

Effective 5/1/2024

26B-4-702 Creation of Utah Health Care Workforce Financial Assistance Program -- Duties of department.

- (1) As used in this section:
 - (a) "Eligible professional" means a geriatric professional or a health care professional who is eligible to participate in the program.
 - (b) "Geriatric professional" means a person who:
 - (i) is a licensed:
 - (A) health care professional;
 - (B) social worker;
 - (C) occupational therapist;
 - (D) pharmacist;
 - (E) physical therapist; or
 - (F) psychologist; and
 - (ii) is determined by the department to have adequate advanced training in geriatrics to prepare the person to provide specialized geriatric care within the scope of the person's profession.
 - (c) "Health care professional" means:
 - (i) a licensed:
 - (A) physician;
 - (B) physician assistant;
 - (C) nurse;
 - (D) dentist; or
 - (E) mental health therapist; or
 - (ii) another licensed health care professional designated by the department by rule.
 - (d) "Program" means the Utah Health Care Workforce Financial Assistance Program created in this section.
 - (e) "Underserved area" means an area designated by the department as underserved by health care professionals, based upon the results of a needs assessment developed by the department.
- (2) There is created within the department the Utah Health Care Workforce Financial Assistance Program to provide, within funding appropriated by the Legislature for the following purposes:
 - (a) professional education scholarships and loan repayment assistance to health care professionals who locate or continue to practice in underserved areas; and
 - (b) loan repayment assistance to geriatric professionals who locate or continue to practice in underserved areas.
- (3) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the department shall make rules governing the administration of the program, including rules that address:
 - (a) application procedures;
 - (b) eligibility criteria;
 - (c) selection criteria;
 - (d) service conditions, which at a minimum shall include professional service in an underserved area for a minimum period of time by any person receiving a scholarship or loan repayment assistance;
 - (e) penalties for failure to comply with service conditions or other terms of a scholarship or loan repayment contract;
 - (f) criteria for modifying or waiving service conditions or penalties in case of extreme hardship or other good cause; and

- (g) administration of contracts entered into before the effective date of this act, between the department and scholarship or loan repayment recipients, as authorized by law.
- (4) The department may provide education loan repayment assistance to an eligible professional if the eligible professional:
 - (a) agrees to practice in an underserved area for the duration of the eligible professional's participation in the program; and
 - (b) submits a written commitment from the health care facility employing the eligible professional that the health care facility will provide education loan repayment assistance to the eligible professional in an amount equal to 20% of the total award amount provided to the eligible professional.
- (5) Funding for the program:
 - (a) shall be a line item within the appropriations act;
 - (b) shall be nonlapsing unless designated otherwise by the Legislature; and
 - (c) may be used to cover administrative costs of the program.
- (6) Refunds for loan repayment assistance, penalties for breach of contract, and other payments to the program are dedicated credits to the program.

Amended by Chapter 250, 2024 General Session

Amended by Chapter 506, 2024 General Session