

CHAPTER 26
HEALTH CARE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

283—26.1(261) Health care loan repayment program. The health care loan repayment program is a state-supported and state-administered program established to repay the qualified student loans of nurse educators teaching at eligible Iowa colleges and universities, as well as applicants who agree to practice as registered nurses, advanced registered nurse practitioners, or physician assistants in service commitment areas for five consecutive years, and who meet the requirements of these rules.

[ARC 4186C, IAB 12/19/18, effective 1/23/19]

283—26.2(261) Definitions. As used in this chapter:

“Advanced registered nurse practitioner” means an individual who graduated from an accredited graduate or postgraduate advanced practice educational program, is licensed by the board of nursing as a registered nurse, is licensed by the board of nursing as an advanced registered nurse practitioner, and is employed as an advanced registered nurse practitioner in an eligible service commitment area.

“Nurse educator” means a registered nurse who holds a master’s or doctorate degree and is employed by an Iowa community college, an accredited private institution defined in Iowa Code section 261.9, or an institution of higher learning governed by the state board of regents as a faculty member who teaches nursing as provided in 655—Chapter 2 at a nursing program approved by the board of nursing pursuant to Iowa Code section 152.5.

“Physician assistant” means an individual who graduated with a master’s degree, holds a practitioner’s license to practice as a physician assistant pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 148C, and is employed as a physician assistant in an eligible service commitment area.

“Qualified student loan” means a loan that was made, insured, or guaranteed under Title IV of the federal Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, or under Title VII or VIII of the federal Public Health Service Act, as amended, directly to the borrower for attendance at an approved postsecondary institution. Only the outstanding portion of a federal consolidation loan that was used to repay a qualified student loan qualifies for loan repayment.

“Registered nurse” means a nurse who is licensed by the board of nursing as a registered nurse and is employed as a registered nurse in an eligible service commitment area.

“Service commitment area” means a city in Iowa with a population of less than 26,000 that is located more than 20 miles from a city with a population of 50,000 or more.

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283—26.3(261) Eligibility requirements.

26.3(1) An eligible applicant must be an advanced registered nurse practitioner, nurse educator, physician assistant, or registered nurse.

26.3(2) An eligible applicant must annually complete and file an application for the program by the deadline established by the commission. If funds remain available after the application deadline, the commission will continue to accept applications.

26.3(3) An eligible applicant must annually complete and return to the commission an affidavit of practice verifying full-time employment, as defined by the employer, in a service commitment area during the entire year as an advanced registered nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or registered nurse, or full-time employment, as defined by the employer, as a nurse educator.

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283—26.4(261) Awarding of funds.

26.4(1) Selection criteria. All completed applications received on or before the published deadline will be considered for funding. To the extent possible, an equal number of new advanced registered nurse practitioners, nurse educators, physician assistants, and registered nurses will be offered awards based on the availability of appropriated funds. In the event that funding is insufficient to award all eligible applicants within an occupation category, criteria for selection of eligible applicants within each occupation category will be prioritized as follows:

a. Renewal status. Recipients of awards through the registered nurse and nurse educator loan forgiveness program during the 2018 state fiscal year will be eligible for funding under the health care loan repayment program if the eligible applicants meet the eligibility criteria of the health care loan repayment program. Under this provision, no recipient will receive more than five consecutive awards between the registered nurse and nurse educator loan forgiveness program and the health care loan repayment program;

b. Iowa residency status;

c. Members of the Iowa national guard, if requested by the adjutant general.

(1) Members of the Iowa national guard are exempt from the service commitment area requirement, and

(2) Members of the Iowa national guard must have satisfactorily completed required guard training and must maintain satisfactory performance of guard duty;

d. Date of application.

26.4(2) Annual award. The maximum annual award shall be the lesser of:

a. \$6,000, or

b. Twenty percent of the eligible applicant's total outstanding qualified student loan.

26.4(3) Extent of repayment. Eligible applicants may receive loan repayment for no more than five consecutive years. Eligible applicants who fail to receive loan repayment awards in consecutive years will not be considered for subsequent years of loan repayment.

26.4(4) Disbursement of loan repayment funds.

a. Loan repayment awards will be disbursed upon completion of the year for which the award was approved and upon certification from the employer that the advanced registered nurse practitioner, nurse educator, physician assistant, or registered nurse was employed full-time, as defined by the employer, during the entire year and completed the year in good standing.

b. Loan repayment awards will be distributed to the eligible applicant's student loan holder and applied directly to qualified student loans.

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283—26.5(261) Loan repayment cancellation.

26.5(1) An eligible applicant who has been designated for a loan repayment award shall notify the commission within 30 days following termination or cessation of full-time practice in a service commitment area as an advanced registered nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or registered nurse, or termination or cessation of full-time employment as a nurse educator.

26.5(2) A recipient of an award is responsible for notifying the commission immediately of a change in name, place of employment, or home address.

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283—26.6(261) Restrictions. An advanced registered nurse practitioner, nurse educator, physician assistant, or registered nurse who is in default on a qualified student loan or who owes a repayment on any Title IV grant assistance or state award shall be ineligible for loan repayment benefits. Eligibility may be reinstated upon payment in full of the delinquent obligation or by commission ruling on the basis of adequate extenuating evidence presented in appeal under the procedures set forth in 283—Chapters 4 and 5.

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These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 261.116.

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