

“(E) after completion of medical school and postgraduate training, to serve as a full-time clinical practice employee in the Veterans Health Administration for a period of 4 years.

“(2) BREACH OF AGREEMENT.—If an eligible veteran who accepts funding under this section breaches the terms of the agreement described in paragraph (1), the United States shall be entitled to recover damages in an amount equal to the total amount of such funding received by the veteran.

“(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent any covered medical school from accepting more than two eligible veterans for the entering class of 2020.

“(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than December 31, 2021, and annually thereafter for the subsequent 3 years, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot program under this section. Such report shall include the evaluation of the Secretary of the success of the pilot program, including the number of veterans who received funding under the program who matriculated and an evaluation of the academic progress of such veterans.

“(g) COVERED MEDICAL SCHOOLS.—In this section, the term ‘covered medical school’ means any of the following:

“(1) The Teague-Cranston medical schools, consisting of—

“(A) Texas A&M College of Medicine;

“(B) Quillen College of Medicine at East Tennessee State University;

“(C) Boonshoft School of Medicine at Wright State University;

“(D) Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine at Marshall University; and

“(E) University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

“(2) Charles R Drew University of Medicine and Science.

“(3) Howard University College of Medicine.

“(4) Meharry Medical College.

“(5) Morehouse School of Medicine.”

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATION AND TRAINING PILOT PROGRAM FOR FORMER MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

Pub. L. 115–141, div. J, title II, §246, Mar. 23, 2018, 132 Stat. 823, provided that:

“(a) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program to provide educational assistance to certain former members of the Armed Forces for education and training as physician assistants of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—An individual is eligible to participate in the pilot program if the individual—

“(1) has medical or military health experience gained while serving as a member of the Armed Forces;

“(2) has received a certificate, associate degree, baccalaureate degree, master's degree, or postbaccalaureate training in a science relating to health care; or

“(3) has participated in the delivery of healthcare services or related medical services, including participation in military training relating to the identification, evaluation, treatment, and prevention of diseases and disorders.

“(c) DURATION.—The pilot program shall be carried out during the 5-year period beginning on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act [Mar. 23, 2018].

“(d) SELECTION.—

“(1) The Secretary shall select eligible individuals under subsection (b) to participate in the pilot program.

“(2) In selecting individuals to participate in the pilot program under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give priority to individuals who agree to be employed as a physician assistant for the Veterans Health Administration at a medical facility of the Department located in a community that—

“(A) is designated as a medically underserved population under section 330(b)(3)(A) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(b)(3)(A)); and

“(B) is in a State with a per capita population of veterans of more than 5 percent according to the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics and the United States Census Bureau.

“(e) EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—In carrying out the pilot program, the Secretary shall provide educational assistance to individuals participating in the pilot program, including through the use of scholarships, to cover the costs to such individuals of obtaining a master's degree in physician assistant studies or a similar master's degree.

“(f) PERIOD OF OBLIGATED SERVICE.—The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with each individual participating in the pilot program in which such individual agrees to be employed as a physician assistant for the Veterans Health Administration for a period of obligated service to be determined by the Secretary.

“(g) BREACH.—An individual who participates in the pilot program and fails to satisfy the period of obligated service under subsection (f) shall be liable to the United States, in lieu of such obligated service, for the amount that has been paid or is payable to or on behalf of the individual under the pilot program, reduced by the proportion that the number of days served for completion of the period of obligated service bears to the total number of days in the period of obligated service of such individual.

“(h) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act [Mar. 23, 2018], the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in collaboration with the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall submit to Congress a report on the pilot program's effectiveness of helping to meet the shortage of physician assistants employed by the Department.”

PAYMENTS TO HEALTH-CARE PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES FOR TUITION LOANS

Pub. L. 102–585, title V, §523(b), Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 4959, provided that Secretary of Veterans Affairs could not provide payments to health-care professional employees of Department of Veterans Affairs for payment of tuition loans, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 105–368, title VIII, §804, Nov. 11, 1998, 112 Stat. 3358.

TUITION LOAN PAYMENT PROGRAM

Pub. L. 102–389, title I, Oct. 6, 1992, 106 Stat. 1574, provided in part for an appropriation: “For payment of outstanding tuition loans to Department of Veterans Affairs health care professional employees (excluding physicians and dentists) who agree to remain in service for one year or more, \$5,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 1994: *Provided*, That the Secretary, in order to recruit and retain such employees, may make such payments, not to exceed \$3,000 during any calendar year, or \$12,000 in total, to any such employee who has an outstanding tuition loan from an educational institution approved by the Secretary that has led to a degree in the health care occupation in which such individual is employed: *Provided further*, That no payment shall be made in advance: *Provided further*, That regulations shall be promulgated by the Secretary to implement this program.”

§ 7602. Eligibility

(a)(1) To be eligible to participate in the Educational Assistance Program under subchapter II, III, VI, or IX of this chapter, an individual must be accepted for enrollment or be currently enrolled as a student at a qualifying educational institution in a course of education or training that is approved by the Secretary and that leads toward completion of a degree in a field of education or training for which a scholarship may be awarded under subchapter II of this chapter,

for which tuition reimbursement may be provided under subchapter III of this chapter, or for which a scholarship may be awarded under subchapter VI or IX of this chapter, as the case may be.

(2) A qualifying educational institution for purposes of this section is an educational institution that is in a State and that (as determined by the Secretary) is an accredited institution.

(b) An individual is not eligible to apply to participate in the Educational Assistance Program under subchapter II, III, VI, or IX of this chapter if the individual is obligated under any other Federal program to perform service after completion of the course of education or training of such individual referred to in subsection (a) of this section.

(Added Pub. L. 100-322, title II, §216(b), May 20, 1988, 102 Stat. 518, §4302; amended Pub. L. 101-366, title II, §205(c)(2), Aug. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 441; renumbered §7602, Pub. L. 102-40, title IV, §402(b)(1), May 7, 1991, 105 Stat. 238; Pub. L. 102-83, §4(b)(1), (2)(E), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 404, 405; Pub. L. 105-368, title VIII, §805(2), Nov. 11, 1998, 112 Stat. 3358; Pub. L. 116-171, title V, §502(b)(1)(B), Oct. 17, 2020, 134 Stat. 818.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2020—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 116-171, §502(b)(1)(B)(i), substituted “VI, or IX” for “or VI” and “subchapter VI or IX” for “subchapter VI”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 116-171, §502(b)(1)(B)(ii), substituted “VI, or IX” for “or VI”.

1998—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 105-368, §805(2)(A), substituted “subchapter II, III, or VI” for “subchapter I or II”, substituted “, for which” for “or for which”, and inserted before period at end “, or for which a scholarship may be awarded under subchapter VI of this chapter, as the case may be”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 105-368, §805(2)(B), substituted “subchapter II, III, or VI” for “subchapter I or II”.

1991—Pub. L. 102-40 renumbered section 4302 of this title as this section.

Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 102-83 substituted “Secretary” for “Administrator” in pars. (1) and (2).

1990—Subsecs. (a)(1), (b). Pub. L. 101-366 inserted “under subchapter I or II of this chapter” after “Educational Assistance Program”.

§ 7603. Application and acceptance

(a)(1) To apply to participate in the Educational Assistance Program under subchapter II, III, V, VI, VIII, or IX of this chapter, an individual shall submit to the Secretary an application for such participation together with an agreement described in section 7604 of this title under which the participant agrees to serve a period of obligated service in the Veterans Health Administration as provided in the agreement in return for payment of educational assistance as provided in the agreement.

(2) To apply to participate in the Educational Assistance Program under subchapter VII of this chapter, an individual shall submit to the Secretary an application for such participation.

(b)(1) An individual becomes a participant in the Educational Assistance Program upon the Secretary's approval of the individual's application and the Secretary's acceptance of the agreement (if required).

(2) Upon the Secretary's approval of an individual's participation in the program, the Secretary shall promptly notify the individual of that approval. Such notice shall be in writing.

(c)(1) In distributing application forms and agreement forms to individuals desiring to participate in the Educational Assistance Program, the Secretary shall include with such forms the following:

(A) A fair summary of the rights and liabilities of an individual whose application is approved (and whose agreement is accepted) by the Secretary, including a clear explanation of the damages to which the United States is entitled if the individual breaches the agreement.

(B) A full description of the terms and conditions that apply to participation in the Educational Assistance Program and service in the Veterans Health Administration.

(2) The Secretary shall make such application forms and other information available to individuals desiring to participate in the Educational Assistance Program on a date sufficiently early to allow such individuals adequate time to prepare and submit such forms.

(d) In selecting applicants for acceptance in the Educational Assistance Program, the Secretary shall give priority to the applications of individuals who have previously received educational assistance under the program and have not completed the course of education or training undertaken under such program.

(Added Pub. L. 100-322, title II, §216(b), May 20, 1988, 102 Stat. 518, §4303; renumbered §7603 and amended Pub. L. 102-40, title IV, §402(b)(1), (d)(1), May 7, 1991, 105 Stat. 238, 239; Pub. L. 102-83, §4(b)(1), (2)(E), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 404, 405; Pub. L. 103-446, title XII, §1201(b)(1), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4682; Pub. L. 105-368, title VIII, §805(3), Nov. 11, 1998, 112 Stat. 3359; Pub. L. 106-419, title IV, §404(a)(10), Nov. 1, 2000, 114 Stat. 1865; Pub. L. 115-182, title III, §303(b)(1)(B), June 6, 2018, 132 Stat. 1466; Pub. L. 116-171, title V, §502(b)(1)(C), Oct. 17, 2020, 134 Stat. 818.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2020—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 116-171 substituted “VIII, or IX” for “or VIII”.

2018—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 115-182 substituted “VI, or VIII” for “or VI”.

2000—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 106-419 substituted “subchapter” for “subsection”.

1998—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 105-368, §805(3)(A), designated existing provisions as par. (1), substituted “To apply to participate in the Educational Assistance Program under subsection II, III, V, or VI of this chapter,” for “To apply to participate in the Educational Assistance Program,” and added par. (2).

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 105-368, §805(3)(B), inserted “(if required)” before period at end.

1994—Subsecs. (a), (c)(1)(B). Pub. L. 103-446 substituted “Veterans Health Administration” for “Department of Medicine and Surgery”.

1991—Pub. L. 102-40, §402(b)(1), renumbered section 4303 of this title as this section.

Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 102-83 substituted “Secretary” for “Administrator”.

Pub. L. 102-40, §402(d)(1), substituted “7604” for “4304”.

Subsecs. (b) to (d). Pub. L. 102-83 substituted “Secretary” for “Administrator” and “Secretary's” for “Administrator's” wherever appearing.