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# Behavioral Healthcare Provider Loan Redemption Program

To address the critical shortage of behavioral healthcare providers, the Behavioral Healthcare Provider Loan Redemption Program offers loan redemption to eligible providers in exchange for up to six years of service. Eligible behavioral healthcare providers includes psychiatrists, licensed psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, psychiatric nurse mental health clinical specialists, board certified behavior analysts, licensed clinical alcohol and drug counselors, and licensed professional counselors.

Subject to appropriation, the program will provide up to \$50,000 to redeem an eligible participant's cumulative outstanding student loan balance in exchange for every two full-time years of service at an approved site, for a total of \$150,000 in loan redemption in exchange for up to six years of service. Approved sites are community providers of behavioral and mental health services located in New Jersey, including community providers operated by a nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, school districts, municipalities, county governments, State agencies, and the federal government. In addition, program participants who work primarily with children or adolescents are eligible to receive up to six individual incentive grants that shall not exceed \$5,000 annually. Funding for this program is subject to state appropriations and available funding.

## Fiscal Year 2024 Overview

Effective July 1, 2023, New Jersey's Fiscal Year 2024 budget allocates \$5 million to the Behavioral Healthcare Provider Loan Redemption Program. When this program launched in Fiscal Year 2023, the program's inaugural year, applications from eligible individuals far exceeded available funding.

To address New Jersey's most severe shortages of behavioral healthcare providers, HESAA will deploy this second year of funding by reviewing applications and selecting participants using a scoring system. The Fiscal Year 2024 scoring rubric includes a weighting factor based on the demand for different behavioral healthcare occupations in the various counties of New Jersey, based on occupational demand data from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Applications will be scored and weighted based on the following criteria:

- In-demand occupation/title (35%)
- Geographic location of the applicant's place of employment (25%)
- The applicant's salary in the current occupation (20%)
- Whether the applicant works primarily with children or adolescents (20%)

Applications will be available on HESAA's website beginning October 1, 2023. Prospective participants in the program must submit their application no later than October 31, 2023. HESAA will consider all applications for Fiscal Year 2024 funding that are submitted within the designated one-month window, without any priority for the date on which the application is received. Starting on November 1, 2023, HESAA will review and score all applications received during the application period. On or after January 15, 2024, HESAA will announce the selected program participants based on the rank order of application scoring.

Any individual whose application was denied in the inaugural round of funding must reapply for Fiscal Year 2024 funding using HESAA's new online application starting in October 2023.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [LoanRedemption@hesaa.org](mailto:LoanRedemption@hesaa.org).

## Eligibility

To qualify for loan repayment assistance, an applicant must meet all of the following requirements:

1. Be a New Jersey resident and maintain residency in the State during Program participation;
2. Be employed full-time, or plan to employed, as a full-time [eligible behavioral healthcare provider](#) at an approved site;

3. Maintain a license, as applicable, to practice as a behavioral healthcare provider in the State of New Jersey throughout participation in the program;
4. Agree to engage in the clinical practice of mental or behavioral healthcare for at least two years at an approved site pursuant to the terms of a contract with the NJ Higher Education Student Assistance Authority;
5. Not be in default on any eligible qualifying loan;
6. Not previously have been selected for participation in the Program; and
7. Not currently be participating in any other State tuition or loan redemption program or in the federally administered National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program, section 338B of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. s.254 1-1).

[Fact Sheet](#)

[Eligible Occupations & Program Definitions](#)

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