



Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program

Full-Time Service Opportunities

Fiscal Year 2024 Application & Program Guidance

May 2024

Application Submission Deadline: July 9, 2024, 7:30 p.m. ET

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Health Resources and Services Administration
Bureau of Health Workforce
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

For questions, call 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910) Monday through Friday (except federal holidays) 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET.

Authority: SEC. 775 of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC § 295f)

Assistance Listings (AL/CFDA) Number 93.162

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Privacy Act Notification Statement	5
Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Overview	6
What to Look For in 2024	7
Application and Program Guidance	7
PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	8
SERVICE OBLIGATION AND LOAN REPAYMENT AMOUNT	9
TRAINING AND LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS	12
PROGRAM COMPLIANCE.....	22
Application Information	34
APPLICATION DEADLINE.....	34
COMPLETING AN APPLICATION	34
Application Review and Award Process	39
CONFIRMATION OF INTEREST	40
THE PEDIATRIC SPECIALTY LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM CONTRACT	42
Additional Information	42
PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT.....	42
RESOURCES FOR APPLICANTS.....	42
Appendix: Glossary	44

Executive Summary

The Health Resources and Services Administration is accepting applications for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program. Individuals who agree to provide three years of full-time pediatric medical subspecialty care, pediatric surgical specialty care, or child and adolescent behavioral health care, including mental health and substance use disorder prevention and treatment services, can receive loan repayment assistance through the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program. In exchange for loan repayment, eligible applicants agree to participate in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty or child and adolescent mental health subspecialty residency or fellowship - **OR** - employment as a pediatric medical subspecialist, pediatric surgical specialist or child and adolescent behavioral health care professional serving in or for a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site serving a Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or Medically Underserved Population.

Eligible Applicants	<p>Clinicians who provide patient care under the following disciplines and specialties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pediatric medical subspecialists • Pediatric surgical specialists • Child and adolescent mental and behavioral health providers, including substance use disorder prevention and treatment services.
Funding	Up to \$100,000 for a three-year service obligation.
Service Obligation	Three-year, full-time (1) clinical practice <u>or</u> (2) participation in an accredited eligible residency or fellowship at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site.
Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved Service Site Connector:	Visit the Health Workforce Connector
Application Deadline	July 9, 2024
Tax Liability	Taxable



A Letter from Luis Padilla, MD

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your consideration and time in applying to the [Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program](#), offered by the Bureau of Health Workforce in the Health Resources and Services Administration. We launched this loan repayment program to financially support health care providers who are providing medical care or combating the nation’s mental health and substance use disorder crisis by treating the most vulnerable of our community – our children.

We will award up to \$100,000 in student loan repayment to eligible health professionals in exchange for a three-year, full-time service commitment to work or participate in a fellowship or residency in a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program approved facility. These facilities are located in Health Professional Shortage Areas or Medically Underserved Areas or providing care to a Medically Underserved Population. Please explore the [Health Workforce Connector](#), an online resource that contains a searchable database of employment and training opportunities at all approved service sites.

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program expands the pool of providers eligible for the Health Resources and Services Administration’s loan repayment awards to pediatric providers, including pediatric medical subspecialists, pediatric surgical specialists, or child and adolescent behavioral health care professionals, including mental health and substance use disorder prevention and treatment services providers.

This loan repayment program is an opportunity to help children access the vital care you can provide. Thank you again for taking time to read this Application and Program Guidance document. We hope that you consider applying to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program.

Sincerely,

/Luis Padilla, MD/

[Luis Padilla, MD](#)

Associate Administrator, Bureau of Health Workforce
Health Resources and Services Administration
United States Department of Health and Human Services

Privacy Act Notification Statement

General

This information is provided pursuant to the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579), as amended, for individuals supplying information for inclusion in a system of records.

Statutory Authority

[SEC. 775 of the Public Health Service Act \(42 United States Code § 295f\)](#)

Purposes and Uses

The purpose of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program is to recruit and retain pediatric medical subspecialist, pediatric surgical specialist, or child and adolescent behavioral health care providers, including substance use disorder prevention and treatment service providers.

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants agree to provide, through their employment or participation in a residency or fellowship program, pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty, or child and adolescent behavioral health care services in a [Health Professional Shortage Area](#), [Medically Underserved Area](#), or serve a [Medically Underserved Population](#). The information applicants submit will be used to evaluate their eligibility, qualifications, and suitability for participating in the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program. Additionally, information from other sources will be considered (e.g., credit bureau reports and National Practitioner Data Bank reports).

Certain parts of an applicant's application may also be disclosed outside the Department of Health and Human Services, as permitted by the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, to the Congress, the National Archives, the Government Accountability Office, and pursuant to court order and various routine uses as described in the [System of Record Notice 09-15-0037 for Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program Records](#). You will be notified if your information will be shared.

A Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participant's, name, discipline, specialty, business address, business telephone number, and service obligation completion date may be provided in response to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act.

Effects of Nondisclosure

Disclosure of the information sought is voluntary; however, if not submitted, except for the replies to questions related to race/ethnicity (Section 3 of the online application for Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program), an application may be considered incomplete and therefore may not be considered for an award under this announcement.

Non-Discrimination Policy Statement

In accordance with applicable federal laws and United States Department of Health and Human Services policy, the Department does not discriminate on the basis of any non-merit factor, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability (physical or mental), age, status as a parent, or genetic information.

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Overview

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program seeks individuals with demonstrated interest in delivering pediatric medical subspecialty care, pediatric surgical specialty care, or child and adolescent behavioral health care, including substance use disorder prevention and treatment services.

The Health Resources and Services Administration has several [loan repayment programs](#), however, you can only participate in one of these programs at a time. If you apply for and are eligible for more than one of these programs, the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program team will contact you to determine which program you prefer. However, the Health Resources and Services Administration cannot guarantee that you will be offered an award under your preferred loan repayment program.

Under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program, the Secretary of Health and Human Services ("Secretary") will repay up to \$100,000 of the graduate and/or undergraduate educational loans of applicants selected to be participants in the program. In return for these loan repayments, participants agree to serve in or for a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site serving a [Health Professional Shortage Area](#), [Medically Underserved Area](#), or serve a [Medically Underserved Population](#). Participants may serve in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty or child and adolescent mental health subspecialty residency or fellowship or through employment as a pediatric medical subspecialist, pediatric surgical specialist, or child and adolescent behavioral health professional.

An applicant becomes a participant in the Loan Repayment Program after their contract is signed by the applicant and by the Secretary or their designee. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program's contract is the agreement, which is signed by an applicant and the Secretary, for the Loan Repayment Program wherein the applicant agrees to accept repayment of eligible educational loans and to serve in accordance with the provisions of section 775 of the Public Health Service Act for a prescribed period of obligated service.

The following applies to applicants who sign a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract:

- All disciplines, except licensed physicians who are entering or receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship, will be committing to work three years full-time in or for a service site serving a [Health Professional Shortage Area](#), [Medically Underserved Area](#), or serve a [Medically Underserved Population](#).

- Licensed physicians who are entering or receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty eligible residency or fellowship are required to be committed to full-time employment in a Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area or to serve a Medically Underserved Population, as a pediatric medical subspecialist or pediatric surgical specialist upon completion of their training for any remaining years of their three-year service obligation. Both their training and their full-time employment must provide service in or for an employer serving a [Health Professional Shortage Area](#), [Medically Underserved Area](#), or serve a [Medically Underserved Population](#). Within 90 days of completing the training, they must demonstrate that they:
 - (1) Completed an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship.
 - (2) Are a licensed physician with a current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) from the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.
 - (3) Are employed full-time at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site providing pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty, or child and adolescent behavioral health care.

If, for any reason, a participant is unable to complete their service obligation at their initial Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site, they will be required to transfer to another Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site to fulfill their service obligation.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN 2024

For Fiscal Year 2024, we expect to make approximately 100 new awards to providers committed to serving a Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or serving a Medically Underserved Population by either receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship or serving in or for a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site.

Application and Program Guidance

You (the applicant) are responsible for reading this Application and Program Guidance (Guidance) in its entirety before proceeding with your application and/or signing a contract. The Guidance explains in detail the obligations of individuals selected to participate in the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program. A complete understanding of the commitment to serve at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved service site and the financial, legal, and other consequences of failing to perform that commitment is critical to successful completion of the mandatory service obligation associated with any Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award.

Key Application Dates

Key dates for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program applicants include:

- **Application Open:** May 28, 2024
- **Application Submission Deadline:** July 9, 2024
- **Employment Start Date:** On or before July 9, 2024
- **Notification of Award:** On or before September 30, 2024
- **Contract Termination Deadline:** 60 days from the effective date of the contract, OR 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.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Per statute, to be eligible to apply for a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award, an applicant must:

- (1) Be a United States citizen (either United States-born or naturalized), national, or permanent resident with a non-conditional [Permanent Resident Card](#) (green card).
- (2) Be an eligible individual who meets applicable educational requirements and has a current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration in the discipline in which they are applying to serve, in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. (See the [Required Credentials for Eligible Disciplines](#) section for additional details).
- (3) Be employed, have accepted a position, or be enrolled in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site, located in, or serving a Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or Medically Underserved Population.
- (4) Begin employment or an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship, providing pediatric medical subspecialty care, pediatric surgical specialty care, or child and adolescent behavioral health care by July 9, 2024.
- (5) Submit a complete application on or before July 9, 2024. See the instructions for completing an application in the [Completing an Application](#) section later in this Guidance.

SERVICE OBLIGATION AND LOAN REPAYMENT AWARD AMOUNT

An applicant to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program can apply for **up to \$100,000 in loan repayment and a three-year, full-time clinical practice service obligation**. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will pay up to \$100,000, less the amount withheld for federal [taxes](#),¹ in exchange for three (3) years of participation in an accredited eligible residency or fellowship or full-time employment, in or for a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site serving a [Health Professional Shortage Area](#), [Medically Underserved Area](#), or serve a [Medically Underserved Population](#). Awardees can refer to the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) for their net payment and tax withholding details upon disbursement. For a more detailed definition of full-time service see the [Requirements for Full-Time Employment](#) section.

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants agree to apply all loan repayments received through the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program to the participant's qualifying eligible undergraduate, graduate, or graduate medical educational loans.

NOTE: If an applicant's outstanding balance of qualifying educational loans is less than the maximum award amount, the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will pay up to the outstanding balance, not the maximum award amount. However, if the participant receives an award of any amount, they will be obligated to complete the full three-year service obligation.

To receive the award, the applicant must remain a participant in an accredited fellowship or residency program or be employed by or for a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site serving a [Health Professional Shortage Area](#), a [Medically Underserved Area](#), or serve a [Medically Underserved Population](#), throughout the contract period. A participant's Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract period becomes effective on the date it is countersigned by the Secretary or their designee. The last day of the contract is determined in whole years from the start date. For example, the last day of the contract period for a participant with a three-year, full-time service contract that began on July 18, 2024, would be July 17, 2027.

Eligible and Ineligible Educational Loans

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program applicants must have eligible undergraduate, graduate, or graduate medical education loans. A participant will receive loan repayment funding to be applied to the principal of and interest on eligible loans outstanding on the day the contract period began. Documentation of the educational loans must be submitted with their online application to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program by July 9, 2024, the application deadline.

¹ Participants tax liabilities are described in detail on page 36.

Consolidated or refinanced loans may be considered for repayment, so long as they include only eligible educational loans of the applicant. If an otherwise eligible educational loan is consolidated/refinanced with ineligible debt of the applicant, **no** portion of the consolidated/refinanced loan will be eligible for loan repayment. For loans to remain eligible, applicants/participants must keep their eligible educational loans segregated from all other debts. In addition, educational loans consolidated with loans owed by any other person, such as a spouse or child, are ineligible for repayment.

Loans that do not qualify for loan repayment include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Loans for which the applicant incurred a service obligation that will not be fulfilled before the deadline for submission of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program application (July 9, 2024).
- (2) Loans consolidated/refinanced with ineligible (non-qualifying) debt of the applicant, or with loans owned by or for any other person.
- (3) Loans for which the associated documentation does not demonstrate that the loan was solely applicable to the undergraduate or graduate education of the applicant.
- (4) Loans not obtained from a government entity or private student loan lending institution. Most loans made by private foundations to individuals are not eligible for repayment.
- (5) Loans that have been repaid in full.
- (6) [Primary Care Loans](#).
- (7) Parent PLUS Loans (made to parents).
- (8) Personal lines of credit.
- (9) Loans subject to cancellation.
- (10) Residency and Relocation loans.
- (11) Credit card debt.

NOTE: All applicants must provide documentation that proves that their educational loans were contemporaneous with the education received and meet all other eligibility requirements. HRSA will verify loans by contacting lenders/holders and reviewing the applicant's credit report.

NOTE: If all loans are paid in full as a result of an individual receiving loan forgiveness under a program such as the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, and the effective date of the loan forgiveness is **after** the Secretary (or the Secretary's designee) has countersigned the contract and the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment award has been disbursed, the participant is still obligated to serve the full length of their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program service obligation.

Eligible Providers and Clinical Practice Requirements

Requirements for Full-Time Employment

Every participant is required to engage in full-time employment and must understand the following:

- **Requirements for All Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Participants Except Licensed Physicians Entering or Receiving Training in an Accredited Pediatric Medical Subspecialty or Pediatric Surgical Specialty Residency or Fellowship.**

For the purposes of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program, full-time employment is defined as a minimum of 40 hours/week, for a minimum of 45 weeks each service year at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. Of the 40 hours/week, a participant must spend a minimum of 36 hours providing a combination of the following: 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, and clinical management of participants in a clinical trial; and care coordination activities. The remaining four (4) hours/week may be used for clinical-related administrative, management or other activities. The 40 hours per week includes scheduled breaks.

- **Requirements for Licensed Physicians Entering or Receiving Training in an Accredited Pediatric Medical Subspecialty or Pediatric Surgical Specialty Residency or Fellowship.**

For the purposes of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program, full-time employment is defined as the active participation in a full-time accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship, for a minimum of 40 hours per week for a minimum of 45 weeks each service year at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. Of the 40 hours/week, a participant must spend a minimum of 36 hours providing a combination of the following: 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, and clinical management of participants in a clinical trial; and care coordination activities. The remaining four (4) hours/week may be used for clinical-related administrative, management or other activities. Physicians who complete their residency or fellowship, but have not completed their three-year service obligation, must obtain full-time employment as described in the preceding paragraph at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site providing pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty, or child and adolescent behavioral health care within 90 days.

Eligible individuals include health professionals trained and licensed in the following disciplines:

Disciplines	<i>Subspecialty</i>
Physicians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allopathic • Osteopathic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pediatric medical subspecialists • Pediatric surgical specialists • Child and adolescent psychiatrists <p>For a complete list of approved pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists, visit the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program website.</p>

Disciplines	<i>Subspecialty</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychologists • Licensed clinical social workers • Licensed or certified master’s level social workers • Psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners • Marriage and family therapists • Licensed professional counselors • Substance use disorder counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pediatrics • Substance use disorder prevention and treatment services

TRAINING AND LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program applicants must demonstrate satisfactory professional competence and conduct and meet discipline-specific education, training, licensure, and certification requirements, as described in the [Required Credentials for Eligible Disciplines](#) section of this document.

Applicants who intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program as federal employees, federal contractors, or employees of a tribal health program (see the Glossary in the [Appendix](#) section) in a state in which the tribal health program provides services described in its contract, must have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) in a state.

All other applicants must have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable), as set forth in the Required Credentials for Eligible Disciplines section, in the state where their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site is located, unless otherwise noted.

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program reserves the right to request documented proof of completion of discipline-specific advanced training (residency, certification, fellowships, etc.) and any other requirements set forth herein. Please note that while an applicant may be licensed in the state of intended practice, there may be additional requirements identified in the [Required Credentials for Eligible Disciplines section](#) that must be met in order to be eligible for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program. See the [Telehealth Policies](#) section for requirements pertaining to participants providing telehealth services.

Required Credentials for Eligible Disciplines

Discipline: Allopathic or Osteopathic Physicians including Adolescent and Pediatric Psychiatrists)

Education Requirements	Certification Requirements	Licensure Requirements	Notes
<p>An MD or DO (or equivalent) from an allopathic or osteopathic medical school or program accredited by any recognized body or bodies approved for such purpose by United States Department of Education.</p>	<p>Completed a residency program approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.</p> <p>-AND-</p> <p>Received specialized training or clinical experience in child and adolescent mental health in psychiatry, psychology, school psychology, behavioral pediatrics, psychiatric nursing, social work, school social work, substance use disorder prevention and treatment, marriage and family therapy, school counseling, or professional counseling after December 31, 2010.</p> <p>-OR-</p> <p>Is entering or receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship. See the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program website for a list of approved specialists. Training must begin by July 9, 2024.</p>	<p>A current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) that allows independent practice without direct clinical supervision in the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Discipline: Psychologists

Education Requirements	Certification Requirements	Licensure Requirements	Notes
A doctoral degree (Doctor of Philosophy or equivalent) from a school or program accredited by any recognized body or bodies approved for such purpose by United States Department of Education.	Passed the Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology; the ability to practice independently and unsupervised as a psychologist.	A current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) that allows independent practice without direct clinical supervision in the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.	N/A

Discipline: Licensed Clinical Social Workers

Education Requirements	Certification Requirements	Licensure Requirements	Notes
Master's degree or doctoral degree in social work from a school or program accredited by any recognized body or bodies approved for such purpose by the United States Department of Education.	<p>Successfully passed the Association of Social Work Boards Clinical or Advanced Generalist licensing exam prior to July 1, 1998, or the Association of Social Work Boards Clinical Exam on or after July 1, 1998;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Successfully passed the licensed clinical social worker Standard Written Examination and the Clinical Vignette Examination; and completed state required number of years or hours of clinical social work experience under the supervision of a licensed independent social worker and passed the clinical level of the Association of Social Work Boards exam.</p>	A current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) that allows independent practice without direct clinical supervision as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, from the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.	N/A

Discipline: Licensed or Certified Master Level Social Workers

Education Requirements	Certification Requirements	Licensure Requirements	Notes
Master's degree or doctoral degree in social work from a school or program accredited by any recognized body or bodies approved for such purpose by the United States Department of Education.	Successfully passed the Association of Social Work Boards Master's Level Examination. OR See Licensure Requirements	A current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) in the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.	N/A

Discipline: Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners

Education Requirements	Certification Requirements	Licensure Requirements	Notes
A master's degree or higher degree in nursing from a school or program accredited by any recognized body or bodies approved for such purpose by United States Department of Education with a specialization in psychiatric/mental health and two years of postgraduate supervised clinical experience in psychiatric/mental health nursing.	Certified as a psychiatric nurse specialist in the state in which they intend to practice, if required by state law. Certified as a Psychiatric Nurse Specialist in the state in which they intend to practice, if required by state law.	A current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) to practice at the level of licensure that allows independent practice without direct clinical supervision as a Registered Nurse (or Psychiatric Nurse Specialist, if applicable) in the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.	N/A

Discipline: Marriage and Family Therapists

Education Requirements	Certification Requirements	Licensure Requirements	Notes
A master's or doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy from a school or program accredited by any recognized body or bodies approved for such purpose by United States Department of Education.	Certified as a marriage and family therapist in the state in which they intend to practice, if required by state law.	A current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) that allows independent and unsupervised practice as a marriage and family therapist in the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan	N/A

Education Requirements	Certification Requirements	Licensure Requirements	Notes
		Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.	

Discipline: Licensed Professional Counselors

Education Requirements	Certification Requirements	Licensure Requirements	Notes
A master's degree or higher degree with a major study in counseling from a school or program accredited by any recognized body or bodies approved for such purpose by United States Department of Education; and at least two years of postgraduate supervised counseling experience.	No additional certifications required.	A current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) that allows independent and unsupervised practice as a licensed professional counselor in the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.	N/A

Discipline: Substances Use Disorder Counselors

Education Requirements	Certification Requirements	Licensure Requirements	Notes
A masters' degree or higher in a health professional field of study from a school accredited by the United States Department of Education nationally recognized regional or state institutional accrediting agency. Certification or licensure requirements are applicable to the state in which they practice.	Certified as a substance use disorder counselor in the state in which they intend to practice. -OR- See Licensure Requirements	A state-issued license to provide substance use disorder treatment.	N/A

Eligible Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-Approved Site Types

All Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved sites must be located in or serve a Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or Medically Underserved Population. Eligible individuals who work at more than one Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment

Program-approved site (e.g., several satellite clinics) must include all Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved locations in their application by selecting from the drop-down menu and initiating an electronic Employment Verification Form for each Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site.

Sites eligible for Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program are outpatient or inpatient sites providing pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty, or child and adolescent behavioral health care, including substance use disorder prevention and treatment services. Eligible sites include, but are not limited to, the following site types:

- Community Health Centers
- Community Outpatient Sites
- Faith-based Settings
- Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)
- FQHC Look-Alikes
- Free clinics
- Group and residential care facilities
- Hospitals (for example, Children's Hospital)
- Indian Health Service, Tribal or Urban Indian Health Clinic
- Inpatient programs/rehabilitation centers
- Migrant health centers
- Mobile units
- Primary care clinics
- Private practices
- Rural Health Clinics
- School-based service sites (pre-kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education setting)
- Specialized outpatient clinics
- State or local public health departments
- Urgent care facilities
- Youth detention center or program

The Health Resources and Services Administration will ensure the approval and activation of service sites for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program if (1) the service site is already approved for the National Health Service Corps, Nurse Corps, or Substance Use Disorder Treatment And Recovery Loan Repayment Program and is located in or serves a Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or Medically Underserved Population, or(2) during the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program application cycle, the service site must submit to the Health Resources and Services Administration the facility type and the recruitment contact(s) through the Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal.

Please visit the [Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved Facility page](#) for more detailed instructions on becoming a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. You can also find out if your site is in a Health Professional Shortage Area at [Health Professional Shortage Area Find](#) or in a Medically Underserved Area and Medically Underserved Population at [Medically Underserved Area Find](#).

Telehealth and Home Health Policies

Telehealth. Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants must comply with all applicable telemedicine policies of their site, as well as all applicable federal and state rules and policies regarding telemedicine services. Telehealth delivery services cannot exceed more than 75 percent of the minimum weekly hours required to provide direct patient care, under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract.

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will consider telehealth as providing pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty, or child and adolescent behavioral health care, including substance use disorder prevention and treatment services when performed at the direction of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site.

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants who are performing telehealth are encouraged to utilize the Health Resources and Services Administration's [Telehealth Resource Centers](#). These centers provide free telehealth technical assistance and training for providers using telehealth. Further, Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program applicants who are providing substance use disorder treatment and recovery services are also encouraged to read a related September 2018 Health and Human Services policy statement, [Telemedicine and Prescribing Buprenorphine for the Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder](#).

Home Health. Home visits may only be conducted at the direction of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site and cannot exceed more than eight (8) hours per week.

HOW LOAN REPAYMENT AWARDS ARE DETERMINED

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program determines loan repayment awardees using rankings of eligible individuals, funding priorities and other selection factors.

Funding Priorities

Consistent with the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program enabling statute, priorities in funding will be applied to eligible and qualified applicants as follows:

- (1) Are or will be working in a **school** (as defined in the Glossary in the [Appendix](#) section) or other pre-kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education setting.
- (2) Have familiarity with evidence-based methods **including culturally and linguistically** (as defined in the Glossary in the [Appendix](#) section) competent health care.

(3) Demonstrate financial need by the way of **debt-to-income ratio** (as defined in the Glossary in the [Appendix](#) section).

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will rank applicants in the tiers as reflected in the [Application Ranking Criteria](#) table, using the applicant’s debt-to-income ratio, their familiarity with cultural and linguistic competencies, and delivery of evidence-based health care services. Further, the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will accept the applicant’s health professional license as demonstration of their familiarity with, and delivery of evidence-based health care services.

Each area of consideration within the ranking criteria will be verified by either submitted documentation from the applicant or an employer’s attestation during the employment verification process. The site administrator will assess the linguistic and cultural competency based on their knowledge by the provider, either by an examination or certification.

Application Ranking Criteria

Among eligible applicants, the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program determines awardees using the following ranking factors.

Eligible Site Types	Ranked by Debt-to-Income Ratio
Tier 1	
School-based service sites (<i>pre-kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education setting</i>) located in or serving a Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or Medically Underserved Population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has familiarity with evidence-based practice. • Demonstrates a set of behaviors, attitudes, and understanding of policies that enables effective interactions and delivery of care to a cross-cultural community. • Directly provides culturally appropriate oral and written language services to limited English proficiency patients or readily use bilingual/bicultural staff, trained medical interpreters, and qualified translators to deliver care.
Tier 2	
All eligible sites located in or serving a Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or Medically Underserved Population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any provider unable to meet all three requirements outlined in Tier 1.

Selection Factors

Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria outlined in this Guidance must also demonstrate that they:

- (1) **Have a history of honoring prior legal obligations.** The Health Resources and Services Administration will perform a hard inquiry² with the credit bureaus to make the award decision. Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program applicants who have a history of not honoring prior legal obligations, as evidenced by one or more of the following factors, will not be selected:
 - a. Default on any federal payment obligations, for example, Department of Education student loans, Health Education Assistance Loans, Nursing Student Loans, Federal Housing Administration Loans, federal income tax liabilities, federally guaranteed/insured loans (such as student or home mortgage loans) or any non-federal payment obligations (for example, court-ordered child support payments or state tax liabilities).
 - b. Write-off of any federal debt as uncollectible or waiver of any federal service or payment obligation.
 - c. Default on a prior service obligation, for example, applicants who have defaulted on a prior service obligation to the federal government, a state or local government, or other entity, unless the obligation was subsequently satisfied.
 - d. Any judgment liens arising from federal debt.
 - e. Failure/refusal to provide appropriate permission/consent for the Health Resources and Services Administration to access the participant's credit report and failure/refusal to unfreeze a frozen credit report.

- (2) **Are not in breach of any service obligation.** Applicants who are in breach of a health professional service obligation to a federal, state, or other entity will not be selected to participate in the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program.

- (3) **Do not have negative report on the National Practitioner Data Bank.** The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will request and review the applicant's National Practitioner Data Bank report.

² According to the United States Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, these inquiries "are typically inquiries by lenders after you apply for credit. These inquiries will impact your credit score because most credit scoring models look at how recently and how frequently you apply for credit." (Source: ["What's a credit inquiry?"](#) Consumer Financial Protection Bureau website.)

- (4) **Do not have an existing service obligation and agree not to incur a service obligation that would be performed concurrently or overlap with their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program service obligation.** Participants who subsequently enter other service obligations such as a state run loan repayment program) will be subject to the breach of contract provision (see the [Breaching the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Contract](#) section).

EXCEPTIONS:

- a. Applicants who are already obligated to a federal, state, or other entity for professional practice or service may be eligible if they will completely satisfy that obligation by July 9, 2024.
 - b. Members of a Reserve component of the Armed Forces or National Guard who are not on active duty prior to receiving a Loan Repayment Program award **are** eligible for the program. Reservists should understand the following:
 - Military training or service performed by reservists will not satisfy the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program service obligation. If a participant's military training and/or service, in combination with the participant's other absences from the service site, will exceed seven weeks per service year, the participant must request a suspension. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program service obligation end date will be extended to compensate for the break in Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program service.
 - If the reservist is deployed, they are expected to return to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site where they were serving prior to deployment. If unable to do so, the reservist must request a transfer to another Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. If the reservist fails to seek a transfer and subsequently refuses to accept a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program assignment to another approved site, they will be placed in default of their service obligation.
- (5) **Are not currently excluded, debarred, suspended, or disqualified by a federal agency.** Applicants are required to report certain information, which is described in the Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Disqualification and Related Matters section of the online application. The applicant should sign the certification that is applicable to their situation.

As a condition of participating in the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program, a participant must agree to provide immediate written notice to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program if the participant learns that they failed to make a required disclosure or that a disclosure is now required due to changed circumstances. The Health Resources and Services Administration will verify each participant's status through the [United States Department of the Treasury's Do Not Pay site](#).

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

To qualify for the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program applicants must be employed, have accepted a position, **OR** be entering or receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship. Further, applicants must begin employment, or their residency or fellowship, by July 9, 2024, and complete their three-year obligation at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site located in, or serving a Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or Medically Underserved Population.

Dates of Service Obligation

The participant's service obligation begins on the date that the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract becomes effective, which is on the date it is countersigned by the U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary or their designee. This information is contained in the participant's profile on the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) and award letter. Participants will not receive service credit for any employment or fellowship at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site located in, or serving a [Health Professional Shortage Area](#), [Medically Underserved Area](#), or serve a [Medically Underserved Population](#) site **prior to the effective date** of their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract.

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants should be aware of the following provisions:

- **All providers with eligible disciplines, including licensed physicians who are entering or receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship**, are expected to begin full-time training or employment on or before the date that the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract becomes effective, which is the date it is countersigned by the Secretary or their designee. The participant's award letter will note the beginning and projected end dates of the service obligation. In addition, this information is contained in the participant profile on the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#).

- **All providers with eligible disciplines, except licensed physicians who are entering or receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship**, must be employed by a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site and commit to provide full-time employment at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site as a pediatric medical subspecialist, pediatric surgical specialist, or child and adolescent behavioral health care specialist, including substance use disorder prevention and treatment service providers. Further, they agree to work in or for a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site serving a [Health Professional Shortage Area](#) or [Medically Underserved Area](#), or serve a [Medically Underserved Population](#) for three (3) years.
- **Licensed physicians who are entering or receiving training in an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship** will be committing to provide full-time employment as a pediatric medical subspecialist or pediatric surgical specialist upon completion of their training for any remaining years of their three-year service obligation, if any. Within 90 days of completing the training, they must demonstrate that they:
 - (1) Completed an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship.
 - (2) Have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable) from the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.
 - (3) Have obtained employment at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site providing pediatric medical subspecialty, pediatric surgical specialty, or child and adolescent behavioral health care.

NOTE: If these requirements are not met within 90 days of the completion of the training, the participant may be in breach of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract and liable for damages (see the [Breaching the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Contract](#) section). Additionally, the participant’s service obligation end date will be extended to account for any time between the conclusion of the residency or fellowship and the start of eligible full-time employment.

Role of Site Point of Contact

For the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program, the site point of contact must be an employee of the site or training program. The site point of contact must agree to complete the applicant’s employment verification form and the participant’s In-Service Verifications. The In-Service Verifications include verification that the participant is meeting their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program workforce employment or training obligations throughout the obligated service period. For additional information, see the [Service Verification](#) section. Once initiated by the applicant, the point of contact must complete the online Employment

Verification Form in order to allow time for the applicant to submit the complete application prior to the application cycle deadline..

The point of contact will receive periodic reminders from the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program to complete the Employment Verification Form; however, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the Employment Verification Form is complete and accurate, within a timeframe that will allow them to submit the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program application by the application deadline. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will send the applicant notification that the point of contact has completed their Employment Verification Form. The applicant should then work to complete and submit their application as soon as possible. The applicant must contact the site or training program point of contact to resolve any concerns regarding the responses provided on the Employment Verification Form.

Site Contract vs. Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Contract

It is important to remember that a participant's Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract is separate and independent from any employment contract they have with the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. Employment contract negotiations are solely the responsibility of the clinician and are between the clinician and the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. The Health Resources and Services Administration strongly discourages employers from considering the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program funds as income to the clinician when negotiating the clinician's salary, particularly since they will only receive funds in the first few weeks of the program and those funds must be applied to the participant's existing educational loan balances.

Please note that the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program requires a participant to work a specified minimum number of hours per week (see the [Program Compliance](#) section). If the participant's employment contract stipulates fewer hours (and their salary is based on those hours), the participant is still required to seek additional service hours at an approved service site to meet the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program service obligation requirements, and all of the participant's Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site points of contact must verify the participant's total work hours and the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program full-time work status (see the [Service Verification](#) section) every six (6) months during the participant's period of obligated service.

Worksite Absences

The information provided below pertains to compliance with the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program service obligation and is not a guarantee that a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site will allow any specific amount of leave. Leave must be approved by your Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. If a participant works more than the minimum 40 hours per week, the only time spent away from the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site that will need to be reported (see the [Service Verification](#) section) and deducted from the allowed annual absences per service year (as set forth above) are the hours of absence that cause a participant's work hours to fall below the Health Resources and Services Administration's required minimum number of hours per week. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program allows the following worksite absences:

- Participants are allowed to spend no more than seven (7) weeks (approximately 35 workdays) per service year away from the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site for vacation, holidays, continuing professional education, illness, or any other reason without triggering the need for a suspension. However, when circumstances occur that will prevent a participant from staying within this timeframe, the Secretary of Health and Human Services may, under certain circumstances, suspend (that is, put "on hold") the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program service obligation.
- Personal/Medical/Parental/Active Duty Leave: Applicants who anticipate the need to be away from their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site for more than seven (7) weeks (approximately 35 workdays) for medical or personal leave, maternity, paternity, or adoption leave, or call to active duty in the Armed Forces must submit a suspension request through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#).

The Health Resources and Services Administration cannot guarantee that a suspension request will be approved. If a suspension is requested and approved, the participant's service obligation end date will be extended accordingly.

Service Verification

Every Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participant at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site must submit in-service verification documentation for each six (6) months of service. The In-service Verification Form is available through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) and must be completed and electronically signed by the participant. Once completed by the participant, it will be forwarded to the site point of contact at the participant's Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site for electronic verification. By electronically signing, the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site point of contact will be certifying the participant's compliance or noncompliance with the applicable service obligation requirement during the prior six-month period. The In-service Verification will also record the time spent away from the Pediatric

Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site (for example, the total number of days during the six-month period that the participant fell below the minimum service obligation).

Participants who fail to complete and submit their In-service Verification on time may jeopardize receiving service credit and may also be in breach of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract. While the Health Resources and Service Administration will take steps to alert both the participant and the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site to the due date for an In-service Verification submission, it is the participant's responsibility to ensure that their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site point of contact completes the verification every six months. Failure to submit the In-service Verification may be considered a breach of the service contract and could result in a default on the obligation.

APPLICATION WITHDRAWAL AND CONTRACT TERMINATION

Award and Withdrawal Process

Even after signing a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract, an applicant may still withdraw their application any time **before** the contract is countersigned by the Secretary or their designee.

- To withdraw an application before receiving a Confirmation of Interest notification, applicants must log into their application account, and select the "Withdraw" option on the "Submitted" page.
- To withdraw an application **after** signing a contract, applicants must [contact the Bureau of Health Workforce](#), and state their intent to withdraw their application.

The Bureau of Health Workforce will contact the applicant within five (5) business days of receipt of the request to confirm the applicant's intent to withdraw their application. After the applicant confirms the request, the Bureau of Health Workforce will remove the application from consideration for a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award. After a contract has taken effect, the Secretary or their designee may only terminate the contract under the circumstances set forth below (see the [Contract Termination](#) section).

An applicant's signature alone on the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract does not constitute a contractual agreement. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract becomes effective on the date it is countersigned by the Secretary or their designee, which is anticipated on or before **September 30, 2024**, although the contract can be countersigned at any time.

Once the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract becomes effective, the applicant (now participant), will be provided with information for logging into their [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#). This web-based system will allow Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants to communicate with the program representatives and manage several customer service inquiries, such as contact information changes.

The award letter for the participant is located in the participant's profile on the Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal. The award letter will note the beginning and projected end dates of the service obligation.

Awards are disbursed in the form of a lump-sum payment and will be electronically issued to the bank account provided by the participant approximately 30 days after the contract start date. The Health Resources and Services Administration will calculate awards to include interest on eligible loans during the period between the contract start date and the disbursement of funds, up to the maximum of \$100,000.

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

Once a contract is in place, the participant is encouraged to participate in the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program New Participant Webinar that will review program requirements. Participants will be notified by email of the New Participant Webinar as well as other upcoming webinars and training opportunities.

Contract Termination

An applicant becomes a participant in the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program only upon entering a contract with the Secretary of U.S Department of Health and Human Services. The contract becomes fully executed (and effective) on the date that the Secretary (or the Secretary's designee) countersigns the contract. For fiscal year 2024 Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contracts under section 775 of the Public Health Service Act³, the Secretary may terminate a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract if the participant meets one of the following conditions and submits a written request through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#):

- (1) Request 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.
- (2) 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.

³ See the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (P.L. 118-47), Division D, Title II, which cross references Sec. 206 of the same, and provides that terminations under section 775 of the Public Health Service Act may occur up to 60 days after the effective date of a contract awarded in Fiscal Year 2024 or at any time before the participant has received funds due under the contract.

If the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program funds have been disbursed to the participant, the participant will receive separate instructions via the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) or directly from a Health Resources and Services Administration representative outlining the process for returning the awarded funds.

Requests to terminate the contract after 60 days will not be considered unless the individual who has been awarded such contract has not received funds due under the contract. Participants who do not meet the conditions for contract termination will be expected to perform their obligations under the contract. Failure to fulfill the terms of the contract may be considered a breach of contract.

Leaving an Approved Site Prior to Completion of Service Obligation

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program expects that participants will fulfill their obligation at the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site(s) identified in the Confirmation of Interest notification that applicants are required to electronically sign. If a participant feels they can no longer continue working at the approved site, the participant should discuss the situation and/or concerns with their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site management and must contact the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program immediately through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#). If the participant leaves their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site(s) without the prior approval of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program, they may be placed in default as of the date they stopped providing patient care at the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site and will become liable for the monetary damages specified in the participant's Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract. **Participants who are terminated for-cause by their service site will be placed in default and become liable for monetary damages.**

Transfer Request to Another Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-Approved Site

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants will only be allowed to transfer to other Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved sites. If a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participant would like to transfer to another Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site, the participant must submit a transfer request through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#). Please keep in mind that a participant's new position must continue to meet the clinical practice guidelines stated in the [Eligible Providers and Clinical Practice Requirements](#) section in order for the transfer request to be eligible for approval. Approval of all transfer requests are at the Health Resources and Services Administration's discretion and may depend on the circumstances of the participant's resignation or termination from the current Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site.

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site change must be approved and processed by the Health Resources and Services Administration prior to the participant beginning to receive service credit for employment at the new Pediatric Specialty Loan

Repayment Program-approved site. If a participant begins employment at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site prior to the Health Resources and Services Administration's transfer approval, they may not receive service credit for the time between their last day providing patient care at the initial Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site and resumption of service at the transfer Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site following the Health Resources and Services Administration's approval. If the proposed transfer Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site is disapproved by the Health Resources and Services Administration and the participant refuses assignment to another Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site, they may be in breach of their service contract.

Unemployment During Service Obligation

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants who resign or are terminated (not for cause) from their initial Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site, or who no longer meet the clinical practice guidelines stated above at their current Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site, must contact the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program immediately through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#). The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will provide the participant ninety (90) days in which to obtain an offer and accept a position at an eligible Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. It is the participant's responsibility to obtain employment at an eligible Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. Participants who do not secure employment at a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site within ninety (90) days will be in breach of their contract and recommended for default.

Breaching the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Contract

Participants should immediately contact the Health Resources and Services Administration through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) if a situation arises that may result in the participant being unable to begin or complete their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program service obligation. While the Health Resources and Services Administration will, to the extent possible, work with participants to assist them in fulfilling the service obligation, participants are reminded that the failure to begin or complete any year of service for which payment was made to the participant may result in a breach of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract.

Liquidated Damages

A participant who breaches a commitment to provide **full-time** direct clinical care will become liable for liquidated damages to the United States in the amount of all Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program payments made to the participant (including the amounts withheld for federal taxes), prorated for the days served, plus interest in accordance with applicable law. Liquidated damages will be calculated in accordance with the following formula:

Liquidated Damages Total = [(a)/(b) x (c)] + [d], where:

(a) = the award amount participant receives plus amounts withheld for federal taxes

- (b) = the number of days of obligated service
- (c) = the number of days left unserved
- (d) = interest in accordance with applicable law⁴

Any participant who breaches the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Payment contract and is placed in default will receive a notice from the Program Support Center's Debt Collection Center that specifies the amount the United States is entitled to recover. The debt will be due to be paid within one year from the date of the default notice. Failure to pay the debt by the due date has the following consequences:

- (1) **The debt may be reported as delinquent to credit reporting agencies.** During the one-year repayment period, the debt will be reported to credit reporting agencies as "current." If the debt becomes past due (that is, remains unpaid at the end of the one-year repayment period), it will be reported as "delinquent."
- (2) **The debt may be referred to a debt collection agency and the U.S. Department of Justice.** Any Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program debt past due for 45 days may be referred to a debt collection agency. If the debt collection agency is unsuccessful in collecting payment, the debt will be referred to the U.S. Department of Justice for filing of a lawsuit against the debtor.
- (3) **Administrative Offset.** Federal or state payments due to the participant (such as, an Internal Revenue Services or state income tax refund) may be offset by the Department of Treasury to pay a delinquent Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program debt. Also, debtors who are federal employees may have up to 15 percent of their take-home pay garnished to pay a delinquent Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award debt.
- (4) **Licensure Sanctions.** In some states, health professions licensing or certification boards may impose sanctions, including suspension or revocation of a defaulter's professional license or certification, if the defaulter fails to satisfactorily address repayment of their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award debt.

The Secretary may decline to impose liquidated damages if the Secretary determines, based on information and documentation as may be required, that the completion of the service obligation is impossible because the participant suffers from a physical or mental disability that:

- (1) Results in the permanent inability of the participant to perform the service obligation.
- (2) Prevents the participant from engaging in substantial gainful employment, as defined in the Glossary in the [Appendix](#) section, that would allow the participant to pay the liquidated damages.

⁴ [Additional information regarding Interest Rates on Overdue and Delinquent Debts.](#)

Participants (or their legal representative) who believe a breach falls within this category may request that the Secretary decline to impose liquidated damages in connection with the breach. To submit a request, participants must upload a signed request letter, including the detailed reason(s) for the request, as an inquiry through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#). The participant must also furnish the Health Resources and Services Administration with any medical and financial documentation requested by the Health Resources and Services Administration. All documents can be submitted through the Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal. The decision to grant a request will be made exclusively by the Secretary or designee. Please note that any request based on the medical condition of any individual other than the participant will be denied.

Sample Default Scenario

Dr. Jane Smith entered a three-year Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program full-time service contract effective September 30, 2024, and awarded \$100,000 (minus withheld taxes) in Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program financial support to apply toward her eligible loans. Her service end date is September 29, 2027. She was terminated for cause by her Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site at the end of her workday on March 31, 2025. The Health Resources and Services Administration determines that she breached her Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract on April 1, 2025 and served 184 days of her three-year (1,096 days) service obligation.

Dr. Jane Smith is liable to the United States for an amount equal to the loan repayments awarded (including the amounts withheld for federal taxes), prorated for the days served plus interest in accordance with applicable law. Therefore, Dr. Smith would be liable for 912 unserved days.

In this example, using the above liquidated damages formula, Dr. Smith would be liable to the United States for approximately \$83,211.67, plus HHS annual rate of interest⁵ from the date of the breach until the debt is paid in full, in accordance with applicable law, and must pay that amount in full within one year from the date of the default notification.

⁵ [Additional information regarding Interest Rates on Overdue and Delinquent Debts.](#)

The following liquidated damages calculation is an approximate projected estimate of the formula:

Liquidated Damages Total (estimate provided for this example only)

Projected Estimates	Factors for Liquidated Damages
\$83,211	Total Award (includes withheld taxes)/service obligation x # of unserved days.
+ \$9,569	Interest Rate at 11.5%
\$92,780.67	Total Damages Estimate

(Interest rates in this calculation is variable and likely to change. Withheld taxes are defined as estimated Form W-4 withholdings + 7.65% employee FICA.)

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Award Taxes and Financial Information

Participants will receive awards in the form of a lump-sum payment electronically, issued to the bank account provided by the participant approximately 30 days after the contract start date. Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award payments are subject to federal taxes. The Health Resources and Services Administration will withhold federal income tax and Federal Insurance Contributions Act tax (Social Security and Medicare) from a participant’s award. Taxes are paid directly to the Internal Revenue Services on the participant’s behalf. All Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program payments and federal taxes withheld are reported to the participant and the Internal Revenue Service on a Form W-2 after the end of the tax year. Loan repayments may also be subject to state and local income taxes.

Participants who want additional funds withheld to cover the income tax on their awards should indicate the additional amount to be deducted on a Form W-4. Participants should consult the Internal Revenue Service regarding any additional tax obligations. The Health Resources and Services Administration does not provide tax advice, and all tax questions should be directed to a tax professional or the Internal Revenue Service through the TAX HELPLINE at 1-800-829-1040. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program is unable to provide an individual with an after-tax calculation or any other tax-related specific advice or information. The Internal Revenue Service encourages the use of their [Tax Withholding Estimator](#) to perform a quick “paycheck checkup.”

Each January, participants will receive a W-2 Wage and Tax Statement for the taxable income received under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program during the prior tax year.

Participants may sign up to have their W-2 form posted in their [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) account. W-2 forms are posted no later than January 30 of each year. If the W-2 form is not available by that date, participants should submit an inquiry via the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#). Participants may also choose to have their W-2 form mailed to the address provided in the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#). Participants must ensure their name, mailing and email addresses, and banking information are up to date.

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 Information

APPLICATION DEADLINE

A complete online application must be submitted via the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) by 7:30 p.m. ET on July 9, 2024. All supporting documentation for the application must be uploaded before an individual can submit a complete application package. Applicants must upload all documents; the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will not accept documentation by fax or mail. The electronic [Employment Verification](#) must also be completed before an applicant can submit their application.

Applicants should print and keep a copy of the completed application package for their records. Applicants are responsible for submitting a complete and accurate online application, including ALL required documentation in a legible format. **If during the initial review of the application, the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program discovers that documentation is missing, or not legible, the application may be deemed “incomplete” and rejected. If the answers provided in the online application do not match the supporting/supplemental documents, or if the documentation provided does not accurately verify the answers provided, the application will be rejected.**

COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

A **complete** Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Online Application consists of:

- (1) Online application.
- (2) Required supporting documentation.
- (3) Additional supplemental documentation (if applicable).

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will not accept requests to update a submitted application or permit the submission/resubmission of incomplete, rejected, or otherwise delayed application materials after the deadline. In addition, Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program staff will not fill in any missing information or contact applicants regarding missing information.

Online Application

Applicants are required to complete each of the listed sections to be able to submit an online application.

- 1. Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Eligibility.** Answers to this section will determine the applicant’s baseline eligibility for participation in the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program. If an individual does not pass the initial screening portion of the online application, they will not be able to continue with the application. Please refer to the [Program Eligibility Requirements](#) section.

2. **Personal Information.** Answers to this section pertain to the applicant's name, Social Security number, mailing and email addresses, and other contact information. Answers also pertain to individual and family background.
3. **Discipline, Training, and Certification.** Answers to this section pertain to the applicant's education, training, and licensure and/or certification.
4. **Employment or Physician Training Program.** In this section, applicants will search for and select the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site where they are providing pediatric medical subspecialty care, pediatric surgical specialty care or child and adolescent mental health care as an employee, resident or fellow (as applicable). If a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site is not listed in the search results, applicants are required to select the option after the search tool, which states, "Click this box if your Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site is not listed in the search results." If selected, the applicant is provided instructions on how to resolve the concern. A site may request to become Pediatric Specialty approved during the application cycle through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#). If any of the sites where the applicant provides patient care do not meet Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program site requirements, the provider is not eligible to apply. Applicants who work at more than one Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site (such as, several satellite clinics) must include all service locations in their application and initiate an electronic Employment Verification Form for each Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. Selecting a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site where the applicant is not providing patient care will disqualify their application.
5. **Employment or Physician Training Program Verification.** Once an applicant selects the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site or training program at which they are or will be serving, the applicant will need to initiate an electronic Employment Verification Form. Once initiated, the designated point of contact(s) at the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site will be notified electronically through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) that an Employment Verification Form has been requested by the applicant. When the point of contact completes the Employment Verification Form, the applicant will be notified. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site must complete the electronic Employment Verification Form before an applicant will be allowed to submit the application. If an Employment Verification Form is not submitted by every Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site identified by the applicant, the application cannot be submitted.
 - For applicants who provide pediatric specialty care to designated areas that qualify as a Medically Underserved Population (for example, Medicaid eligible, migrant farm workers, Native Americans, etc.) a site point of contact(s) will be required to attest to the type of Medically Underserved Population that is

included in the provider's patient panel for which the site receives any level of reimbursement from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for those services.

- The point of contact(s) will receive periodic reminders to complete the Employment Verification Form; however, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the Employment Verification Form is complete and accurate within a timeframe that will allow them to submit the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program application by the application deadline. The applicant will receive notification that the point of contact has completed the Employment Verification Form and should work to complete and submit their application as soon as possible. The applicant must contact the point of contact(s) to resolve any concerns regarding the responses provided on the Employment Verification Form.
- Applicants will have the ability to edit their application and initiate a new Employment Verification Form if necessary. However, the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site must complete the corrected Employment Verification Form before the applicant can resubmit the application, which must be done before the application deadline, or the applicant will be ineligible for an award. Errors made by applicants and/or Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved service site point of contact(s) cannot be corrected after the application deadline.
- Additionally, if the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program applicant is working at multiple Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved sites, each Employment Verification Form should reflect the hours worked at each Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site. The total hours from all the Employment Verification Forms must be at least 40 hours weekly for full-time employment.⁶

6. Loan Information. Answers in this section pertain to each eligible loan for which an applicant is seeking repayment. All loans submitted will be verified to determine whether they are eligible for repayment under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program through a review of the supporting documents, by contacting lenders/holders, and by checking the applicant's credit report. Applicants are strongly encouraged to view the link provided in the online application for detailed instructions on the types of documents that need to be provided to help the Health Resources and Services Administration verify loan information. The following information must be entered about each of the loan the applicant wishes to submit for repayment, and the documents listed in the [Required Supporting Documentation](#) section must be uploaded separately:

Full-time service is 40 hours/week; 36 hours of direct care and up to four (4) hours of administrative.

- a. Name and contact information for the lender/holder.
- b. Loan account number.
- c. Original amount disbursed.
- d. Original date of the loan.
- e. Current outstanding balance (no more than 30 days from the date of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program application submission).
- f. Current interest rate.
- g. Type of loan. If a consolidated loan, additional questions will be asked:
 - i. Original date of consolidation.
 - ii. Original balance of consolidation.
 - iii. Account number.
- h. Purpose of loan.

Required Supporting Documentation

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide/upload supporting documentation into the online application. All information reflected in the supporting documentation must match answers provided in the online application or the application will be deemed ineligible. An application will not be considered complete, and an applicant may not submit an application, unless it contains each of the following required supporting documents:

- (1) **Proof of Status as a United States citizen, national, or a permanent resident.** This document may include a copy of a birth certificate, the ID page of a current United States passport, a certificate of citizenship or naturalization, or copy of [Permanent Resident Card](#) (green card). **Copies of a driver's license or a Social Security card are NOT acceptable documents.**
- (2) **Health Professional License, Certification, or Registration.** Applicants will be required to submit proof of their current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, certificate, or registration (whichever is applicable), **with an expiration date** in the state in which they intend to practice under the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program or from any state if practicing in a federal site.
- (3) **Health Professional Degree.** Applicants will be required to submit proof of completion of their health professional degree. (See [Required Credentials for Eligible Disciplines](#) section).
- (4) **Loan Information Verification.** Applicants will be required to provide two types of documentation for each loan that is being submitted for consideration: (a) an account statement; and (b) a disbursement report.
 - a. **Account Statement.** This document is used to provide current information on their eligible loans. Often borrowers receive monthly statements indicating the status of their loan balance. This document should:
 - i. Be on official letterhead or other clear verification that it comes from the lender/holder.
 - ii. Include the name of the borrower (must be the name of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program applicant).
 - iii. Contain the account number.

- iv. Include the date of the statement (cannot be more than 30 days from the date of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program application submission).
- v. Include the current outstanding balance (principal and interest) or the current payoff balance.
- vi. Include the current interest rate.
- b. **Disbursement Report.** This report is used to verify the originating loan information and should:
 - i. Be on official letterhead or other clear verification that it comes from the lender/holder.
 - ii. Include the name of the borrower.
 - iii. Contain the account number.
 - iv. Include the type of loan.
 - v. Include the original loan date (must be prior to the date of the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program application submission).
 - vi. Include the original loan amount.
 - vii. Include the purpose of the loan.

NOTE: For all federal loans, the [Student Aid Summary Report](#) is used to verify the originating loan information. The applicant will need to have or [create a Federal Student Aid ID](#) to log in to their secured area. If the applicant has multiple federal loans, they will only need to access one Student Aid Summary Report since the report will contain information on all their federal loans.

For all other loans, the disbursement report can be satisfied through various types of documents, including a promissory note, a disclosure statement, and letters directly from the lender containing the required information (as indicated in the Disbursement Report section). The applicant may be able to obtain this disbursement information on the lender's website; however, all documentation must be on official letterhead from the lender.

Additional Supplemental Documentation (if applicable)

The following additional documents will be required for submission only if the applicant's responses on the online application indicate that they are relevant. Only applicants who have these documents listed on their "Supporting Documents" page of the online application should submit them. These documents will be added to their Supporting Documents list once the online application has been submitted.

- (1) **Specialty Certification.** If an applicant selects a specialty, they will be required to upload a copy of the certificate of completion or diploma from the training program where they matriculated.
- (2) **Postgraduate Training Completion Verification.** This document verifies that the applicant completed specialized training. This documentation is in addition to the postgraduate training related to the applicant's practice area. Such documentation may include an official completion certificate.

- (3) **Postgraduate Training Acceptance or Good Standing Verification.** This document verifies that the applicant is accepted to or completing an accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship.
- (4) **Substance Use Disorder Certification/License.** A substance use disorder licensure and/or certification must meet the national standard recognized by the National Board of Certified Counselors, National Association for Addiction Professionals or International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium.
- (5) **Verification of Existing Service Obligation.** If the applicant has an existing service obligation, they must submit verification from the entity to which the obligation is owed indicating that the existing service obligation will be completed prior to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program application deadline, July 9, 2024.

Application Review and Award Process

Applicants receive a receipt of submission pop-up window immediately upon submitting the online application. Applicants are able to view the overall status of their application, as well as a copy (PDF) of their submitted application, which includes a list of uploaded supporting documents, and a copy (PDF) of their completed Employment Verification Form(s) by logging into the application account that was set up when the applicant registered to apply. **It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the entirety of the application and required supporting documents (including Employment Verification Form(s)) and applicable supplemental documents are accurately submitted.**

Once the online application has been submitted, applicants will have an opportunity to make edits to their online application, including the ability to upload new documents, cancel and reinstate employment verifications, change answers to questions and loan data, and withdraw their applications from consideration. Final edits and resubmissions must be made before the close of the application cycle of July 9, 2024.

Each time the application is reopened for editing, or to check specific elements of the application, the applicant must: 1) complete the "Self-Certifications" section of the online application, and 2) click the "Submit" button to resubmit their application, or the application will not be submitted.

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program advises that providers submit their complete applications as early in the open application period as possible. Applicants who wait until the end of the application cycle risk submitting incomplete or ineligible applications if errors are found later during the open application cycle. The "Edit" option is available in the applicant's account on the "Submitted" page, until the close of the application cycle. The ability to edit and resubmit an application will be disabled after the application deadline. Applications not resubmitted by this deadline will not be considered for an award. Applications that remain in the "In Progress" state (not submitted) after the close of the application cycle (July 9, 2024) are

not eligible for review or award. **No exceptions will be made in cases where an applicant fails to resubmit an edited application.**

Applicants may withdraw their application at any time prior to the contract being countersigned by the Secretary or their designee. To withdraw, applicants must log into their application account, and select the “Withdraw” option on the “Submitted” page.

The Health Resources and Services Administration will not begin to review applications for funding until the application deadline (July 9, 2024) has passed (see the [Funding Priorities](#) section).

Health Resources and Services Administration Communication Methods

The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program frequently corresponds with applicants by email. It is important that the applicant check their email during the application process for correspondence from the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program office and **make certain to disable “spam” blockers (or check the spam folder)**. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program will provide email updates as applicable; however, it is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure the contact information that the Health Resources and Services Administration has on file is correct. If updates are necessary, applicants can make changes prior to the close of the application cycle by logging into their application account.

Note: When submitted applications are opened for editing during the open application cycle, applicants must complete ALL steps to resubmit their application prior to the close of the application cycle. Applications that remain in the “In Progress” state (not submitted) after the close of the application cycle (July 9, 2024) are not eligible for review or award.

CONFIRMATION OF INTEREST

Award finalists are notified by email to log into their application account to confirm their continued interest in receiving an award, and to confirm that the loan and service site information provided to the Health Resources and Services Administration in their Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program application remains valid. Applicants are also asked to confirm that they have read and understand the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract they will be asked to electronically sign if they accept an award. In addition, applicants are asked to provide their direct deposit banking information for award funds in the event they receive a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract.

Note: The Confirmation of Interest is not a guarantee that the individual will receive an award, as awards are subject to the availability of funds and all other eligibility requirements. All participants will receive final notification of an award, including the service obligation dates, no later than September 30, 2024.

To confirm interest in receiving a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award, an applicant must respond by the deadline provided with the Confirmation of Interest email and verify that:

- They are currently employed by (that means, are currently working at) or participating in accredited pediatric medical subspecialty or pediatric surgical specialty residency or fellowship at the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site they selected when they submitted their application. Applicants who are not employed at the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved site verified by the Health Resources and Services Administration must check “NO” where asked.
- They will meet the full-time service requirements, as outlined in this Guidance, throughout the period of obligated service.
- The information describing the loans approved by the Health Resources and Services Administration for repayment is correct.

All finalists must read and electronically sign the contract document. The electronic signature has the effect of a handwritten signature and verifies that all of the information in the Confirmation of Interest is accurate. Once countersigned by the Secretary of Health and Human Services or their designee, the contract obligates the participant to a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award service obligation. Applicants who verify inaccurate information on the Confirmation of Interest may not receive service credit and/or may be in a breach of contract. If an applicant does not complete the Confirmation of Interest process by the deadline, their application will be withdrawn from consideration.

If an individual selected for an award decides not to accept the award **prior to signing the contract**, they may decline the award by selecting the “Decline” option on the Confirmation of Interest document. This process is without penalty and permits the award to be offered to an alternate applicant. Once an applicant declines the offer of award, there will not be any opportunity to reclaim the award during the Fiscal Year 2024 application cycle.

If an individual selected for an award decides not to accept it **after signing the contract**, the individual should notify the Health Resources and Services Administration immediately through the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) that they no longer want the award.

- **If the Secretary’s designee has not yet countersigned the contract**, the individual will not incur a service obligation or any penalty for withdrawing.
If the Secretary’s designee has signed the contract, the individual can terminate the contract within 60 days of the effective date of the award upon written request and repayment of any funds paid or at any time if the individual who has been selected for an award has not received funds due under the contract.

THE PEDIATRIC SPECIALTY LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM CONTRACT

Only the Secretary or their designee can grant a Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program award. Awards cannot be guaranteed or granted by the service site personnel, Health Resources and Services Administration staff, a state Primary Care Office, a state Primary Care Association, or any other person or entity.

Applicants selected as finalists will receive a Confirmation of Interest email with instructions to electronically sign and return the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program contract and to provide banking information to confirm their continued interest in the program and to facilitate the electronic transfer of the award funds if their contract is approved by the Secretary (or their designee) and funds are awarded.

Additional Information

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

The purpose of this information collection is to obtain information through the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program that is used to assess a Loan Repayment Program applicant's eligibility and qualifications for the Loan Repayment Program and to obtain information for eligible facilities or sites. Clinicians interested in participating in the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program must submit an application to the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program through the Bureau of Health Workforce Online portal. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this information collection is 0906-0058 and it is valid until 07/31/2026. This information collection is required to obtain or retain a benefit (Section 775 of the Public Health Service Act [42 USC § 295]). Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.5 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to HRSA Reports Clearance Officer, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 14N136B, Rockville, Maryland, 20857.

RESOURCES FOR APPLICANTS

Health Workforce Connector

The [Health Workforce Connector](#) contains a searchable database for all Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved sites, including those with current job openings. Additionally, clinicians can create a searchable user profile, so hiring sites can contact you.

Find Shortage Areas

All Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants must serve in or provide service to a federally designated Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or Medically Underserved Population. You may find the locations of a current Health Professional Shortage Area, Medically Underserved Area, or Medically Underserved Population by using the [Find Shortage Areas](#) tool.

Need Help?

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.

- 1-800-221-9393
- TTY: 1-877-897-9910

Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal

After an applicant has been selected for an award, the [Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal](#) allows Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program participants to access pertinent program materials and their participant profile, make service requests, and to communicate with the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program directly.

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program Website

Announcements and information posted by the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program on social media sites are informal and unofficial communications. Official program policies and requirements are set forth in this Guidance, the applicable contract, on the [Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program website](#), and through other communications provided to the participant via the Bureau of Health Workforce Customer Service Portal.

Appendix: Glossary

[FY 2024 PEDIATRIC SPECIALTY LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM APPLICATION PROGRAM AND GUIDANCE](#)