Program Eligibility

Eligible Sites

Must serve an underserved population, and be located in a federally-designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA).

Eligible Providers

Work at an eligible site, and do not have another student loan repayment obligation for the duration of the two year contract.

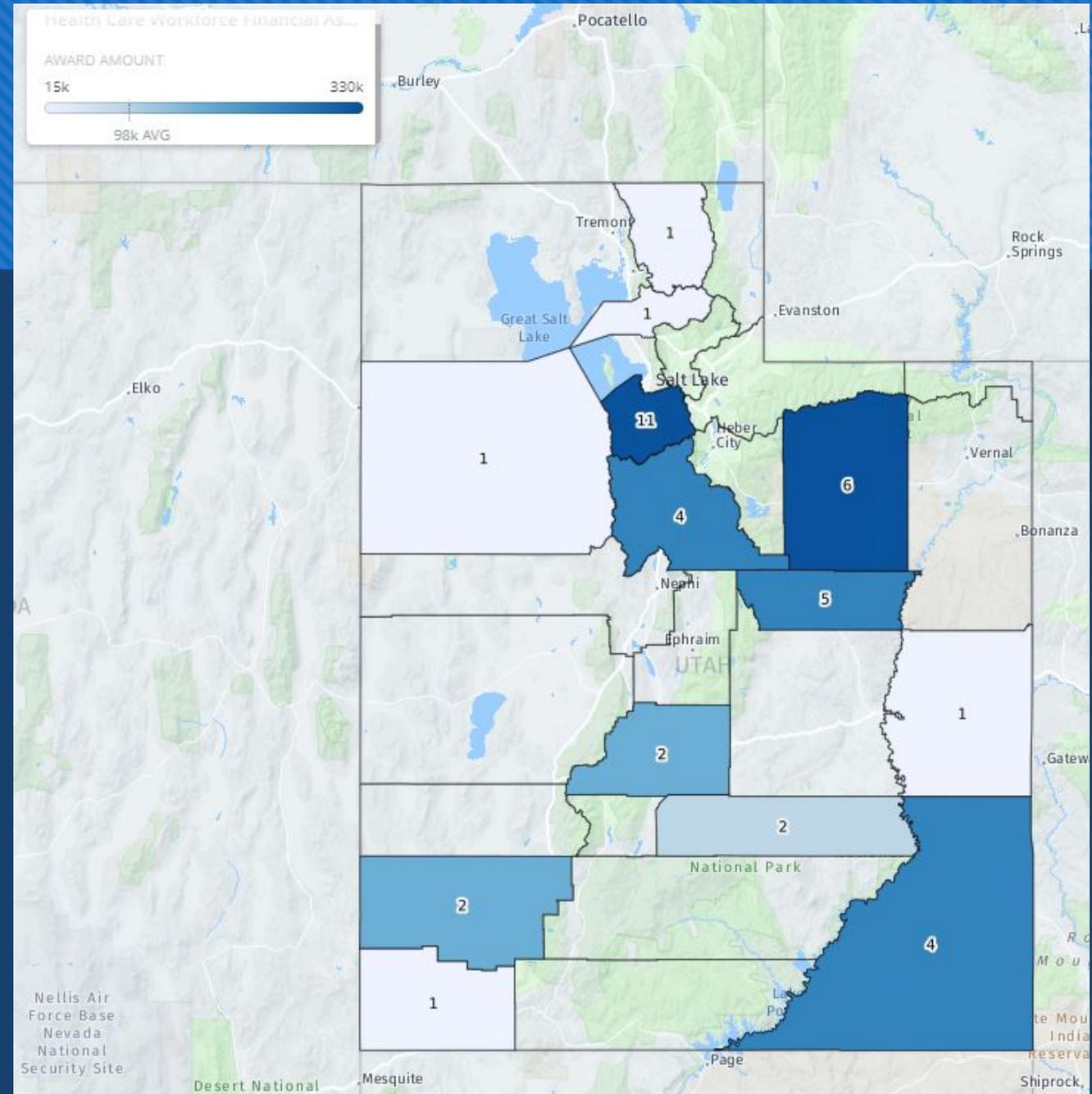
Applicants cannot have worked at their site for more than 18 months before applying to the program.

Provider must stay for 2 Years

Reneging on the 2-year commitment requires payback of the award.

Recent Awardees by County

| County | No. of Providers |
|--------------|------------------|
| Cache | 1 |
| Grand | 1 |
| Tooele | 1 |
| Washington | 1 |
| Weber | 1 |
| Iron | 2 |
| Sevier | 2 |
| Wayne | 2 |
| San Juan | 4 |
| Utah | 4 |
| Carbon | 5 |
| Duchesne | 6 |
| Salt Lake | 11 |
| TOTAL | 41 |



Other data on recent awardees

Since 2016, 41 providers have received awards through the program. **54%** of awards have been made to **rural recipients**.

These awardees have included 10 physicians, 17 physician assistants, 9 APRNs, 1 RN, 1 geriatric pharmacist, 1 LCSW, and 1 dentist.

In FY 2019, the program could only fund 12 out of 21 (57%) applications received. (The state appropriated no money for FY 2020.)

The program leverages state dollars



- When the state puts money into the program
 - Federal matching Money is available on a 1:1 match. So the total amount available to the state is twice as large as what we put in.
- It would be possible to leverage additional Federal dollars by requiring the sites who are applying for the money to put in some of the money as well.



Qualifying for a federal match long-term

- It is very important that Utah demonstrate it is committed to **ongoing** funding of the Healthcare Workforce Financial Assistance Program in order to qualify for the federal match from HRSA beyond FY 2022.

If clinics can recruit, they can retain

- A 2018 survey by UDOH's Office of Primary Care and Rural Health asked program awardees about their intention to stay at their current site, in the same community, or in a rural/underserved area.
 - **75%** of participants planned to stay at their current site for at least two years **after** completing their service obligation.
 - **88%** planned to stay in their communities for at least five years after completing their obligation.
 - **75%** planned to stay in rural or underserved areas for at least ten years after completing their obligation.

A Utah success story!

*“Coming out of medical school I had a strong desire to work in community health, but realized the potential earning limitations. The Workforce Financial Assistance Program made starting out at Midtown more feasible, and **16 years later and I am still practicing medicine here.** In my opinion this program helps increase the probability of medical providers opting to work in underserved areas.”*

- Kurt Rifleman, MD, Midtown Community Health Center



Recent history of program funding

- The program has functioned using one time funding that has been appropriated several years in a row.
- Last year the Social Services again recommended providing funding, but in the abrupt changes on the last few days of the session, the funding was cut entirely.
- Because the funding is given in 2 year cycles – the program still exists this year and is paying out money awarded 2 years ago

Where the program stands today

- After this year, the program will cease to exist if it doesn't receive an appropriation
- Some kind of ongoing state funding commitment will be needed to secure federal matching funding

What the bill does

- Requires sites that are applying for a state grant to put up 20% of the amount of the award from their own funds.
- Recommends an ongoing appropriation of \$300,000 to keep the program alive and functioning