



*Department of Health
and Human Services*

*Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives*

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner

Office of the Commissioner
Student Loan Reimbursement Program - Nurses

Policy # DHHS-36-09

Issue Date: 3/20/09

Revised Date:

I. SUBJECT

Student Loan Reimbursement Program - Nurses

II. POLICY STATEMENT

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is committed to recruiting and retaining the most highly skilled and talented workforce in the State of Maine. Occasionally, in order to attract and retain employees in highly competitive job families and/or classifications, it is necessary to implement recruitment and retention strategies as provided for in statute.

III. RATIONALE

The Student Loan Reimbursement Program is a recruitment and retention incentive designed to provide modest financial assistance to current and future registered, and licensed practical nurses for those individuals who accumulated student loans while pursuing licenses to practice nursing. This program is authorized by Title 5, Chapter 372 and the Memorandum of Agreement dated October 7, 2008. This agreement is pursuant to the State Administrative and Accounting Manual Section 95.10 or its successor.

IV. PROCEDURES

Nurses employed at State operated hospitals will be eligible for a pre-determined monthly reimbursement payment for loans that were obtained from financial institutions as qualified student loans by the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Public Health Service Act. The loan must be directly related to qualified educational expenses granted by the institution and must not include in whole or in part the purchase of personal property such as vehicles, dwellings, stocks, etc..

The Student Loan Reimbursement Program will be established on a calendar year basis. Each facility will designate an amount of funding to be available for this Program from within existing budgets. Nurses employed at the beginning of each calendar year will be surveyed to determine their interest in participating in the Program. The survey will identify the management representative within the facility to whom requests for tuition reimbursement will be made.

A monthly reimbursement amount will be determined based upon available budgets, the number of eligible participants employed at the time, as well as an estimate of nurses who will be employed during the calendar year. This monthly amount will remain unchanged during the year so long as there is continued availability of funds.

Each nurse who requests reimbursement will be required to sign a certification acknowledging the Program requirements, tuition reimbursement amount, their responsibilities including an understanding that the payments are considered wages by the Internal Revenue Service, and that financial institutions will be contacted to verify the authenticity of the loan. Each individual who requests tuition reimbursement will sign a release of information so that information verifying the loan may be obtained as necessary. Each nurse who requests reimbursement for student loan assistance must provide adequate documentation of payment for each month reimbursement is requested.

Reimbursement payments will be made directly to the employee. Employees who receive tuition reimbursement under existing tuition reimbursement programs will not be eligible for this Program.

In order to participate in this reimbursement program, student loans must be current. No retroactive payments for loans in arrears will be authorized.

A participant in the Program will cease reimbursement eligibility upon separation from State service, transfer to a position outside of the hospital where the student loan program was authorized or accepts a position within the hospital that does not require a nursing license.

V. DISTRIBUTION

To all registered nurses and licensed practical nurses employed within Riverview Psychiatric Center and Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Center.

Effective Date

Brenda M. Harvey
Commissioner