

## Washington Health Corps

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What are the major differences between SHP & BHP, and FHP?

	State Health Program (SHP) & Behavioral Health Program (BHP)	Federal Health Program (FHP)
<b>Maximum award amount</b>	\$75,000	\$70,000
<b>Contract service obligation</b>	Minimum three (3) years	Minimum two (2) years
<b>Employment type</b>	Less than full-time allowed	Full-time only
<b>Default penalties</b>	Amount equal to the unsatisfied portion of the service obligation or the total amount paid, whichever is less, plus interest	Minimum \$31,000 See default section in reference guide for details
<b>Eligibility requirements</b>	Vary for site and provider	Vary for site and provider

#### Can I apply for SHP & BHP and for FHP?

Yes. Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) staff will review your application for all programs if you qualify for all. WSAC awards FHP funds first. If selected for FHP, you may choose to decline the award, and your application will remain in the SHP & BHP funding pool, but WSAC does not guarantee an award. If you accept an FHP offer, WSAC will remove your application from consideration for an SHP & BHP award.

#### Is the National Health Service Corps the same as the Washington Health Corps?

No. The National Health Service Corps awards scholarships and loan repayment from Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). Please contact the Department of Health for more information regarding the National Health Service Corps.

#### Are the site qualifications the same for all programs?

FHP has more requirements. For example, the site must have a federal Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) designation and use a posted sliding fee discount schedule. For the BHP, priority consideration will be given to licensed community mental health agencies.

#### What if I don't have a job by the application deadline? Can I still apply?

Application eligibility requires employment at one of the approved sites, or that you have a contract stating you will be starting employment by July 1 of the application year.

#### Do you accept late applications?

We receive more applications than we can fund. In fairness to the providers who submit complete applications by the deadline, we do not accept late applications.

**What are my chances of receiving an award?**

Depending on the applicant pool, each year is different. WSAC awards providers based on score. WSAC scores applications based on criteria outlined in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC), along with selection criteria identified by the program's planning committee.

**I see there is a limit on the number of days per year I can be away from the clinic/site. I was planning to take a month off next year for an extended vacation. Will this impact my contract?**

Yes. If awarded, the contract limits you to a maximum number of days away from the site for any reason (holidays, sick leave, paid time off, leave without pay, etc.). If you exceed the number of days allowed, it may put your account into default and require repayment, according to the guidelines in your contract.

**I need to take extended time off for FMLA. Will this impact my contract?**

A deferment of service obligation may be granted if your compliance with the obligation is temporarily impossible or an extreme hardship (e.g., leave of absence for medical reasons, FMLA, or call to active duty). Deferments should be requested in advance and be preapproved. Periods of approved deferment will suspend payments and may extend your service obligation end-date.

**How long after I submit my application will I know whether I am selected for an award?**

WSAC will contact all applicants as soon as decisions are made. Generally, the awards process begins in June of each year. WSAC sends notification of offers to FHP awardees first and completes this process before notifying SHP & BHP awardees. WSAC also notifies applicants who are not awarded as soon as the awarding process is completed.

**What happens if I get laid off or terminated?**

Contact our office immediately. WSAC has a Site Change Policy and will work with you to try to keep your contract from going into default repayment. You may have the option to look for another preapproved site where you can complete your service obligation. Participants terminated for cause go into default repayment immediately.

**What happens if more than one person from my site applies?**

More than one person at a site may be able to receive loan repayment. There are a number of variables. There is a cap on the number of awards per profession at one site. If the providers are in different professions, there can be more than one award at a site.

**I am a nurse who sometimes works outside of the ambulatory clinic. I do home visits, educational classes, and other activities. Do I qualify for the program?**

To be eligible for the program, you must work in a clinic (or hospital) with scheduled appointments. Programs such as WIC, immunization programs, etc. are not included. If you are a Public Health Nurse, you do not qualify for the program. Please refer to the full-time and less than full-time definitions and hours allowed that are not scheduled appointments in the Reference Guide.

**If I am selected for an award, are these funds tax exempt?**

You will need to refer to IRS Publication 970 Tax Benefits for Education (Section - 5 Student Loan Repayment Assistance). We do not report the funds to the IRS.

**How are my payments dispersed?**

Awards will be divided into quarterly payments over the contract service obligation period. Payments are made after the completion of each quarter and upon receipt, review, and approval of each Quarterly Service Verification Form.