

Pediatric Loan Repayment Program FAQs

For comprehensive information about program eligibility requirements and the application process, visit the [Apply to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program](#) page and review the *Application and Program Guidance (APG)*.

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

What is the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program?

- The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program is a HRSA-funded program that seeks eligible clinicians interested in delivering medical subspecialty care, pediatric surgical specialty care, or child and adolescent behavioral health care, including substance use disorder prevention and treatment service providers.
- The program's focus is to recruit and retain pediatric medical subspecialists, pediatric surgical specialists, or child and adolescent behavioral health care providers located in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), Medically Underserved Area (MUA), or serving a Medically Underserved Population (MUP), with the intent to foster the regionalization of the pediatric health workforce and improve patient outcomes.
- Providers can receive up to \$100,000, less the amount withheld for federal taxes in student loan repayment in exchange for a three-year service commitment.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to apply to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program?

- To be eligible for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award, you must:
 - Be a U.S. citizen, national or lawful permanent resident.
 - Be working at a facility approved for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program.
 - Have unpaid government or commercial loans for school tuition.
 - Be licensed, certified, or credentialed to practice in the state where your employment site is located or is entering or receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship by **July 9, 2024, the application deadline.**

What disciplines are eligible for the program?

- Clinicians and providers working in a specialty or sub-specialty such as:
 - Physicians, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, licensed social workers/licensed master's level social workers, psychiatric mental health nurses, marriage and family therapists, licensed professional counselors, and substance use disorder counselors.
 - For a detailed list of eligible specialties and subspecialties please visit the [Apply to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program](#) page.

I am currently in a residency program. Am I eligible to apply?

- Yes, licensed physicians entering or receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty-eligible residency or fellowship are eligible to apply. The residency or fellowship must be with an employer providing service in a HPSA, MUA, or serving a MUP.

SERVICE OBLIGATION

How long is the service contract?

- Participants must serve three years full-time at an approved Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program facility in exchange for up to \$100,000, less the amount of federal taxes withheld.

If I'm awarded, when does my service contract begin?

- The service contract for an awardee begins the day it is countersigned by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary or their designee.

What happens if I am unable to complete my service contract?

- The program will consider terminations for the following reasons only:
 - The participant requests to terminate the contract within 60 days following the contract's execution date and repays all loan repayment program funds paid to, or on behalf of, the participant under that contract.
 - At any time, if the individual who has been awarded such contract has not received funds due under the contract and the individual submits a written request to terminate the contract.
- Failure to meet the contract expectations will be considered a breach of contract.
- Participants can submit a suspension request due to medical or personal reasons that will exceed the allowed time away from the worksite of 35 days or seven (7) weeks per contract year.
- When experiencing unemployment, at no fault of the participant, the participant will have 90 days to obtain a new position at an approved Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program facility.

SERVICE QUESTIONS

Can I transfer to another Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program facility?

- Yes, prior to beginning work at a new, approved facility, the participant must obtain prior approval to either add or transfer to the new, approved Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program facility.

What if I completed my residency or fellowship but not my three-year obligation?

- Physicians who complete their residency or fellowship but have not completed their three-year service obligation must obtain full-time employment at a facility approved for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program that provides pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty, or child and adolescent behavioral health care within 90 days.

What is care coordination?

- Care coordination is the deliberate organization of patient care activities between two or more participants, including the patient, involved in a patient's care to facilitate the appropriate delivery of health care services. Organizing care involves marshaling personnel and other resources needed to carry out all required patient care activities. It is often managed by exchanging information among participants responsible for different aspects of care.

What is considered clinical-related administrative, management, or other activities?

- They may include charting, training, laboratory follow-up, patient correspondence, attending staff meetings, or other activities related to maintaining professional licensure, and other non-treatment-related activities.

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

What is full-time employment?

- Full-time employment is 40 hours per week, providing pediatric medical subspecialty care; pediatric surgical specialty care; child and adolescent behavioral health care, including substance use disorder prevention and treatment services; direct treatment, care; clinical management of participants in a clinical trial; care coordination activities and scheduled breaks. Out of the 40 hours, four (4) hours are available for administrative or management activities.

Can I administer care in clinical trials?

- Yes. For the purpose of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program, "Care in Clinical Trials" is the participation in the direct treatment, care, and clinical management of pediatric patients participating in a clinical trial. This includes the provider addressing the care and needs of an individual patient, making real-time decisions about health care plans, and using treatments and therapies known to be safe and effective.

FACILITY ELIGIBILITY

How do I know if my facility is eligible?

- You can check HRSA's [Health Workforce Connector](#) and see if the site is an existing approved Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program facility.
- You can find out if your facility is in an eligible shortage area (that is, a HPSA or in a MUA/MUP) at [Find Shortage Areas](#).

HPSAs

What is a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)?

- A Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) can be geographic areas, populations, or facilities. These areas lack primary, dental, or mental health care providers.

MUA

What is a Medically Underserved Area?

- A Medically Underserved Area (MUA) is a geographic area that lacks access to primary care services. The geographic areas can be an entire county, a group of neighboring counties, a group of urban census tracts, or a group of county/civil divisions.

MUP

What is a Medically Underserved Population (MUP)?

- A Medically Underserved Population (MUP) has a shortage of primary care health services for a specific population subset within a geographic area. These groups may face economic, cultural, or language barriers to health care. Some examples include people experiencing homelessness, low income, eligible for Medicaid, Native Americans, and migrant farm workers.

How can my facility demonstrate that I serve a Medically Underserved Population?

- The facility point of contact(s) will be required to attest to the type of Medically Underserved Population (MUP) that is included in the provider's patient panel. A provider will be found eligible as serving an MUP based on whether the employment facility receives any level of reimbursement from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for the provider's services. This allowance is limited to applicants who provide pediatric specialty care to designated populations that qualify as an MUP (for example, Medicaid-eligible, migrant farm workers, Native Americans, etc.).

AWARD PROCESS

How many applicants will be awarded?

- For Fiscal Year 2024, the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program anticipates making approximately 100 new awards.

When will I know if I was selected for an award?

- All applicants will be notified of their application status by September 30, 2024.

TAXES AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Is the award amount taxable?

- Yes, the award is subject to federal, state, and local taxes and will be counted as income under the Social Security Act.

Can I request additional funds to be withheld from the award amount?

- Yes, you can request additional funds to be withheld on a form W-4.

What happens if I owe taxes?

- Under the Treasury Offset Program, the United States Treasury Department is authorized to offset the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award payments for delinquent federal and state debts, including delinquent child support.

APPLICATION

When is the application due?

- Submit a complete application to the program by **July 9, 2024, 7:30 p.m. ET.**

Can I make changes to my application?

- Yes, you can change your application before the application submission deadline by logging into your account and filling in the required sections. However, you must resubmit your application each time you reopen it.

What if I can't find my facility?

- Clinicians at a facility approved for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program who are interested in applying for loan repayment but do not see their site during the application process should visit the [Become a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved Facility](#) page for detailed instructions on becoming a facility approved for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program.

PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

Who can I contact with questions?

- Any individual with questions about the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program may contact the Customer Care Center Monday through Friday (except federal holidays) from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET at 1-800-221-9393 or TTY: 1-877-897-9910 or through our online form at [Ask Us a Question](#).